

RE: HIJACKING OF DUTCH TRAIN IN NETHERLANDS - 2.12.75No Changes at Train

THE HAGUE 9.12.75

In sharp contrast to the mediation efforts in Amsterdam, the situation at the hijacked train in northern Holland remained totally deadlocked as the Dutch authorities wage a war of nerves against the six gunmen, who are still holding an estimated 29 hostages.

A Justice Ministry spokesman there confirmed today that the authorities were using isolation tactics in an attempt to break the gunmen's nerves. 'We want to give them the feeling they have been deserted, that they are totally alone. We are not rejecting any negotiator but they will first have to ask us for one and then we will carefully consider it', the spokesman said.

In an attempt to further shatter the hijackers' nerves, police were planning to direct 10 giant floodlights at the train tonight and send a stream of noisy armoured cars shuttling to and fro nearby, he said.

Justice Minister Andreas van Agt, who is in charge of the anti-guerrilla operations, told reporters 'no news is good news'.

'Although every further day is atrocious for the hostages, it can hardly help the morale of the captors', he said.

MOLUCCAN LEADERS TOMAKE PERSUASION EFFORT

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Beil en, December 11 - Four South Moluccan leaders will make another attempt today to talk the six terrorists keeping some 29 hostages in a hijacked train near here into surrendering themselves.

Justice Ministry spokesman Toos Faber said today the six terrorists last night asked to see Mr Johan Manusama, the self-styled President of the South Moluccas.

Mr Manusama who saw Justice Minister Andreas van Agt last night, agreed to meet the terrorists aboard the train in the company of Mrs Soumokil, widow of the first 'President' of the South Moluccan Republic, Doctor Delima and South Moluccan 'Education Minister' Kuhuwael.

The talks, which are a departure from the policy of isolating the hijackers, follow an emergency congress of the Badan Persatuan ('Unified Front') movement which claims to represent over 90 percent of all South Moluccans in Holland.

Demands Endorsed

The congress, held in Moordrecht yesterday, condemned acts of terrorism but endorsed the terrorists' demands. It also supported the policy of the South Moluccan leaders and instructed them to 'maintain good relations with the Dutch people'.

It charged the leaders to explain the South Moluccan problems to the Dutch Government and Parliament.

Another mediation bid, which is being studied by the Dutch Government, was made last night by the small right-wing Protestant EO broadcasting corporation which offered to make broadcasting time available to the South Moluccan leaders to explain their 'just political cause' in exchange for a release of the hostages.

The Rotterdam newspaper ALGEMEEN DAGBLAD reported today that the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Home Affairs and Justice favoured action to put an end to the hostage dramas. But the fourth member of the Government 'crisis centre', Premier Joop den Uyl, opposed immediate action and preferred to wear the terrorists down so they would surrender without further bloodshed, the paper said.

DISASTER TEAMS READYFOR EVENTUALITIES

Beilen, December 11 - The Dutch authorities have set up an emergency hospital in a lonely farmhouse near here in case the siege of a hijacked train one kilometre away ends in bloodshed.

A staff of doctors and nurses is already on duty in the farmhouse, in preparation for such an eventuality.

The 6,000 inhabitants of this small northern town along with the hundreds of police, troops, doctors and Red Cross men here, all hope to see the 29 hostages walk safely to freedom from captivity by six South Moluccan guerrillas who have already killed three hostages.

Should the siege turn into a shooting, a disaster plan centred on the farmhouse, would be put into operation.

Four military Alouette helicopters, at present parked on a public green in Beilen, would fly the nine kilometres to the train to ferry away any severely injured casualties.

Fleet of Ambulances

The head of the medical operation, Dr Jan Bosman, said any dead would later be flown to the town of Meppel for autopsy. The badly wounded would be flown on to three area hospitals at Meppel, Assen and Hoogeveen, or to the university hospital at Groningen.

A fleet of 20 ambulances are standing by -- 12 at the farm and eight at the level-crossing, 100 metres from the train -- where food, water and medicine for the gunmen and hostages are transported daily along the track on a railway trolley.

'We are prepared for a medical calamity', Dr Bosman said. 'A national disaster plan drawn up by the Dutch Government several years ago has now been specially adapted to the situation here'.

Two other field hospitals are fully manned near the train and four doctors are on duty in shifts round-the-clock in a centre at Beilen town hall.

The hostage train is surrounded by two rings of 300 police and soldiers, including marine commandos and marksmen, and 45 armoured vehicles.

Another 400 soldiers of the 45th infantry battalion make up a third cordon guarding road blocks and strategic buildings in the area.

Mobile Kitchens

Mobile kitchens shuttle to and from police and army posts during the night, serving hot tea or bean soup to the sentries.

Local housewives pop outdoors with coffee for heavily armed soldiers posted at street corners and the town's only Chinese restaurant serves rice dishes free of charge to troops manning a roadblock nearby.

The hostages on board the train only get food when their captors demand it. As they have done throughout the nine-day siege over the field telephone linking the train with police headquarters.

Apples, buttermilk, soft drinks, drinking water, sandwiches, medicines including tranquilisers, tobacco, toothbrushes and toothpaste, and disposable underwear, along with brushes and soap to clean the carriage are among the items sent aboard.

TRAIN GUNMEN FREE

File: V132 & 4

TWO HOSTAGES

Beil en, December 11 - Six Moluccan guerrillas today freed an elderly man and woman from a hijacked train where they have held 29 hostages for nine days.

A Dutch official said the man aged 82 and the woman of 71 were in good condition considering their ordeal, but they were taken to hospital for observation.

The South Moluccan gunmen released them after nearly three hours of talks aboard the train with four fellow countrymen acting as mediators, including the President of the self-styled South Moluccan Government-in-exile, Mr J. Manusama.

In Amsterdam, meanwhile, police said they expected developments -possibly tonight - at the Indonesian Consulate where seven more South Moluccan extremists are holding 25 hostages.

The two passengers freed from the train were identified as Mr D. Smith, from Norg, and Mrs T. Bakker-de Bruin, from Hilversum. They stumbled for 100 metres along the railway embankment to a level crossing where Red Cross officials were waiting. The four mediators followed them.

The man and woman were the first hostages to be released since Sunday when the gunmen freed an elderly couple, also as the result of mediation efforts by South Moluccan leaders.

Gunmen's request

The South Moluccan gunmen had asked for the meeting on the train with the man they recognise as their President, Mr Johannes Manusama. Yesterday he publicly urged them to release all their hostages and surrender to police, on the ground that they had achieved the aim of drawing attention to their cause.

Mr Manusama and his companions stayed aboard the train for nearly three hours of discussions with the gunmen. Police believed he told them that to continue the hostage drama would only damage the Moluccan independence cause.

Shortly before the two hostages were released today, a senior Government official said that police and troops planned to storm the train here if the guerrillas killed one more of their hostages.

The official, who did not wish to be identified, said a team of psychiatric experts had warned the authorities that the guerrillas were desperate men capable of killing all their hostages if their demands were not met.

The experts drew up individual psychiatric profiles after police identified all six, he said.

Groups of the 60 heavily-armed police, marine commandos and armoured troops would launch any assault in daylight so that they could distinguish better between the guerrillas and the hostages, the official said.

In Amsterdam, police said they expected new developments in the week-old siege of the Indonesian Consulate where seven guerrillas had been in contact with police by telephone today.

A spokesman said: 'We are expecting a change - and the change could be tonight'. He would go no further.

The spokesman's comment raised speculation that the guerrillas might have decided to follow Mr Manusama's call for the release of all the hostages.

Earlier today civilian and military police, backed by a squad of 50 marine commandoes, reinforced wood and steel roadblocks round the Consulate with barriers of barbed wire.

The spokesman said a recent build-up in security forces round the Consulate, including troops in eight armoured personnel carriers, was mainly intended to ward off any attempt by other South Moluccan guerrillas to relieve the beleaguered gunmen inside the building.

Police sources at the Amsterdam siege said the seven gunmen in the Consulate organised daily fitness exercises to keep their captives in good physical condition.

They were imposing strict, but not rigid discipline, according to their telephone conversations with the police, the sources said.

But there were few mattresses in the building and most of the hostages were sleeping on the floor, they added.

GIRL RELEASEDFROM TRAIN

A m s t e r d a m, December 12 - Six South Moluccan guerrillas holding a hijacked train near Beilen today released a young girl, one of their 25 hostages, a Justice Ministry spokesman said.

The 17-year-old Dutch girl left the train along with two South Moluccan mediators who had gone on board earlier to talk with the gunmen.

The spokesman named the girl as Irma Martens, 17, a trainee kindergarten teacher from Beilen.

Red Cross doctors said after a preliminary examination later that Miss Martens was in 'fairly good condition in the circumstances'. She was taken to hospital for observation.

The two mediators, both prominent members of the South Moluccan community, later went to police headquarters at Beilen to report on the outcome of their talks on the train, which lasted for about two and a half hours.

It was the second successive day that the train gunmen, who killed three hostages last week, had released captives.

Yesterday, they freed an 82-year-old man and a woman of 71, also after negotiations on board with mediators from the South Moluccan community.

The mediators had arrived unexpectedly at Beilen late in the afternoon and boarded the train for a further round of talks with the six gunmen.

A Justice Ministry spokesman said they had told police they wanted to make another attempt to persuade the guerrillas to free their hostages and give themselves up.

The two mediators were Mr. T. Kohuwaal, Education Minister in the self-styled Government in exile of the South Moluccas, and Mrs. Josina Somoukil, widow of a former guerrilla leader and 'President' of the islands. Her husband Christian was executed in Jakarta in 1966.

TRAIN SIEGE ENDS FWS:

WITHOUT CONCESSIONS

B e i l e n, December 15 - Six South Moluccan guerrillas yesterday surrendered after holding 23 hostages on a hijacked train near here for 12 full days.

The gunmen walked out of the train unarmed five minutes after one of the hostages told police by field telephone they were surrendering unconditionally.

The guerrillas, members of a radical youth movement seeking independence from Indonesia for their Pacific island homeland, had so far refused to budge from their demands.

The suddenness of their surrender took hundreds of heavily-armed police and troops by surprise.

After seizing the train on a lonely stretch of track on December 2, the masked guerrillas killed three of their hostages, throwing their bodies onto the track.

Officials said they were likely to be charged soon with murder, which carries a maximum sentence of 20 years.

Surrender

A Justice Ministry spokesman said the hijackers formally surrendered to Mr Johannes Manusama, 'President' of the self-styled Government-in-exile of the Republic of the South Moluccas.

Mr Manusama, a 65-year-old mathematics teacher, was on board the train with three other South Moluccan community leaders for negotiations when the guerrillas agreed to surrender.

The news was given to police on a field telephone by one of the hostages, five minutes before they walked out unarmed and approached the lines of police and troops encircling the train. The guerrillas were quickly bundled into buses and police vans, and taken to different prisons throughout Holland.

The spokesman said none of the hostages was injured, although several were carried away on stretchers. After the guerrillas left the train, they waved frenzied with joy from the windows of the carriage with scarves and handkerchiefs.

The hostages, who suffered from sub-zero temperatures for nine days in the train because of a heating failure, ripped newspapers from the ice-covered window panes, blacked out by the guerrillas since the hijacking.

23 Hostages

The spokesman said checks at the hospitals to which the passengers were rushed after their release, showed there were only 23 hostages. Police earlier believed there were still 25 hostages aboard.

Police said the hostages were 16 men and seven women. Six were aged between 60 and 70, and one was a 16-year-old schoolboy.

The spokesman, Mrs Toos Faber, said the gunmen had not treated them badly under the circumstances. 'There is no question of torture and none of the passengers was bound in the last few days. Although some were earlier'.

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Dutch News (continued)15/12/1975Afternoon

Chief Justice Ministry spokesman Wim van Leeuwen said the credit for persuading the guerrillas to give up should go to Mr Manusama, a moderate whom the hijackers scorned in early negotiations.

'Mr Manusama was definitely the key man in bringing about the surrender. He was solely responsible. He did almost all the talking, but other mediators played important advisory roles'.

Mr Manusama last Thursday paved the way for a solution to the hostage dramas by appealing to both groups of gunmen to release their hostages and surrender.

He told them they had already achieved their main aim of drawing publicity to their independence demands, but were harming the cause of the whole 40,000 strong Moluccan community by continuing to hold the hostages.

Government officials said temperatures of about minus eight centigrade during the night pushed the young guerrillas beyond breaking point. The passengers, even with five thick blankets a piece, were unable to stand up to the biting cold.

No Concessions

Relatives of the hostages went wild with jubilation when they heard the ordeal was over. Husbands, wives and parents danced around weeping, shouting and hugging each other in a city centre hotel where they had been waiting since the hijacking.

Police were surprised that the guerrillas gave themselves up without gaining any concessions to their main demands.

They had demanded the release of all South Moluccan prisoners in Dutch jails, including a group who plotted to kidnap Queen Juliana last April, and Dutch Government support for their independence claims at the United Nations.

The guerrillas said that Holland left the South Moluccans in the lurch when it allowed Indonesia to take over the South Moluccas, and they demanded a meeting between Mr Manusama and President Suharto of Indonesia.

But the Dutch Government declared from the start of the hostage drama here -- the longest ever in Holland -- that it would not make any political concessions whatsoever.

It backed this stand up by charging with murder one of the hijackers who had to be taken to hospital on December 5 after a mystery explosion on board. He was blinded in one eye.

Justice Minister

Justice Minister Andreas van Agt, who flew to the scene immediately, told a press conference the gunmen would be judged by the courts for what he called their 'macabre deeds'.

He expressed relief that the drama was over, but grief at the killing of three of the hostages.

'I am also speaking soberly, since every word uttered here is being heard by the gunmen in the Amsterdam Consulate and can have its effect'.

He referred to anti-Moluccan sentiment in Holland and called on the Dutch population to understand that the vast majority of the South Moluccan community could not be held responsible for what had happened.

The outcome in Beilen had vindicated the tough no-concession line adopted by the authorities from the beginning. 'From the outset we refused to make a single concession and decided that the guerrillas would not be allowed to leave the country', Mr Van Agt added.

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Dutch News (continued)15/12/1975AfternoonEmbassy Comment

The Indonesian Embassy in The Hague said last night that with the end of the hostage drama in Beilen 'our hope has increased that the drama at the Consulate in Amsterdam will also be brought to a good end by the Netherlands Government'.

A spokesman for the Embassy further voiced its appreciation of the Government's handling of the train siege.

The spokesman was pleased that the Beilen drama had ended without further bloodshed.

Mr Aponno

In a television interview last night the Chairman of the Free South Moluccan Youths (movement) to which the terrorists belong, Mr Etty Aponno, said he was pleased the train siege had ended without further bloodshed. He also expressed sympathy with the relatives of the three victims.

But he said he was grieved that Justice Minister Andreas van Agt had not even mentioned the efforts of Mr Manusama in bringing the siege to a good end.

He felt that the Minister by ignoring the efforts by Mr Manusama had not contributed to more harmonious relations between the South Moluccan and Dutch communities.

Justice Minister Van Agt, in a televised interview, admitted that Mr Manusama had played a role in persuading the terrorists to surrender. 'But I do not think it has been only their work', he added.

He was convinced it had become very clear to the terrorists over the past 12 days that the Dutch Government would not make any concessions and that their action was hopeless.

Mr Van Agt disagreed with Mr Manusama's statement that terrorist action was a warning in the event the Dutch Government failed to show any understanding for the political demands of the Moluccans.

'I don't even think Mr Manusama meant to issue a direct threat to the Government', he added.

Mr Van Agt said he believed the Dutch Government should open talks with the South Moluccans on their problems. 'This was an obligation the Government had towards all minority groupings.

One thing must be clear, however. The twin hostage dramas had not increased possibilities for the Dutch Government to meet the specific demands of the South Moluccans.

He argued that hijackings should not be used to bring home one's point. He did feel however that since attention had been drawn to the South Moluccans, the Government had a duty to pay more attention to their problems.

This attention could be translated into talks, Mr Van Agt added.

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Dutch News15/12/1975AfternoonFIRST AMBULANCEMANON BOARD TRAIN

Beilen, December 15 - Numbed hostages broke down and wept when Red Cross men boarded the train where six South Moluccan guerrillas had held them at gunpoint for 12 days.

'Many were weeping, some fell around our necks, others offered their tanks to God', said ambulanceman Jan Blom, 22.

Mr Blom was first on board the train, along with Red Cross chief Dr Jan de Vries, after the guerrillas suddenly surrendered to police.

'The hostages were numbed, although they appeared to be in fair physical shape. Some were laughing, but others just had fixed stares on their faces.

'The train looked filthy, it was a mess although there was little damage', he told reporters.

There were no explosives on the train. 'But there were fireworks hanging from the inside of the doors -- what a swindle', Mr Blom said.

No Explosives

Police had believed the guerrillas booby-trapped all the carriage doors and the windows with plastic explosives to warn special anti-guerrilla marine commandoes against storming the train.

Mr Blom told how the passengers were shephered out of the train, still bewildered about the sudden turn in their luck.

'We had to take the oldest hostage, a 72-year-old woman, out on a stretcher. Another man was so shaky on his legs that we put him on a stretcher too', he said.

'We were worried about the danger of a time-bomb', Mr Blom said. 'But we still got on with our work'.

Costs

The cost to Beilen has been tremendous. Government officials estimate an early tally of the whole affair at a minimum of 26 million guilders.

Mr Ger Peerbolte, Ministry of Justice information officer for the province of Drenthe, termed the estimates 'extremely conservative. The railways also lost a lot of money but at the moment nobody can even get close to a proper estimate'.

Beilen Aftermath

16.12.75

The six hijackers who gave themselves up at Beilen were being questioned by police and investigating magistrates in different jails throughout the country today, and officials said they might be charged with murder in the next three days.

The hijackers, all members of the 'Free Young South Moluccans' movement like their compatriots here, killed three of their hostages after seizing the train.

Most of the Beilen hostages were sent home from hospitals after medical and psychiatric checks last night, but some were still under observation in hospital.

Mr Johannes Manusama, 'president' of the self-styled government-in-exile of the Republic of the South Moluccas, said he was leaving negotiations in Amsterdam up to Mr Metiari and did not intend to intervene himself as he did in Beilen yesterday.

'It is up to Mr Metiari now, I have done my part', he said.

Murder Charges

19.12.75

In Assen, northern Holland, police said the six Moluccan guerrillas who held a hijacked train with 23 hostages for 12 days were all charged with murder today - an offence carrying a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment.

The guerrillas, who surrendered on Sunday, killed three hostages soon after seizing the train on December 2.

Another hijacker, injured in an explosion on board the train on December 5, was officially charged with murder three days later in hospital.

Assen police chief Lieuwe Bergsma told REUTER the six guerrillas were all charged with murder today because police had not yet ascertained who actually fired the shots which killed the hostages.

They were charged at different prisons throughout the country where they are still being questioned.

Commissioner Bergsma said they were unlikely to be put on trial for several months.