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*Constant W. Hijzen, Cees Wiebes*

## “MUTUAL APPRECIATION AND FRIENDSHIP”. THE AMERICAN-DUTCH INTELLIGENCE LIAISON FROM THE 1940S TO THE 1970S



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Zusammenfassung:

### „GEGENSEITIGE WERTSCHÄTZUNG UND FREUNDSCHAFT“. DIE AMERIKANISCH-NIEDERLÄNDISCHE GEHEIMDIENSTZUSAMMENARBEIT VON DEN 1940ER BIS ZU DEN 1970ER JAHREN

Am späten Nachmittag des 13. Septembers 1974 stürmten drei bewaffnete Männer die französische Botschaft in Den Haag. Über den Polizeinotruf teilte eine Frau mit, dass „verrückte Japaner mit Schusswaffen herumrennen“ würden. Zehn Minuten später identifizierten sich die Täter selbst gegenüber der niederländischen Polizei. Die Geiselnahmer waren Angehörige der Japanischen Roten Armee, einer internationalen terroristischen Organisation mit einer langen Liste an Gewalttaten. Abgesehen von zahlreichen Flugzeugentführungen, hatte die Gruppe 1972 einen israelischen Flughafen angegriffen und dabei 25 Personen getötet und 75 verletzt. Für die Freilassung von 11 Geiseln, darunter der französische Botschafter in den Niederlanden, Jacques Senard, verlangte die Gruppe die Freilassung ihres Kameraden Yutaka Furuya aus einem Gefängnis in Frankreich, eine Million US-Dollar sowie sicheres Geleit zu einem Flugplatz ihrer Wahl. Der Vorfall ereignete sich direkt gegenüber dem Büro des Chief of Station der Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) und wurde zu einem Testfall für die traditionell sehr enge Verbindung zwischen der niederländischen und der amerikanischen Intelligence Community. Howard T. Bane, CIA Chief of Station in Den Haag, stellte sein Büro in der US-Botschaft den holländischen Behörden zur Verfügung. Somit veränderte sich die Zusammenarbeit, die sich bis dahin überwiegend mit Spionageabwehr befasst hatte, hin zur Terrorismusabwehr. Der vorliegende Artikel untersucht, wie, warum und wie genau dieser Wechsel zustande kam. Dadurch soll ein detaillierter Einblick in die Dynamik geheimdienstlicher Kooperation vermittelt werden.

## INTRODUCTION

From the top floor of the American embassy in The Hague, hidden behind an exotic looking lock, emanated perhaps the least tangible influence on the Netherlands for decades. Here, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) established a station in 1948, managed by a Chief of Station (CoS). Their Dutch counterparts were largely unaware of what the station looked like from the inside, because they generally met their CIA contacts outside the embassy. Thanks to the description a former CoS once gave to one of the authors, we do have an impression, however, of this part of the embassy. Having passed several security checks, one took the elevator to the top floor. After the doors opened, a long corridor stretched out before you. To the right were a number of rooms overlooking the street (Korte Voorhout), although looking out the window was difficult since the blinds were down, or sometimes even closed behind shutters. At the end of the corridor was the largest office, that of the CoS. It faced the French embassy across the street (Smidswater).<sup>1</sup> Liaison with the Dutch intelligence community was primarily the responsibility of the CIA. Ties with the Dutch Domestic Security Service (Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst, BVD) were, from inception, very close. Louis Einthoven, head of the BVD from 1949 to 1961, greatly admired the CIA. He forged close ties with officers at CIA Headquarters in Langley and with various CoS in The Hague.<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1: The building in which the American embassy seated until January 2018, Lange Voorhout, The Hague.

Einthoven and Allen Dulles (Director Central Intelligence from 1953 to 1961) got along very well, too. Dulles called Einthoven his "friend" and often praised the professionalism of the BVD on official occasions.<sup>3</sup> CIA employees saw Einthoven as a charming man, who was loved and respected, if not a bit "too outspoken for Dutch politicians".<sup>4</sup> For Ein-

hoven, on the other hand, it was beyond doubt that the close relationship with the CIA was essential for the Netherlands. He wrote in 1974 in his memoirs, exaggerating a bit, that the Dutch owed it to the CIA "for a significant part that we are still free."<sup>5</sup> To him it was crystal clear that a reliable intelligence liaison with the CIA was of crucial importance for Dutch national security, although under his successors the intimacy of the ties fluctuated somewhat.



Fig. 2: Louis Einthoven, head of the Dutch security service BVD between 1949 and 1961. Picture taken in 1936, when Einthoven was chief commissioner of the Rotterdam police force.

Several factors account for this. First, the extent to which American and Dutch intelligence officials were able to cooperate, was reliant on the personal relations between the head of the BVD and the CoS.<sup>6</sup> These could be strained when the CIA acted too unilaterally for the BVD's liking. Because the close ties that developed from 1948 onwards, the CIA, much to Dutch chagrin, also collected intelligence and undertook clandestine intelligence operations in the Netherlands without informing the BVD, ostensibly to protect American interests. The CIA operators worked under diplomatic cover, often as attachés. Such operations sometimes resulted in the expulsion of the CoS or lower ranking officials.<sup>7</sup> Second, from the late 1960s onwards, the Cold War faded away somewhat and political activism and terrorism became more prominent, which also caused ebbs.<sup>8</sup>

For a large part of the Cold War, nonetheless, silver cords tied the Dutch intelligence community to their American partners. As a result, the CIA influenced the Dutch post-war intelligence and security history in a material, financial, professional and (intelligence) cultural way. Although in the current historiography these close links between the BVD and CIA have been addressed, two issues have remained poorly explained. First, how exactly did the American influence on the Dutch intelligence community take shape? We know that there were joint operations, but what exactly did intelligence liaison consist of? Who maintained contact with whom? What and where did these contacts take place? A second underexposed aspect is the transformation of those relationships over time. What, for example, were the operational consequences when political violence and terrorism became important priorities for the BVD in the 1970s? Did the CIA and BVD cooperate as closely in Counter-Terrorism (CT) as in Counter-Intelligence (CI)?<sup>9</sup> In this article, we attempt to fill both gaps. In order to do so, we will structure the article as follows. After a brief introduction to the American-Dutch intelligence relationship, the article focuses on intelligence liaison in the 1960s and 1970s. We discuss several cases and examples in which this cooperation materialized. New archival research on a case in which CT became important, the hostage crisis at the French embassy in The Hague in September 1974, allows us to zoom in and explore to what extent the mutual appreciation and friendship between the American and Dutch intelligence communities had changed.

## **THE ORIGINS OF THE SILVER CORDS, 1945-1960**

When we study Dutch foreign intelligence liaison, we note fierce competition between the British and the Americans after 1945. Several factors account for this. Factors that pulled the Dutch to the British were the unfolding of the Second World War (the Dutch Government resided in London throughout the war), Dutch indebtedness to the British intelligence community for its institutional, organizational, and practical knowhow in the intelligence and security domain, the training of Dutch intelligence officers in Great Britain, and the close relations after the war in the counter-intelligence domain. A push factor accounting for strong intelligence liaison with the

British services was the fact that the Dutch initially did not have a good relationship with the Americans. The military envoy Colonel Fred Johnson, for example, conducted unilateral intelligence operations in the Netherlands, much to the annoyance of the Dutch. Today, as it was true back then, whenever friendly services display such illegal unilateral operations without informing the security service of the host country, this leads to a setback in relations. In the history of the Dutch-American intelligence liaison, this would occur several times, even as recent as 2005, when the CoS in The Hague was replaced after making the same mistake.<sup>10</sup>

Pull factors for the Dutch to strengthen their relations with the Americans were also present. Most importantly, the United States were a superpower with endless intelligence capability and sufficient financial resources. The relations with the Americans started to ameliorate shortly after the CIA was established in 1947. The Americans – claiming that the British had betrayed their intelligence operations during the war – demanded exclusivity in ties with the BVD. This caused the so-called Jenever-incident. The head of the Dutch security service, Louis Einthoven, sat down and drank Jenever (a strong Dutch liquor) with the CIA station chief of Brussels, who demanded that the Dutch would not supply intelligence to the CIA, which the British also received. Einthoven, striking his fist on the table, made the glasses and bottle with Jenever fall off the table, and supposedly shouted that this was unacceptable. Einthoven's strong attitude convinced the CoS and his superiors in Langley. The cooperation therefore began, but Einthoven decided on the terms and boundaries of American influence on the Dutch security service.<sup>11</sup>

Very quickly, the Dutch Government happily invited the CIA to open a station in The Hague. In April 1947, the Cabinet asked the American Government to appoint a CIA representative in The Netherlands.<sup>12</sup> Despite their willingness to befriend Western European services, the CIA initially responded cautiously. Pull factors for the American intelligence community were not so strong. The Netherlands was a small country, had a limited intelligence capacity, and did not border a communist state. As a result, other European services like the Scandinavian ones were more important for the CIA. However, as the Cold War was unfolding and containment of Communism became important, the CIA began looking for more friends in Western Europe.<sup>13</sup>

A few months later, the CIA therefore changed course and appointed a liaison officer in The Hague. Despite the objections mentioned above, there were important pull factors for the American intelligence community as well. The Netherlands was a prosperous country with colonies in Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America and was therefore of interest to the United States. A CIA presence would facilitate the gathering of economic intelligence. Moreover, Dutch threat perceptions were very akin to those of the Americans; an extra ally against Communism could never hurt, the CIA argued.<sup>14</sup> Apart from this, the Netherlands was one of the Western countries that could help to gain insights into communist operations in Europe. While electorally the Communist Party of the Netherlands (CPN) gained 10% of the votes in the 1946 elections, it retreated into marginality from 1948 onwards. Nevertheless, its connections with the Soviets were of great importance to discover how Moscow attempted to influence Western politics, particularly in the aftermath of the events in Czechoslovakia in February 1948. How strong was the Soviet hold on its representatives in the West? How influential were these Western communists, what were they up to and was a repetition of the Prague events conceivable?<sup>15</sup>

Furthermore, the Netherlands became of strategic importance, since it had shifted from a policy of neutrality to one of involvement in international alliances. In 1948, the Netherlands cofounded the Western European Union and in 1949, it signed the North Atlantic Treaty, which led to the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).<sup>16</sup> This inspired several East European services to send agents to the Low Countries. East German, Soviet, Polish, Hungarian, and Bulgarian agents tried to lay their hands on NATO's military secrets in the Netherlands.<sup>17</sup> The Netherlands became a honey pot and a very important locus of counter-intelligence activities, which gave the Western services (through their liaison with the Dutch security service) plenty of information about the communist intelligence requirements (what do they want to know?), their modus operandi (how do they try to obtain that information?), and the intelligence assets (who was recruited?).<sup>18</sup>

Another pull factor for the CIA to intensify their cooperation with the Dutch intelligence community was that while the CIA maintained good liaison with all Western allies, other Western agencies had

serious problems in the late 1940s and the beginning of the 1950s. The British services were deeply and thoroughly penetrated by Soviet spies, such as the infamous Cambridge Five. The French services were not fully trusted because of communist infiltration and the German services were still under construction. The number of reliable partner services in Western Europe, which were to be trusted with American secret intelligence, was thus not that great. It was therefore important for the CIA to find a trustworthy partner; one that would not be penetrated by hostile services and one, which had organized a proper security regime, in order to be sure that American intelligence was safe. The Americans were interested in the Scandinavian services, but also in the BVD, mainly because a large number of its employees were former members of the Dutch resistance. The Office of Strategic Services (OSS), a predecessor of the CIA, collaborated closely with the Dutch resistance in different operations during World War II and this convinced the CIA that these people maintained unconditional loyalty towards one another and would not betray each other. This lent the BVD a high degree of trustworthiness as an organization.<sup>19</sup> Accordingly, in May 1948 the first CIA liaison, Hank B. Bradford started work in The Hague. However, the first official CoS, William C. Ladd, arrived in April 1949.<sup>20</sup>

The BVD, for its part, also had its interests and motives to shift focus from the British intelligence community to a closer liaison with the CIA. In general, intelligence liaison is essential for small services. Resources are scarce and reliance on other agencies for their intelligence position and expertise vis-à-vis the craft of intelligence is highly valued.<sup>21</sup> This general rule was certainly applicable to the post-war Dutch intelligence and security services in particular. Although the BVD was heavily indebted to the British expertise and intelligence support for its institutionalization, organization, and training of its personnel, as the Cold War progressed and the BVD expanded, it began to look at the CIA for closer cooperation. The CIA was willing to spend more money on security measures and American support provided the BVD with an opportunity to grow, contrary to the relationship envisioned by the British.<sup>22</sup>

From the early 1950s onwards, Dutch-American intelligence liaison became reality. Interestingly, this was not the result of a formal agreement, contrary to

the UK-USA-agreement. Dutch-American liaison was for most of the Cold War period a distinctly informal relationship. Only in 1958 were the first agreements put on paper, but even then, during the later Cold War years Dutch-American liaison was informal to a great degree.<sup>23</sup> The advantages of informality are clear: the services can cooperate on a pragmatic basis without having to calculate for political sensitivities and both parties refrained from longstanding commitments or obligations. There were also disadvantages. When one of the parties suddenly did not meet its (informal) promises, it was difficult to sanction the other party. This sometimes resulted in disruptions in the liaison, like that in 1951, when the CIA had promised the head of the BVD a certain budget for 1952 and suddenly decided that half of the money would be sufficient. This of course dissatisfied the BVD. Einthoven immediately flew to Langley and negotiated with Allen Dulles to clarify the misunderstanding, which he did successfully. The full sum was transferred to the BVD's secret budget.<sup>24</sup>

Under Ladd and his successors, Jim E. O'Donnell (1953-1955) and Jim O'Ryan (1955-1961), the silver cords between BVD and CIA were strengthened. Intelligence liaison assumed different forms. First and most substantial was intelligence support. The CIA, dwarfing the BVD in terms of resources, provided the Dutch large sums of money, as well as intelligence. In 1950, the BVD received \$ 25,000 – a considerable amount on a BVD budget – with which they purchased automatic guns, recording equipment for eavesdropping operations and equipment to detect clandestine communist radio transmitters. The material and financial support grew exponentially in later years. In the mid-1960s, the salaries of 65 BVD employees (about 10% of the entire BVD staff) was paid for by the CIA, allowing the BVD to punch above its weight. After Dutch politicians objected to this form of support, fearing the American influence on the BVD would become too significant, direct financial contributions to BVD personnel were terminated in 1967 (thereafter, only to be spent on material expenses). The CIA also trained BVD personnel. Every few years, a group of talented BVD employees traveled to Langley for a number of weeks to be trained in tradecraft. During one training exercise, Dutch officers were allowed to interrogate the KGB-defector, Yuri Nosenko, under CIA auspices.<sup>25</sup>

Of course, this practice was structured by the quid pro quo principle. In return for their support, the

CIA was given access to Dutch territory and BVD cooperation on many levels. The Dutch sent the CIA one of their most important external products, the monthly intelligence synopsis, in which they reported primarily on developments in the international and domestic communist world. More important than these finished products, the BVD forwarded a variety of raw intelligence to the CIA, both verbally and in writing, ranging from unprocessed tap reports, intercepts, and transcripts of microphone operations to observation reports the BVD teams just brought in. Everything was “routinely delivered to the CIA”, a former BVD employee recalled.<sup>26</sup>

Another important form of liaison was operational cooperation. A large joint venture was a decade-long CI operation, called Project A. It entailed a combined microphone and telephone operation aimed at the Soviet embassy and its trade mission.<sup>27</sup> The CIA supplied technical equipment, edited and translated the takes from Russian, and handed over the detailed tap reports to the BVD. The Dutch in turn tolerated that the CIA was operationally active against Soviets on Dutch soil. Using telephone taps, microphone actions and observation teams, the BVD and CIA charted names and addresses of visitors to the Soviet embassy and the content of the conversations that occurred. These joint operations were very valuable in terms of studying the communist adversary. Through their long-term cooperation in joint operations, the CIA and BVD accumulated detailed and extensive knowledge on the modus operandi of Soviet intelligence in the West. If a specific diplomat was identified as an intelligence officer and his or her activities were deemed to damage Dutch interests, the BVD convinced the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to expel them.<sup>28</sup>

Even though the liaison was asymmetric<sup>29</sup> – the CIA was obviously the dominant partner in terms of resources and global reach – this did not mean that the CIA could ignore Dutch wishes at will. Some American operational proposals went too far. Einthoven refused, for example, to purchase the progressive weekly *De Groene Amsterdammer*, which the CIA wanted to use as a propaganda tool. He also blocked a CIA plan to blackmail the Indonesian foreign minister by using prostitutes because “we did not use such methods here”, Einthoven argued. To guarantee Dutch sovereignty in the area of intelligence and security, Einthoven drafted a declaration of independence in 1955, stating that the BVD decided whether, when,

and what information was passed on to the CIA. He also demanded that the CIA always ask for permission in advance about planned operations in the Netherlands and before approaching potential agents and informers. Although it is not very likely that the CIA strictly abided by these rules, the document showed that Einthoven was aware of the major influence of the CIA on Dutch intelligence and security affairs.<sup>30</sup>

Over the years, Dutch-American cooperation primarily focused on common security interests: countering espionage by and possible influence from communist states. During Operation Klaas Vaak, launched in 1958, for example, the BVD succeeded with the CIA's help in placing microphones in the premises of the Chinese legation in The Hague, even hidden in the code room, with spectacular intelligence results.<sup>31</sup> This successful formula was repeated as often as possible: whenever communist countries had found a suitable building for their embassy or consulate, the BVD and CIA used friendly real estate agents, who allowed custom-made bugs to be placed. For this, CIA officials often praised the technical employees of the BVD. In American eyes, each of them was an "aggressive guy in the good sense of the word" and had an offensive intelligence mentality. The intelligence results from the operation were shared, to the satisfaction of both services.<sup>32</sup>



Fig. 3: Aerial photo of the BVD building in the 1980s.

© Bungpenontton

but with his successor Gordon B. Mason (1965-1966) they severely deteriorated. Under Damsté's pressure, Langley recalled him and sent Cleve W. Cram (1966-1969). This fact illustrated how much the CIA valued the intelligence liaison with the BVD, for Cram was a heavyweight in the CIA.

For the CIA, the liaison was most valuable when Warsaw Pact sources could be recruited in the Netherlands, especially when the BVD and CIA could recruit an agent in place. During Project Mongol, a sophisticated intelligence operation in the 1960s, this was the case.<sup>34</sup> When tensions between Peking and Moscow flared, the BVD set up a successful operation and used a Dutch deep penetration agent, code-named Sipier. For the CIA, Mongol provided high-level information about the modus operandi of Chinese intelligence services, their networks and practices of financing and influencing Maoist (youth) organizations in Western Europe. However, the operation was also a form of back channeling, since the BVD discovered that Peking was not averse to an American political rapprochement. This intelligence was passed on to the US administration. The importance was so great that Cram instructed one of his CIA officials to maintain permanent liaison with the China desk of the BVD.<sup>35</sup> The CIA also operated from the consulates in Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The latter, in particular, was an important intelligence post, owing to the shipping traffic, specifically coming from and going to the Soviet Union, China and other communist countries. When the State Department threatened to close down the consulate in Rotterdam, the CIA immediately stepped in and began to finance the consulate, which remained open.<sup>36</sup>

If we try to imagine how the Dutch-American intelligence liaison materialized, our first observation should be that the BVD and CIA employees hardly met at the embassy. CIA employees arranged meetings in public places and often visited the BVD headquarters. The CoS and their deputies regularly spoke there with the BVD head or his deputy and there was frequent contact at lower levels, too. The CIA liaison official showed up weekly at various BVD desks and the CI department. Even if there was nothing specific to discuss, he simply appeared to maintain and nourish the warm relationship at the individual level. Very consciously, the CIA staff also sometimes visited the BVD on a Friday afternoon, when its regular interlocutors already had left for home and then questioned the youngest employee,

## AN UNLIMITED INFORMATION FLOW

The silver cords remained intact after Einthoven retired in 1961. Koos Sinninghe Damsté, who succeeded him, also frequently traveled to Langley, accompanied by several BVD departmental heads. Conversely, CIA employees instructed BVD employees in The Hague. In the 1960s, however, the liaison showed the first cracks. Sinninghe Damsté's relations with CoS Robert E. Anderson (1961-1964) were good,<sup>33</sup>

often a new BVD employee who had just started working there. He or she was often happy to be of service to the CIA and divulged much information.<sup>37</sup>

The form and content of the collaboration was never recorded in a formal contract. Former BVD employee Frits Hoekstra remembered that there were no guidelines or official agreements that regulated the flow of intelligence from the BVD to the CIA in the 1960s and 1970s. The intelligence that was passed on could never be traced back, for much of it was transmitted orally. Even the most sensitive political and operational issues were shared with the CIA. This was no problem for the BVD management and this informal practice remained. Only in the late 1970s, the new BVD head, Pieter de Haan (1977-1985), ended this generous and informal practice. Solely the departmental heads of the BVD were officially allowed to liaise with the CIA.<sup>38</sup>

## CHANGING THREAT PERCEPTIONS

Besides mutual interest, the closeness of the ties was also influenced by the fact that CIA and BVD adhered to a common threat perception. Early in the Cold War, there was a shared sense of destiny: the struggle against Communism. As a result of détente, other security problems came to the fore. Simultaneously, the political climate changed and the question rose whether the close ties should remain intact. When the progressive Joop Den Uyl Cabinet took office in 1973, his Social-Democratic colleagues Willy Brandt (West German Chancellor, 1969-1974) and Harold Wilson (British Prime Minister, 1964-1970 and 1974-1976) had explicitly warned Den Uyl to keep an eye on his secret services: they did not like Social Democrats, the two argued.<sup>39</sup> In 1975, the Dutch Parliament asked if the CIA also carried out operations in the Netherlands, thus becoming more critical of the silver cords.<sup>40</sup> Furthermore, the perceived communist threat gave way to a much more diffuse threat. Apart from student and youth activism, Western Europe was confronted with terrorism in the 1970s. Although the work against communist targets continued, the shared sense of destiny seemed to crumble. As a precaution, the CIA increased the number of its employees in The Hague under the Den Uyl Cabinet to a station of eight to ten employees.

## THE HOSTAGE CRISIS AT THE FRENCH EMBASSY

It soon became apparent that the Dutch wanted to strengthen their ties with the CIA also in a transforming threat landscape. Silently, the cooperation broadened from the CI to the CT domain. What this CT-cooperation looked like, transpired between 13 and 17 September 1974, when a hostage crisis broke out in the French embassy. Three members of the Japanese Red Army (JRA), an international terrorist group, took eleven diplomats and staff hostage, including the French Ambassador, Jacques Senard. They wanted to force the French Government to release an imprisoned comrade and demanded a ransom from the Dutch Government plus safe passage by plane.<sup>41</sup>



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Fig. 4: The French embassy during the hostage crisis, 15 September 1974. Police detectives are near the entrance at the Lange Voorhout street entrance.

To ward off this crisis, the Dutch Ministry of Justice formed a crisis center, which contacted the Japanese and French authorities. The BVD contributed, too. BVD head Andries Kuipers ordered 60 of his employees to deal with the crisis, operating 24/7. Every BVD employee spoke to his sources and used their press contacts to prevent information leaking that could harm the fate of the hostages.<sup>42</sup>

Although the BVD and CIA did not play a leading role – terrorism was a matter for the Dutch police and the judiciary – the intelligence liaison proved once again of great value. To begin with, the location of the French embassy was situated just opposite to the office of CoS Howard T. Bane, station chief since July 1974. Bane had opted to become CoS in Athens but CIA leadership chose Richard Skeffington Welch as CoS. Welch was killed on 23 December 1975 by the Greek urban guerrilla “17 November” (17N) Marxist organization. The BVD initially feared that Bane would import his secret operational activities from Asia and Africa, where he had previously been

stationed, but now Bane's experience came to hand. He reassured Kuipers and the collaboration soon became close. Kuipers only requested that Bane operate cautiously, for he feared political problems with Dutch Parliament.

The BVD lacked experience in the CT field, but the CIA and the rest of the US intelligence community could bring much expertise to the table. This applied especially to Bane. He set up a crisis center for the duration of the crisis. In this office, the CIA and BVD set up cameras and directional microphones pointed at the suite of the French Ambassador, Jacques Senard, where the JRA held their hostages.<sup>43</sup> Bane spent five days and nights in his office with a crisis staff. A great deal of intelligence about the perpetrators came in from Langley, which was immediately shared with the BVD. In addition, the CIA provided significant technical support, especially in the domain of signals and communications intelligence. Spy satellites were also used. Special eavesdropping equipment was flown in from Langley, such as a silent drill that allowed the BVD to place microphones unnoticed at the outside wall of the embassy (which were not used). A female US diplomat remembered the CIA's help in the Dutch hostage crisis in the 1970s: "I discovered that the Agency had all kinds of fascinating techniques like putting listening devices in trays of food and what not".<sup>44</sup>

Bane made the embassy a meeting ground for the BVD, the Dutch Marine Corps (which might be deployed to violently end the crisis), The Hague municipal police and the French intelligence service Direction Generale de Sécurité Extérieure. Bane barely knew the French CoS, but the siege led to close contact. One of the topics of their meetings were possible termination scenarios. The atmosphere was so tense that the Dutch sometimes forgot that they were guests in the US embassy. Once the US Ambassador Kingdon Gould Jr. stood at the front door of the embassy while Dutch police refused to admit him. Gould reacted outraged and slammed his fists on the front door. Bane intervened quickly and escorted the ambassador inside.

The intelligence support of the CIA was invaluable for Dutch authorities. Of course, all telephone lines from the French embassy were tapped, but it soon became clear that the BVD was not able to track the many telephone numbers that the JRA called in the Middle East. The CIA, however, was able to retrieve those numbers within one hour. In

this way, the JRA was sketched and the CIA soon discovered who was behind the hostage taking. After a Dutch proposal to move the hostages to the Egyptian embassy had been rejected by the JRA, all kinds of plans were discussed to free the hostages. For example, it was considered to inject gas into the embassy via the air-conditioning system. However, it was soon discovered that the embassy had no air-conditioning system at all. The possibility of using strong sleeping pills in the food for the hostages was also discussed. Bane sent a flash telegram (highest priority) to Langley for more information about a scenario with sleeping pills. Not only the CIA, but also other agencies like the National Security Agency (NSA), the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Office of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) studied this scenario. They responded very quickly with a joint top-secret telegram of ten pages, in which they urgently advised not to use sleeping pills. The chance was too great that the terrorists would notice this and kill the hostages. Kuipers informed Prime Minister Den Uyl about this advice and the PM decided to cancel this idea.<sup>45</sup>

Ultimately, the Dutch Cabinet, which wanted to prevent bloodshed (slightly to American annoyance), managed to realize a peaceful solution. The siege and negotiations lasted five days. The French Government agreed to free a jailed JRA member in return for the release of the hostages. The JRA received \$ 300,000 and a Boeing 707 to leave the Netherlands with a Dutch pilot and co-pilot who volunteered for this mission. In the end, the JRA members and their hostages were transported in three buses to Amsterdam airport. For a short while the Dutch Government contemplated to free the hostages violently by ramming the buses or to use sleeping gas in the Boeing 707 plane itself. But would this have the same effect on all and would the JRA members not start throwing grenades in a desperate mood?<sup>46</sup> So, nothing happened. The flight took them to Aden, South Yemen, and then to Damascus in Syria where the Syrians forced the JRA to give up their weapons and ransom. The money was never seen again. The BVD was happy about the role of Bane but became increasingly worried about his personal safety. A BVD car thereafter followed Bane every evening when he drove home. Nevertheless, being an intelligence professional, Bane soon observed this surveillance

by the BVD. Their speed gave them away: the BVD car drove exactly 50 kilometers per hour and this was abnormal for Dutch drivers who usually drove much faster.<sup>47</sup>



Fig. 5: The Boeing 707 plane at Schiphol Airport, awaiting the Japanese Red Army.

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## CONCLUSION

From the Second World War to the 1970s, American influence on the Dutch intelligence community was important. The friendship and appreciation were mutual, the cords between them silver. Until the 1960s, CIA employees were mainly active in the CI domain and maintained contacts at every level in the BVD in a very informal manner. By very conscientiously keeping track of who said what, the CIA station came to know almost everything. This expanded silently in the 1970s into the field of CT. In exchange for the help, the CIA received two reciprocal services. First,

they got a free hand wherever possible. For example, because of the great help during the hostage crisis, the BVD allowed the CIA to recruit independently among Eastern European diplomats stationed in The Hague. Via a recruited Warsaw Pact diplomat, CoS Bane received top-secret diplomatic code telegrams from a Warsaw Pact country, which facilitated the breaking of the code.<sup>48</sup> This, as was the explicit agreement, was shared with the BVD. In addition, there was hardly any restriction in the CT domain on the quantity and types of data that the CIA received from the BVD. Because of this willingness, the CIA was also well aware, from an operational point of view, of what the Dutch authorities thought and did in this area, even at the political and administrative levels. This did not mean that the CIA and BVD had exactly the same mindset. Neither should we conclude that the Netherlands was being practically governed from the top floor of the US embassy, an allegation put forward by Edward Snowden in January 2015 when he claimed that the Dutch services followed orders from Washington blindly.<sup>49</sup> Such a silly characterization confuses the complexities of intelligence liaison. Despite the fact that the BVD cooperated closely with its CIA counterparts and was therefore greatly influenced by them, the Netherlands is the only Western European country where CIA CoS were expelled on four separate occasions. The Dutch were certainly smaller, but their criticism was heeded.

## ENDNOTES

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