

Bill Hooper and secret service

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This article claims that Bill Hooper (1905-1970), a former staff member of the British Passport Control Office (PCO) at The Hague in the Netherlands, was in fact working for MI6, and for MI5, all his life, while posing as a double agent for the Sovietrussian NKVD and for the Abwehr, the German military intelligence and security service. It also offers a possible twist to the story of John Herbert King, an agent for the NKVD. Finally it sheds some light on the interaction between MI6 and the Dutch intelligence service in 1940-1941.

HOOPER IN THE INTELLIGENCE LITERATURE

‘The other man was Dalton’s indispensable factotum, 30-year-old John William (Jack) Hooper, a naturalized British subject of Dutch birth. So completely was he trusted by Dalton that he was given charge of the secret roster of agents and entrusted with the filing of their reports.’

In 1971 this description of Hooper was published by Ladislav Farago in his book on British and German intelligence operations before and during the Second World War.¹

In these two sentences the former intelligence officer Farago managed to make several mistakes. William John (*Bill*) Hooper was born at the Dutch harbor city of Rotterdam on 23 April 1905² and he was, just like his brother Herbert (*Jack*) Hooper ten years later, born a British citizen. In December 1928, when Bill Hooper’s first daughter was born, he was listed as a secretary to the British Passport Control Office (PCO) in Rotterdam.

It was after the PCO moved to The Hague that his name became infamous. The Passport Control Officer at the time, lieutenant E.A.L. Dalton³, had been gambling in Belgian casinos, and debts forced him to dip into deposits for visas of travellers to Palestine.⁴ Dalton started to insist on Bill Hooper getting applicants to make their deposits in cash. Hooper became aware of the reason and urged Dalton to inform London. Instead, on 4 September 1936, Dalton chose to shoot himself through the head, leaving Bill a letter with instructions. In it he stated having committed suicide, and instructed Hooper to inform the British legation and MI6 of his death. Hooper was also to cooperate fully with Dutch police authorities in establishing the cause of death. Dalton concluded his letter: ‘Your only fault has been that you were too damned loyal.’ Major V.P.T. (Valentine) Vivian, head of counter-espionage at MI6, and commander P.S. Sykes, head of Section Finance, came over, supplemented the deposits, and took Dalton’s letter to London.

Farago wrote: ‘The postmortem of the Dalton suicide had also exposed another culprit, a blackmailer *pro domo* rather than an embezzler *per se*. He was John (“Jack”) Hooper, Major Dalton’s trusted assistant. When Hooper discovered that his chief was dipping into the slush fund, he threatened to denounce him unless Dalton cut him in. From then on the two men shared the loot, as Hooper, who did not choose to follow Dalton into death, confessed to the investigators.’ Since then, this representation lingers on in intelligence literature in various forms.⁵ In 1981 Nigel West called Hooper a blackmailer too. ‘When confronted by Vivian, Hooper made a confession and was taken off the payroll.’ In 1984 Bill’s younger brother, captain Herbert (Jack) Hooper⁶, tried to convince West that this was not the case.⁷ As a member of the PCO staff from 1933 to 1937, Jack Hooper claimed to have intimate knowledge of the PCO and in a letter to West he explained in detail certain aspects of Bill’s activities. Seemingly he succeeded, as West promised to ‘make the necessary alterations to future edi-

¹ Ladislav Farago, *The game of the foxes: British and German intelligence operations and personalities which changed the course of the Second World War* (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1972) pp.105-106.

² Correspondence Archiefdienst Gemeente Rotterdam 1996.

³ Ernest Albert Llewellyn Dalton, 18930925 Anderlecht (Belgium) – 19360904. Gemeentearchief ’s-Gravenhage. Register of residents. Dates are noted in accordance with ISO recommendation R 2014-1971.

⁴ The only sizeable amounts of money received by the PCO originated from deposits (sixty pounds each) made by applicants for tourist visas to Palestine. The visa applications were largely dealt with by APCO Bill Hooper, who screened the applicants, checked their documents, signed the visas and received the bank guarantee or the cash in lieu thereof, taking the cash or the guarantee up to Dalton for safekeeping in his personal safe. Note, undated, of H. Hooper. In part, the following is also based on correspondence and interviews with captain Herbert Hooper 1992-, and F.A.C. Kluiters, *De Nederlandse inlichtingen- en veiligheidsdiensten* (’s-Gravenhage: Sdu 1993) pp.295-296.

⁵ Nigel West, *MI 6: British Secret Intelligence Service Operations 1909-45* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1983) pp.50-51. Christopher Andrew, *Secret service: the making of the British Intelligence Community* (London: Heinemann 1985) p.378. Johan P. Nater, *Het Venlo incident: de mysterieuze ontvoering met geweld op Nederlands grondgebied door een SS-Sonderkommando in november 1939* (Rotterdam: Ad. Donker ny) pp.101-102. Uwe Brammer, *Spionageabwehr und “Geheimer Meldedienst”: die Abwehrstelle im Wehrkreis X Hamburg 1935-1945* (Freiburg: Rombach 1989) p.70. Bob de Graaff, ‘The Venlo incident’, *World War Investigator* no 13 (Vol 2 No 1) 1990 pp.2-13.

⁶ Herbert (Jack) Hooper, 19151202 Rotterdam – 20010831. *NRC Handelsblad*, 20010903.

⁷ In 1969 H. Hooper already had convinced L. de Jong, the author of *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, to change some details concerning Bill Hooper. Letter 19691208 L. de Jong to J. Kist.

tions.⁸ When Jack discovered that reprints of West's book on MI6 still contained the same libellous statement, he wrote to West for clarification.⁹ West answered: 'At a distance of seven years I am unable to explain what went wrong but I have taken the necessary steps to ensure the required changes now take place. Please accept my sincere apologies for the oversight.'¹⁰

However, it is clear that West still believes in a guileful Hooper. In his foreword to Kern's book about the Soviet intelligence officer Krivitsky, published in 2003, West writes: 'At the very least, this [Krivitsky's knowledge of the Passport Control Officers and the PCO as a cover organisation] implied some successful Soviet penetration of SIS, and perhaps something rather worse, especially when he named John Hooper, a Briton who had been dismissed from the SIS station in The Hague, as one of his sources.'¹¹

BILL HOOPER AND COMMUNISM

In 1920 Bill Hooper began working at the Passport Control Office in Rotterdam at the age of fifteen.¹² According to him, he was interested in matters connected with communism. In 1923 he switched to the Consulate, but in 1927 he was appointed as a clerk to the PCO and began collecting information about communism and Dutch communists. At some point he was ordered by commander Fletcher¹³ to start looking for agents against the Germans, and he succeeded in setting up an anti-German organization. PCO agent Vrinten (to be introduced later) said in 1933 that, whilst over the past years British Intelligence had been concerned primarily with communist propaganda and arms deals heading towards India, activity towards Germany had again become a priority and had undergone an intense resurgence.¹⁴

In a nutshell, these were Bill Hooper's activities, as he himself stated in October 1939. Before describing them in depth, attention must be called to his activities in regard to communism.

Hooper and Pieck

According to Jack Hooper, as early as 1934 or 1935 his elder brother had received an order from admiral Hugh Sinclair, chief of MI6, to infiltrate the circle of acquaintances of the Dutch communist H.C. (Han) Pieck. This man had already come to the notice of MI6 in 1930.¹⁵ It was indeed in this year that MI5 started a file on Pieck, the first document being an extract from a MI6 report dated 24 March 1930.¹⁶

Subsequently Bill succeeded in becoming part of a group of Dutchmen who were helping Jews to escape from Nazi-Germany.¹⁷ One man of this group, the Internationale Rode Hulp, was the lawyer Simon de Vries¹⁸ – according to Hooper, he was 'politically sound' – who in the twenties had been married for some years to Bernie van Lier, who later became Pieck's wife.¹⁹ They decided to thank Bill for his help by presenting him with a painting of his eldest daughter, Mary Joyce, made by Han Pieck²⁰, who was a well-known artist, just like his twin brother Anton Pieck.²¹ A postwar investigation by the Dutch security service Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst (BVD) concluded it was more or less in this way Bill met Han in 1935. However, in 1939 Bill Hooper himself stated that on 30 January 1935 he submitted a report on communism in Holland and Pieck.²²

Pieck and King

In February 1935²³ Han Pieck had succeeded in recruiting captain John Herbert (Bertie) King, who had joined the British Foreign Office communications department as a temporary clerk in 1934²⁴, for the Sovietrussian NKVD.²⁵ After King's transferral from Geneva to London late 1934²⁶, Pieck had to go there frequently, and in

⁸ Letter 19850301 H. Hooper to West, and letter 19850310 West to H. Hooper.

⁹ Letter 19920406 H. Hooper to West.

¹⁰ Letter 19920411 West to H. Hooper.

¹¹ Gary Kern, *A death in Washington: Walter G. Krivitsky and the Stalin terror* (New York: Enigma Books 2003) p.xiv.

¹² Nigel West; Oleg Tsarev, *The crown jewels: the British secrets at the heart of the KGB archives* (London: HarperCollins 1998) p.82. The PCO was situated in Maasstraat 16 in Rotterdam. In the thirties it was moved to Nieuwe Parklaan 57 in The Hague.

¹³ Probably Reginald Fletcher, mentioned in Andrew p.345.

¹⁴ Chantal Aubin, 'French counterintelligence and British secret intelligence in the Netherlands, 1920-1940' in Beatrice de Graaf ea [ed], *Battleground Western Europe: intelligence operations in Germany and the Netherlands in the twentieth century* (Amsterdam: Spinhuis, 2007) pp.17-47.

¹⁵ *The Security Service 1908-1945: the official history* (London: Public Record Office 1999) p.189.

¹⁶ The National Archives (Public Record Office) London (hereafter TNA), KV 2/809. No 1a. Extract MI6 report 19300324?

¹⁷ Archief Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst. Extract from file on W.J. Hooper.

¹⁸ Simon de Vries, 18960820 Amsterdam.

¹⁹ TNA, KV 2/815. Hooper interview 19391006.\ Bernharda Hugona Johanna (Bernie) Pieck-van Lier, 19000325 Amsterdam – 19880727.\ She was married to De Vries from 19230717 to 19280316. She married Pieck on 19280525.

²⁰ Henri Christiaan (Han) Pieck, 18950419 Den Helder – 19720112.

²¹ Mary Joyce could not remember such a painting. Telephone conversation 20031212.

²² TNA, KV 2/815. Hooper interview 19391006.

²³ West; Tsarev p.82. The minute sheets of TNA KV 2/809 record that MI6 reported by telephone about Pieck's presence in London. 'He was returning to the Hague on 3.2.35. via Harwich.'

²⁴ Christopher Andrew; Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin archive: the KGB in Europe and the West* (London: Penguin 1999) p.65.

²⁵ In August 1929 Pieck visited the Soviet Union and, according to his wife Bernie, he started working for the Russians in 1931. According to MI5, it was in 1929 that Pieck had been charged with penetrating the British Foreign Office. He established himself in Geneva as an artist,

order to explain his visits he founded a decorative art business in London. Pieck's cover during his travels was excellent, because he had managed to become an official courier of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and possessed a diplomatic pass, which he also used on other occasions.²⁷

Pieck's travels, however, meant a delay. Because of this, and of Pieck's occasional mistake in writing down King's messages, NKVD operative Theodor Mally (alias Paul Hardt)²⁸ came to London in September 1935.²⁹ He instructed Conrad Parlanti, Pieck's business partner and co-worker of the NKVD, to rent premises near Westminster. Now King could take documents from the Code Room to a flat in Buckingham Gate. There Pieck spread out King's material on a table and, standing on a chair, took photos of it with his Leica.³⁰ He then took the undeveloped films to the Netherlands. Pieck's wife Bernie assisted too. She transported undeveloped film rolls from London to Belgium.³¹ According to Walter Krivitsky, the Soviet illegal resident in the Netherlands, this method was common practice: in case of impending discovery the incriminating material could easily be disposed of by exposing the film to light.³² In Pieck's absence Mally took care of things, although he handled King's material differently. Via the Soviet embassy he telegraphed the most important of the messages to Moscow, while the remainder were taken by courier.³³ Some of King's material was deemed so important it was shown to Stalin.³⁴ After the war Pieck boasted that M.M. Litvinov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, read the Foreign Office missives at an earlier stage than the British ambassadors themselves.³⁵

This arrangement became a liability when a private detective, hired by De Vries, the first husband of Bernie Pieck, tried to find out all he could about Pieck.³⁶ At the end of November 1935 Mally decided that Pieck could not come to London anymore. Meetings with King had to take place on the continent. This, however, was not a workable solution, so at the beginning of January 1936 Pieck arranged a meeting with King and introduced Mally to him as his successor.³⁷

There was also another reason for changing the arrangement. According to the Dutch BVD, at the end of 1935 Bill Hooper warned Pieck that British authorities were aware of his communist sympathies, and that his contacts with a person in London had aroused suspicion. Probably already the next day Pieck hurried off to Paris and informed Krivitsky, who then decided to replace Pieck as case officer by Mally. Originally Mally's sole responsibility was to be the handling of the material supplied by King.³⁸ Because of the flood of documentation, Arnold Deutsch – the case officer of the Cambridge group, consisting of Donald Maclean, Kim Philby and friends – was overwhelmed. Mally was recalled to Moscow for briefing, and by April 1936 had returned as the newly designated London resident with responsibility over Deutsch for the running of the Cambridge group.³⁹

The KGB-archives tell a slightly different story. On 31 January 1936 Pieck held a house-warming party at his new flat in The Hague.⁴⁰ Among the many guests were Parlanti and the British commercial attaché 'John' Hooper.⁴¹ This was Bill Hooper using his middle name. Taking Pieck apart during the party, he told him that they knew about his past and kept a 'constant watch' on him. Later Hooper showed Pieck a file which contained information about his person and details of all his visits to London.⁴² In 1998 West and Oleg Tsarev wrote in their book on Russian espionage: 'At this point Hooper had identified several of Pieck's business contacts in

and carefully cultivated the British official community there. His expenses in this connection are believed to have been approximately £ 20,000 spread over a period of two and a half years. Igor Cornelissen, *De GPOe op de Overtoom: spionnen voor Moskou 1920-1940* (Amsterdam: Van Gennep 1989) pp.92, 108, 115, 156-158, 296. *The Security Service* p.189.

²⁶ West; Tsarev, p.81.

²⁷ Cornelissen p.165. In 1935 Pieck travelled at least eleven times between London and the continent. TNA, KV 2/809. Minute sheets.

²⁸ There is disagreement about the correct personal particulars of Mally/Hardt. It is not even clear what the real surname was, and what the alias. West and Tsarev most probably state the correct ones as Theodor Stepanovich Mally (1894 Temesvar, Hungary) alias Paul Hardt (18941227 Oldenburg). West; Tsarev pp.113, 117.

²⁹ West; Tsarev p.88.

³⁰ Email 20011009 Cornelissen to author, and email 20011016 W.G. Visser (a former BVD staff member) to author. According to MI5 Pieck had installed a 'photographic studio in which he photographed the material with which KING supplied him.' Nationaal Archief, Tweede Afdeling (hereafter NA), Bureau Nationale Veiligheid (hereafter BNV) (2.04.80), 3109. Excerpt from MI5 report The Soviet Intelligence Service September 1945, p.125.

³¹ Cornelissen p.158. Email 20011009 Cornelissen to author.

³² W.G. Krivitsky, *Dat heb ik gezien!* (Amsterdam: De Lange 1940) pp.44-45. Although sent by diplomatic bag undeveloped film was still being used in the case of George Blake, bringing his information to Moscow in the early fifties. David E. Murphy ea, *Battleground Berlin: CIA vs. KGB in the Cold War* (Newhaven & London: Yale University Press 1997) p. 216.

³³ Andrew; Mitrokhin p.173. Most probably these telegrams were transmitted from the Soviet embassy in Copenhagen, Denmark, as was the MO since 1934, and not directly from London. John Costello; Oleg Tsarev, *Deadly illusions* (NewYork: Crown 1993) p. 187.

³⁴ Christopher Andrew; Oleg Gordievsky, *KGB: the inside story of its foreign operations from Lenin to Gorbachev* (London: Hodder and Stoughton 1990) p.144. 'They included telegrams from the British embassy in Berlin reporting meetings with Hitler and other Nazi leaders.'

³⁵ Cornelissen p.157.

³⁶ West; Tsarev p.89.

³⁷ The minute sheets indicate the arrival of Pieck to have been on 7 January 1936. TNA, KV 2/809. No 42a.

³⁸ Costello; Tsarev p.199.

³⁹ According to Hooper, 'Peter' took over in May 1936. TNA KV 2/815. Hooper interview 19391006.

⁴⁰ West; Tsarev p.92.

⁴¹ It is not clear if Bill Hooper was identified in the files as 'John', given West's confusion over John and Jack.

⁴² West; Tsarev pp.92-93.

London, demonstrating that he had been under surveillance, and that the commercial attaché was connected with MI5. Hooper had learned from Parlanti the Westminster address of the company's offices, 34 Buckingham Gate, and received Pieck's undertaking that he would not use the premises for, and would no longer engage in, "non-sense".⁴³ Because Hooper knew of the Westminster safe house, Pieck alerted Krivitsky and told Mally to use another safe house. Perhaps Pieck did this in person, because MI5 recorded his arrival on 18 February 1936.⁴³ Regardless of Hooper's warning Pieck paid visits to Great Britain in October and November 1937 too.⁴⁴

There is a statement of Bill Hooper himself concerning part of his prewar activities. He was bound by the Official Secrets Act, but in a letter of 1941 to François van 't Sant, adviser to Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, he hinted at his work and 'its subsequent success which rid my country of several pests.'⁴⁵ 'In this particular work, which took me about 2½ year to finish, I showed and proved myself of sympathising with the Netherlands. At times I have been able, by warning you, to avert what might have become scandals in the permanent Dutch Official Class. I remind you of the case of Mr. de Carriere [who had been responsible for issuing Pieck's diplomatic pass⁴⁶], who was subconsciously used by one of the most clever G.P.U agents in Holland; that the Dutch Diplomatic bags were being used by the G.P.U.; that Dutch Government orders were being given to this G.P.U agent and which he used as a cloak for his subversive activities; that Dutch Diplomatic laissez-passers for journeys throughout Europe etc. etc. were used.'

In 1940 Pieck's former NKVD chief Walter Krivitsky told MI5 and MI6 that Hooper had been recruited by Pieck, but 'that he had produced no significant material – only "a very old British Black List". So Krivitsky suspected that he was a double agent and warned Pieck against him. Hooper was the source that British intelligence had consulted when checking out Krivitsky. It was spy vs. spy round and round.'⁴⁷

MI5's hunt for King

According to the official history of MI5, three pieces of information were important in the unmasking of King. On 22 January 1946 Michael Serpell of B Division noticed in a minute to major Maxwell Knight: 'It is remarkable how we seem to have been led to the detection and arrest of KING by three independent informants – "H[oopers]", Parlanti and Krivitsky.'⁴⁸ Serpell seems to have been a bit surprised.

In 1939 Pieck's business partner Parlanti contacted MI5 and stated that in 1935-1936 there had existed a photographic dark room at his offices, and that Pieck's wife had told him that Han had been obtaining documents from the Foreign Office through a cypher officer at the time. Pieck's partner had felt obliged to speak out, now that England was at war.⁴⁹ The second piece of information came from an MI6 agent who had been in touch with Pieck in the Netherlands. This agent had obtained the London address of Helen Wilkie from Pieck's personal papers. Its significance was not understood at the time, but after the disclosures in 1939 her name was recognized by MI5 as that of King's mistress. The most important information, a name, came from a Soviet defector.

On 4 September 1939⁵⁰ Permanent Undersecretary Sir Alexander Cadogan received a disturbing telegram from the Washington embassy.⁵¹ It gave him a 'line on the "leaks" of the last four years', originating from Pieck's former NKVD chief Krivitsky, who had defected. He had mentioned a Soviet agent named King, who was employed in the Communications Department of the Foreign Office.⁵² In view of King's position it is interesting to know by what channel this telegram reached Cadogan, and what the exact phrasing has been. Anyway, he almost immediately decided to reorganise this department, as is shown by his entry for 8 September: 'All

⁴³ TNA, KV 2/809. No 43a.

⁴⁴ TNA, KV 2/809. No's 103a, 104a, 105a, 106a.

⁴⁵ NA, Ministerie van Justitie Londen (hereafter JUSLON) (2.09.06), 10506. Letter 19410214 W.J. Hooper to Van 't Sant.

⁴⁶ L.F. Carrière had been head of the secretarial department of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1924 and as such responsible for handling the ministerial correspondence and the issuing of diplomatic passes to couriers. L.J. van Dijk, *Nederlandsche Staatsalmanak voor iedereen 1938* (Zaltbommel: Van de Garde 1937) p.416.

⁴⁷ Kern p.278.

⁴⁸ TNA, KV 2/811. No 213a.

⁴⁹ Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *The storm petrels: the first Soviet defectors, 1928-1938* (London: Collins 1977) p.177.

⁵⁰ Andrew p.432.

⁵¹ David Dilks [ed], *The diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan 1938-1945* (London: Cassell 1971) p.207. Dilks does not specify the exact date. TNA, KV 2/816. Report Leakage from the Communications Department Foreign Office 19391030 by Vivian. D. Cameron Watt, 'Francis Herbert King: a Soviet source in the Foreign Office', *Intelligence and national security*, volume 3, no 4 (1988) (pp.63-82) p.79. The wrong first name in the title was a mistake caused by another article on Francis Herbert. Letter 20040109 Watt to author. John Costello reads part of Cadogan's entry as 'of the past few years'. John Costello, *Mask of treachery: the first documented dossier on Blunt, MI5, and Soviet subversion* (London: Collins 1988) p.346. *The Security Service* p.190. According to Andrew Boyle, the counsellor at the embassy in Washington, Sir Victor Mallet, had sent 'to London a very detailed and secret dossier.' Andrew Boyle, *The climate of treason: five who spied for Russia* (London: Hutchinson 1979) p.199.

⁵² Brown erroneously maintains that King's activities were discovered much later: at the end of December 1939 or even in the beginning of 1940. Anthony Cave Brown, *"C": the secret life of Sir Stewart Graham Menzies, spymaster to Winston Churchill* (New York: Macmillan 1987) p.242.

sorts of bothers about Staff and reorganising Communications Department.’⁵³ It came down to moving or dismissing all staff.⁵⁴

Cadogan ordered a joint investigation by brigadier O.A. (Jasper) Harker, the head of MI5’s counter-espionage division, and colonel Vivian, the head of Section V in MI6. David Dilks, the editor of Cadogan’s diaries, stresses the point that the ‘Diary does not show how long Cadogan had known of this particular breach of security. Nor does it indicate what steps had been taken to counteract it.’⁵⁵ So maybe the joint investigation was the follow-up of an earlier one. In the minute sheets of Pieck’s MI5 file King was first mentioned on 17 September 1939: ‘B. note re report at 123a [a B.6 report about an interview with Parlanti] and KING case.’⁵⁶ In his diary entry of 21 September, Cadogan called the ‘revelations of leakages awful’.⁵⁷ On 26 September, the day after King’s arrest, he notes: ‘I have no doubt he is guilty – curse him, but there is no absolute proof’.⁵⁸ In late September King confessed. He told that from the middle of 1935 he had supplied documents to Pieck and to his successor Hardt. This man (in fact Mally) had become King’s case officer in January 1936, but the following year he fell victim to Stalin’s paranoia.⁵⁹ In June 1937 he was recalled to Moscow and after interrogation he was shot. Because he was suspected of having informed British intelligence of King’s duplicity, all contact with King was broken. Later the Soviets learned from their double agent Anthony Blunt that King had gone undetected by MI5 until his identification by Krivitsky.⁶⁰

On 18 October 1939 King was sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment for breaching the Official Secrets Act 1911.⁶¹ According to an MI5 official, the judge told King that he wondered ‘whether he ought to be trying the case at all. In other words whether it was not a matter for a court-martial.’⁶² On 18 June 1946 King was released from prison camp Hill on the Isle of Wight.⁶³ According to its Governor, King was becoming prematurely senile.⁶⁴ He was suffering from bad rheumatism and he was very enfeebled. ‘He stated most emphatically that his one aim in life, once he was released, was to forget all about the events which had brought about his conviction, and he reiterated what he said before, namely that if there is any assistance he could give the authorities, he would be only too willing to do so.’ His trial remained secret for the next seventeen years. On 7 June 1956 there was an official admission that King had been sentenced for ‘passing information to the Russian Government’.⁶⁵ ‘He had remission for good conduct and did not serve his full sentence.’⁶⁶ In 1985 Christopher Andrew considered King’s sentence to be a ‘modest’ one.⁶⁷ Richard Deacon stated: ‘The case of Captain King remains one of the enigmas of Russian penetration of Britain.’⁶⁸ And John Costello wrote: ‘The reluctance to explain the anomalies arising from the King case is one of the more puzzling skeletons in the MI5 closet.’⁶⁹ Well, it looks like MI5 is not to blame, because MI6 was aware of King’s activities well before 1939, and, by having Bill Hooper warn Han Pieck that his London contacts had aroused suspicion, probably had been trying to find out more about Soviet activities there. Because of MI6’s early knowledge of King’s activities, which it did not share with MI5, a possible solution to Deacon’s enigma presents itself in that King cooperated with (part of) MI6. The remission of his already ‘modest’ sentence can be explained in this way.⁷⁰

KING AND MI6

Shortly after the war King was described, although not by name, as a German agent by Stanley Firmin, clearly an author with some inside knowledge, in his book about espionage in Great Britain.⁷¹ ‘Special Branch officers had watched him for some time before the outbreak of war and there was no doubt he was supplying fairly valuable informations to the Germans.’⁷² King’s spying for the Germans has not been investigated. Firmin’s story

⁵³ Dilks p.214.

⁵⁴ Dilks p.208.

⁵⁵ Dilks p.208.

⁵⁶ TNA, KV 2/809. No 125a.

⁵⁷ Watt p.82.

⁵⁸ Watt p.82.\ Dilks p.208.

⁵⁹ Andrew; Mitrokhin pp.83, 102-104.

⁶⁰ Andrew; Mitrokhin p.119.

⁶¹ TNA, KV 2/815. Rex versus J.H. King 19391017.

⁶² Nigel West [ed], *The Guy Liddell diaries I, 1939-1942* (London: Routledge 2005) p.37.

⁶³ TNA, KV 2/816. Letter 19460619 Camp Hill to M. Knight.

⁶⁴ TNA, KV 2/816. Note 19460522 M. Knight (B5) for Marriot (F2c).

⁶⁵ Brook-Shepherd p.172.

⁶⁶ Richard Deacon, *A history of the Russian Secret Service* (London: Grafton 1987) p.218.

⁶⁷ Andrew p.432.\ Firmin tries to explain King’s modest sentence: ‘As he had had no opportunity of sending information to Germany after war had broken out [19390903] he was not arraigned on a capital charge. Instead he was sentenced to a term of penal servitude under the Defence of the Realm Act.’ Stanley Firmin, *They came to spy* (London: Hutchinson ny [1950]) p.54.

⁶⁸ Deacon p.220.

⁶⁹ Costello p.347.

⁷⁰ Boyle thought it to be a ‘stiff sentence’. Boyle p.201.

⁷¹ Firmin p.54.

⁷² According to Firmin, ‘a sum of no less than £5,000 was found in Bank of England notes, which were traced without much difficulty as having been sent from Germany.’ Firmin p.55.\ According to Vivian, a sum of £ 1,300 in various denominations of notes dated back to 1937

runs parallel to an article by Donald Cameron Watt in which he points to a similar connection.⁷³ He writes: 'There is no evidence that when King's activities were uncovered and investigated, he volunteered or the investigators required any information as to the passage of information to the German embassy.' Watt discovered that from April to August 1939 the German embassy in London received doctored British telegrams from an unknown source. The alterations tried to induce Hitler in signing a non-aggression pact with Stalin, something that, according to Krivitsky, Stalin already had aimed at since 1934.⁷⁴ Watt puts forward the hypothesis that it was the NKVD through King which supplied these telegrams. When asked in 2004 whether MI6 could have been involved, Watt would not support that theory.⁷⁵ 'I did not arrive at the King solution quickly. I considered all sorts of other possibilities but I could not come up with one that fitted either the timing or the motivation.'⁷⁶ These are indeed very problematic questions.

Timing

However, as the NKVD had put on hold the contacts with their agents, including Kim Philby and the other four, it does not seem credible that King's Soviet controllers were directly involved.⁷⁶ As Richard Aldrich points out, 'agent material was nearly always devalued by being up to a month late, reflecting an awkward compromise between the urgency of "hot" information during a crisis and the dangers of exposing a valuable agent through frequent contact with a controller.'⁷⁷ Nor, given the idiosyncrasies of diplomatic messages, is it plausible that the NKVD had London-based personnel capable of editing such telegrams.⁷⁸

There are some indications which favour the theory that MI6 supplied the telegrams. According to West and Tsarev, since the KGB-archives showed no record of any attempt to restore contact with King between 1937 and 1939, 'it must be assumed that none was made.'⁷⁹ It is, however, not beyond the KGB to have deleted some material from King's file, although Tsarev explained: 'To pull a single file, or set of files and trust [...] that they will provide all the information necessary to write up a case, is a great error. [...] Some of the reports in the files are not even stitched into the bound volumes in chronological order; others were extracted and have been placed into another case file relating to that operation, or in some cases turn up under an entirely different subject.'⁸⁰ Still, weeding is a method not exclusively limited to British or Dutch archives. Tsarev, somewhat naïve, thought it improbable that his KGB would stoop to such practices: 'Apart from the enormous investment of time and resources [into stitching into yellowing bindings] that would have to had to have been committed to such a deception, it would [have] be[en] highly damaging to the new image of Soviet openness to begin manufacturing historical forgeries whose only purpose would be to discredit me [...]'.⁸¹ Well, it all depends on the kind of deception. After all, deception had already been in the blood of the KGB and its predecessors for decades, and successfully at that.

A fellow-worker of Philby, Anthony Blunt, had succeeded in being employed by MI5, and he got hold of Pieck's MI5 file.⁸² According to this file it was in 1938 that MI6 reported to MI5 that Hooper was 'well acquainted with Pieck and was told by him that he had worked for Soviet Intelligence since 1930.' MI5 made inquiries and sent a letter to MI6 about Hardt (Mally) and his contacts in the Netherlands.⁸³ Could Pieck be bought to reveal all he knew? The investigation had to be stopped at this stage, however, since MI6 had cut off contact with Hooper and did not wish to resume it. Later Hooper told MI5 that he had gone to London and was told his story was 'ridiculous. Three weeks after I received a letter saying my services could no longer be used.'⁸⁴ He tried once more. 'I telephoned to London, although I was down and out. I got through to [omitted], and when he heard my voice he dropped the phone and then a secretary told me he was not in. I telephoned again and said I

or previously, and had been traced to the account of Pieck and to Mally alias Paul Hardt. NA, KV 2/816. Report 19391030 by Vivian.

⁷³ Watt p.78.

⁷⁴ According to MI5, 'Krivitsky confirmed and elaborated some previous rather sketchy information concerning collaboration between certain officers of the German and Russian Secret Intelligence Services. There was not sufficient evidence to justify the statement that they were in fate [sic] collaborating against ourselves [MI5] at the end of 1939 although Krivitsky was definitely of opinion that after the pact between Stalin and Hitler there could be no doubt that the two organisations would be working together in this country and that it could be taken as certain that the Soviet diplomatic bag, which was always used for Soviet espionage material, was being used for the despatch to Berlin and elsewhere of the fruits of German espionage. This last statement [...] was never substantiated and seems improbable in the light of later information.' *The Security Service*, p.192.

⁷⁵ Letter 20040109 Watt to author.

⁷⁶ Andrew; Mitrokhin p.109-110.

⁷⁷ Richard J. Aldrich, *The hidden hand: Britain, America and Cold War secret intelligence* (London: John Murray 2002) p.423.

⁷⁸ It is even less likely the telegrams were edited in Moscow, given the time required for the extra elements: the coding process in London, the decoding in Moscow, the editing and obtaining permission for the results thereof, the coding in Moscow, and the decoding in London. Watt mentions one telegram which needed only 12 hours for the whole process, including King's supplying it to his case officer, the deliverance to the German embassy and its being coded there.

⁷⁹ West; Tsarev p.94.

⁸⁰ Costello; Tsarev pp.xx-xxi.

⁸¹ Costello; Tsarev p.498.

⁸² West; Tsarev p.287. In June 1941 Moscow received from Blunt a copy of the complete debriefing of Krivitsky. Kern p.285.

⁸³ West; Tsarev pp.287-288.

⁸⁴ TNA, KV 2/815. Hooper interview 19391006.

had most important papers which I wanted to bring over. I was told that my information was not required and they wished to have no more to do with me.' Here it must be remembered that Hooper was fired officially in September 1936. A possible trace of the events in 1938 can be reconstructed by studying the minute sheets.⁸⁵ In March 1938 MI5 received from MI6 a communication regarding Pieck. That same month and in April questions to MI6 were asked and the service replied on 12 May. A written comment on the minute sheet dated 13 May stated: 'How disappointing!'

In October 1939 the official report by MI6's head of counter espionage Vivian on the leakage states that Hooper had communicated his findings piecemeal to MI6.⁸⁶ 'The full story was therefore in the possession of the S.I.S. nearly two years ago and, though in no consecutive form, could have been acted upon then had it been credited. It was, however, treated with coldness and even derision, largely as a result of the prejudice against "X" [Hooper] himself. [...] The fact remains that no vigorous enquiries were made on "X's" information, which, up to the 15th September 1939, remained forgotten and in abeyance.' Given the MI5 enquiries in March and April 1938 this must be called sheer incompetence.

Or was it?

On 12 September 1939 MI5 was informed by Parlanti about his former business partner Pieck.⁸⁷ Blunt registered a hiatus in the file and it seemed to him that at the point where the hiatus occurred, a report was received from Krivitsky.⁸⁸ If the file was in chronological order, it is a strange one, because it was on 4 September 1939 that Cadogan received the disturbing telegram from Washington.

On 31 October Pieck's name was put on the Black List, 'to report arrival'.⁸⁹ In November 1939 Hooper handed MI5 a letter, written by Pieck to Parlanti, in which he asked Parlanti to help him with his difficulties.⁹⁰ This was mentioned in the minute sheets: '15.11.39. Photostat copies of letter from PIECK to Parlanti with covering letter from H.'⁹¹ MI5 conceived a plan to lure Pieck into the country so he could be arrested, but it all came to nothing.

Blunt was surprised to note that 'although Hardt [Mally] was recognised by everyone as an important figure in the case, no serious attempts were made to keep a close watch on him.'⁹² Well, it was in 1938 that MI6 reported to MI5 about Pieck and his successor Mally, who by then already had left the country.⁹³ MI5 did try to find out more about Mally, but MI6 declined to cooperate.⁹⁴

Hooper did not tell MI5 about his explicit warning to Pieck or about his showing him Pieck's 'MI5 file'. Neither did he tell that, because of his (and MI6's) knowledge of the safe house at the end of 1935 or at the beginning of 1936, he knew of Mally's existence. Subsequent observation of this safe house by the counter-espionage section in MI6 might already have revealed King's identity in 1935-1936, or in 1936-1937 by following Mally. Hooper's reticence is understandable, because awkward questions by MI5 had to be avoided at all costs. In 1939 MI5 asked him: 'In one report you mentioned an office in Buckingham Gate. Is that the one?'⁹⁵ Hooper replied: 'Yes, that is the one. I have no records and my memory is not very fresh.'

In May 1940 Bill's brother Jack became head of the Dutch Country Section in MI5, in 1941 to be called E1a in E-Division.⁹⁶ There he saw a MI5-file on King, containing MI6 reports. Although an agent number had been deleted, he could link the events mentioned in those reports, which, according to Jack, had taken place before September 1939, with his brother Bill.⁹⁷

Intelligence is basically a question of nuts and bolts, and so is writing about it. It certainly is not about the glamour of James Bond, and some historians show reluctance in writing about it. Their attitude, their distaste of minor

⁸⁵ TNA, KV 2/809. No's 107a-128a.

⁸⁶ TNA, KV 2/816. Report 19391030 by Vivian.

⁸⁷ West; Tsarev p.288. Parlanti's name indeed appeared for the first time in the minute sheets on 19390912. TNA, KV 2/809. No 122a. Vivian wrongly states that this happened on 15 September. TNA, KV 2/816. Report 19391030 by Vivian.

⁸⁸ West; Tsarev p.289.

⁸⁹ TNA, KV 2/810. Tussen 134g en 134h.

⁹⁰ West; Tsarev p.292.

⁹¹ TNA, KV 2/810. No 144a.

⁹² West; Tsarev p.292.

⁹³ Mally left the country on 19370624. He was sentenced to death on 19380920. TNA, KV 2/816. Report 19391030 by Vivian. Costello; Tsarev p.207.

⁹⁴ Kern points out that Krivitsky identified Simon Kremer, the Fourth Department resident in London, in 1940. Yet MI5 took no action. That's why 'Kremer was available in the autumn of 1941 to handle Klaus Fuchs, who walked into the Soviet embassy in London wanting to turn over atomic secrets to the Bolsheviks. The next year Ursula Kuczynski ("Red Sonia") took over Fuchs, and two years later he went to Los Alamos. No one was watching.' Kern p.271.

⁹⁵ TNA, KV 2/815. Hooper interview 19391006.

⁹⁶ In May 1943 H. Hooper took a security course in the Intelligence Corps. A year later he became conducting officer in N Section in SOE, but he was destined for the interrogation of SOE agents abroad. In September 1944 he was posted to 3 Special Force, but in October he was attached to the staff of prince Bernhard. He left SOE on 19451015, and was demobilised in December 1946. He resumed his prewar career at BPM/Shell. Kluiters pp.319-320.

⁹⁷ After a conversation with the author in 1992 H. Hooper declined to elaborate on this file in writing. He stated the facts therein were already known to him during the years 1933-1936. 'Mentioning this file was solely for the purpose of illustration and not meant for publication.' Letter 19920330 H. Hooper to author.

details, is hampering the writing of intelligence history. It is a pity, and a challenge at the same time, that some nuts are hard to unscrew (metaphorically too). Only painstakingly researching futile details, with an open mind to the wilderness of mirrors, will result in a plausible representation of the real history of intelligence, in which a mass of detail is necessary. Such a representation, however, will probably always lack certain facts.⁹⁸ Furthermore, Anthony Glees has written in his study of communism and the British secret services: 'It is my guess that the informal networks were the most devastating route that Communist subversion took. In the realm of secret policy, the records of these networks are hard to establish in terms of written reports and documentary evidence. In addition, by its very nature, British politics consists in large part of informal networks, advice proffered by old friends, school and university chums, exchanged at dinner or in bars and only very rarely recorded on a document, even if sometimes noted in a private diary or retained as a lively reminiscence.'⁹⁹ In March 2000 even Michael Foot felt compelled to note in his foreword to William Mackenzie's history of SOE: 'It also deserves recall that, in a secret service, there are bound to be a few points so secret that nothing gets put on paper about them at all.'¹⁰⁰

Because of the discrepancies, the full story about King cannot be written yet. However, given MI6's knowledge of King prior to September 1939, it is possible to develop a theory in which MI6 used King to try to influence German policy.¹⁰¹ This is the second problem that Watt referred to: motivation.

Motivation

In order to clarify this theory one must understand some aspects of politics at the time. According to Watt, Neville Chamberlain had been at the centre of rearmament since the inception of a committee of senior civil servants and military advisers in 1934, and had urged and pressed it forward, expressly relating it to the treat from Germany.¹⁰² Already in the autumn of 1935 this committee, recommending a comprehensive scheme for British rearmament, named 1939 as the year of maximum danger.¹⁰³ 'It seemed almost essential to attempt to limit the causes of conflict and to "appease" as far as possible one or more of the potential enemies.'¹⁰⁴ In 1938, now as Prime Minister, Chamberlain succeeded in persuading Hitler to sign a declaration of Anglo-German friendship, thereby giving Great Britain an opportunity to continue the rearmament. This was no dishonourable action, but a realistic one. He seems to have disliked public opinion, so he concealed much of the truth, thereby woefully damaging his public standing. There is always a fairly wide gap between the arguments that governments use behind closed doors and their public defence of them. Watt wrote: 'Never was the gap as wide or as absolute as under Neville Chamberlain.'¹⁰⁵

Historian Wesley K. Ward wrote: 'In the event, the German invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939, proved that Hitler was not content with a psychological war alone, negated the hopes placed in deterrence, and quickly proved the eastern front a mirage. In purely military terms, the COS had embraced an eastern front strategy at the wrong time. It was a year too late in terms of building a formidable eastern barrier with the chance of Czechoslovakian and Russian assistance and at least a year too early in terms of the hoped-for improvements in British and French defences. The breathing space the Allies gained by the German attack on Poland was nine months long, and for the French, it was not long enough. The hope that the East would absorb enough German military resources to prevent a knockout blow against the West became a reality only after the German invasion of Russia in the summer of 1941.'¹⁰⁶ A basis for possible machinations was outlined in Brown's book about Sir Stewart Graham Menzies, but it is not within the scope of this article to speculate about this theory.¹⁰⁷ It is based on a paper, prepared by MI6 for Chamberlain, 'on what Britain should or could do to restrain Hitler without war'. Although acknowledging the rarity of such documents, Brown fails to mention where this paper can be examined, thereby reducing the validity of it.

⁹⁸ For instance, the minute sheets of TNA file KV 2/811 indicate that the first volume has been lost before 22 January 1946. In February 2004 the author was able to visit the TNA in Kew for the first time. On that occasion, his time there was limited to two days because of lack of financial resources. In an almost desperate attempt to gather as much information as possible, he researched the King files, and, in order to save time, make copies of some of the documents. There seemed to be no missing file. However, he was somewhat disappointed to hear that the files on Pieck and Krivitsky were in use.

⁹⁹ Anthony Glees, *The secrets of the Service: a story of Soviet subversion of Western Intelligence* (New York: Carroll & Graf 1987) p.66. Although writing about Krivitsky, Glees omitted mentioning King.

¹⁰⁰ W.J.M. Mackenzie, *The secret history of SOE: the Special Operations Executive 1940-1945* (London: St Ermin's Press 2000) p.xv.

¹⁰¹ It is even possible that MI6 was somehow involved in falsifying a report on Chamberlain's conversation with Mussolini in January 1939. Watt describes it as a 'garbled version' of the conversation: 'almost the exact reverse of what Chamberlain had actually said.' Donald Cameron Watt, *How war came: the immediate origins of the Second World War, 1938 - 1939* (New York: Pantheon 1989) pp.117-118.

¹⁰² Watt p.77.

¹⁰³ Watt p.26.

¹⁰⁴ Watt p.27.

¹⁰⁵ Watt p.79.

¹⁰⁶ Wesley K. Wark, *The ultimate enemy: British Intelligence and Nazi Germany 1933 - 1939* (London: Tauris 1985) p.222.

¹⁰⁷ Brown pp.190-199.

Already in February 1939 the Foreign Office was aware of a possible rapprochement between Germany and the Soviet Union and thought the development of any such tendency should be watched 'very carefully'.¹⁰⁸ It appears that it had knowledge of a meeting of the German military High Command with Von Ribbentrop and Göring towards the end of January 1939.¹⁰⁹ According to a record which had fallen into Czech hands through intelligence sources, the military argued that the East could be divided between a rump Poland, Great Ukraine and Russia. In his book *How war came* Watt wrote: 'Ribbentrop's counter-arguments laid great weight on Germany acting in concert with Italy and Japan. She was not yet strong enough to act on her own. If she attacked Poland and Russia in 1939 Italy would be exposed to the combined weight of the Western democracies, and Germany would find herself isolated. Moreover, in the year or two it would take to get a decision in the East, Germany would have committed her war industry and armaments while those of the West were still developing their strength.'¹¹⁰ Von Ribbentrop stressed the need for Polish neutrality to be completely guaranteed.

Von Ribbentrop's arguments must have been appreciated by Chamberlain. Here a motive can be discerned for Chamberlain to order MI6 to promote a pact between Germany and the Soviet Union. At the time Soviet strength was dismissed as being in no condition to wage war effectively¹¹¹, and it would buy him time for rearmament.¹¹² Negotiations with the Soviets in May 1939, forced upon Chamberlain by both Parliament and Cabinet, he could ingeniously sabotage. In this he was inadvertently helped by, according to Watt, presumably King's reporting to the NKVD (and, in slightly altered form, to the Germans).¹¹³

In March 1939 there were tentative approaches from the German side aimed at reaching an agreement with the Soviets.¹¹⁴ It is possible that rumours about the rapprochement reached the Foreign Office in April. After all, they already were aware of the possibility in February 1939. This was good news. In regard to talks between the British government and the Soviets about an agreement for mutual assistance, Cadogan wrote on 18 April 1939: 'We have to balance the advantage of a paper commitment by Russia to join in a war on one side against the disadvantage of associating ourselves openly with Russia.'¹¹⁵ A week later agreement was reached about turning the Soviets down.¹¹⁶ On 20 May 1939 Chamberlain said to Cadogan that he would 'resign rather than sign alliance with Soviet.'¹¹⁷ Perhaps he was less frank on 10 July, when he told the Cabinet's Foreign Policy Committee: 'So long as the military conversations were taking place we should be preventing Soviet Russia from entering the German camp.'¹¹⁸ But most probably Stalin already knew better, because Soviet agent Burgess had told his NKVD case officer: 'Prime Minister's office openly says that "they thought they could avoid a pact with the Russians"' (the actual words used by the secretary of Horace Wilson).¹¹⁹ Such inside information reaching the Kremlin could only have reinforced Stalin's conviction that the negotiators were not seriously interested in a treaty, and was therefore a vital factor in bringing about the Nazi-Soviet pact.

Interesting, but difficult to read, is a remark from Sinclair, chief of MI6, to a friend of his who commanded the British Staff mission in Moscow: 'It is an infernal shame that they should send you out to Moscow to try to clear up the mess that has been made out there by the politicians.'¹²⁰ His remark seems to indicate a lack of respect for political activities, although it remains unclear whose in particular. In August it was noted that MI6 had not provided any clear pointer to the imminence or nature of the German-Russian agreement, concluded on 23 August 1939.¹²¹ If MI6 had been involved in promoting such an agreement, this lack of pointers does seem logical.

Historian Richard Aldrich pointed out that for intelligence and security officers the near-enemy status of the Soviet Union was not an unwelcome development.¹²² The Nazi-Soviet Pact came close to causing the collapse of many Western communist parties, so recruiting dissident members became easy. On 4 October 1939 Rex Leeper¹²³ – in 1938 Cadogan had characterised him as 'very anti-Chamberlain' – stressed that the emergence of

¹⁰⁸ Dilks p.146.

¹⁰⁹ Watt pp.69, 630.

¹¹⁰ Watt p.70.

¹¹¹ Watt p.102.

¹¹² Historian John Charmley wrote: 'Chamberlain had answers to the various questions posed by the problem of rearmament. He assumed that Germany would be the main enemy in case of war, so his diplomacy first set out to detach Mussolini from the "axis" with Hitler – which was why Eden had to go in February 1938 when he could not seem to see the need to recognize the Italian conquest of Abyssinia. Priority would be given to fighter aircraft, the defensive system which became known as "radar", and to a mechanized army; the programme was due to reach a peak in 1939, and it was not entirely coincidental that Chamberlain felt able to take a tougher line with Hitler that year.' John Charmley, *A history of conservative politics 1900-1996* (London: Macmillan 1996) p.101.

¹¹³ Watt pp.247-249.

¹¹⁴ Watt pp.229-230.

¹¹⁵ Dilks p.175.

¹¹⁶ Dilks p.177.

¹¹⁷ Dilks p.182.

¹¹⁸ Watt p.453.

¹¹⁹ Costello; Tsarev p.240.

¹²⁰ Sinclair cited in Watt p.453.

¹²¹ Dilks p.201.

¹²² Aldrich p.24.

¹²³ Sir Reginald Wildig Allen 'Rex' Leeper (1888-1968) joined the Intelligence Bureau, Department of Information, 1917; entered Foreign Office 1918; Counsellor 1933; head of the News Department; acting Assistant Under-Secretary of State, August 1940. Dilks p.836.

‘Godless Bolshevik Russia’ was the unexpected event of the first months of the war and that by his pact with Stalin, Hitler had ‘given the Allies the strongest propaganda weapon that could have been forged’.¹²⁴

Already at the end of 1938 Leeper, as head of the Foreign Office News Department, had been involved in the organizing of propaganda.¹²⁵ According to Leeper, various other propaganda techniques were also considered: ‘various other methods were being tried by the SIS which for obvious reasons he could not enlarge on.’¹²⁶ He had hinted at Section D, a new section of MI6 which probably resulted from Chamberlain’s authorization to MI6 to find ways for restraining Hitler without war.¹²⁷ According to Brown, Chamberlain wanted ‘under no circumstances [...] any agreement, written or spoken, with the Soviet Union. She remained *the* enemy. A second but no less important aspect of the policy was that under no circumstances should England fight Germany again.’ He played for time in which to rearm with the only weapon at hand, concessions to Hitler. This is consistent with peace negotiations, conducted with dissenting factions within Hitler’s regime, directed through, amongst others, officers of MI6.

In May 1939 the Foreign Office drafted a telegram to Berlin and Rome, and asked Chief of MI6 Sinclair that messages based on its paragraph three should be planted ‘wherever you think they would be most likely to be effective’.¹²⁸ That paragraph three contained the sentence that if by any employment of force by Germany ‘the Danzig situation so developed as to justify the Polish Government in invoking our guarantee there is no doubt that both we and the French would come in and that many other States would be likely to join us.’ This was not true, as the French had opted for a different approach to the problem.¹²⁹ Two months later, a bogus Cabinet decision was drafted for MI6 to communicate to the Germans, in which the Cabinet decided to adopt the advice of the Foreign Office, and to regard any attempt by the German Government to force the issue at Danzig [the free city in Poland but historically German] as a *casus belli*.

On 23 July 1939 Chamberlain had remarked in a letter to his sister: ‘Hitler has now realized that he cannot get anything else without a major war and has decided to put Danzig into cold storage. In the meantime, there are other and discreeter channels by which contact can be maintained, for it is important that those in Germany who would like to see us come to an understanding should not be discouraged.’¹³⁰ Later, after the outbreak of war, one of these contacts resulted in the unfortunate Venlo incident, involving MI6 officers S.P. Best and R.H. Stevens, and the death of the Dutch lieutenant D. Klop on 9 November 1939.

In July 1940 Leeper was appointed head of SO1 which was to become the Political Warfare Executive, an organisation in charge of subversive propaganda to occupied Europe.¹³¹ He retained his position as head of the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office. Had he himself perhaps been involved in forging that ‘strongest propaganda weapon’?

HOOPER AND THE GERMAN ABWEHR

According to Farago, shortly before the war Hooper ‘confessed’ to the Passport Control Office that he had ‘played a little ball’ with the Germans.¹³² He had indeed been playing, but not in the way Farago described.

Shortly after the suicide of Dalton, the chief of MI6, Sinclair, decided to dispense with the services of the entire PCO staff in The Hague.¹³³ What appears to be plain madness may well have had an underlying motive. It is possible that Valentine Vivian, at the time head of counter-espionage (Section V),¹³⁴ used the suicide

¹²⁴ Dilks p.75.\ Leeper cited in David Garnett, *The secret history of PWE: the Political Warfare Executive 1939-1945* (London: St Ermin’s Press 2002) p.16.

¹²⁵ Ellic Howe, *The black game: British subversive operations against the Germans during the Second World War* (London: Queen Anne Press 1988) p.27.\ On 19380927 (Charles) Vernon Bartlett, Member of Parliament and diplomatic correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, sent a ‘Memorandum on Propaganda to Germany’ to Leeper. An opponent of appeasement, he wrote: ‘Every day of this hesitation [to drop bombs on Germany] should be a British victory since it should be devoted to flooding enemy territory with propaganda.’ According to Hooper, Bartlett knew Pieck. A year later he became head of the Intelligence Department of PWE. Garnett pp.2, 15.\ TNA, KV 2/815. Hooper interview 19391006.

¹²⁶ Leeper cited in Howe p.27.

¹²⁷ Brown pp.187-190.

¹²⁸ Gill Bennett; Christopher Baxter, *The records of the Permanent Under-Secretary’s Department: liaison between the Foreign Office and British Secret Intelligence, 1873-1939* (March 2005) [20060617].

¹²⁹ During the British-French Staff talks on 3 May 1939, the British military learned that in the event of a German attack against Poland the French Army did not intend to launch operations along the Western front, but would prepare for an offensive against Italy. The British found this fact highly disturbing because it meant that the concept of threatening Hitler with war on two fronts was beginning to break down. Obviously, the Western allies did not intend to make these plans known to the Polish side. Tessa Stirling ea [ed], *Intelligence co-operation between Poland and Great Britain during World War II: volume I: the report of the Anglo-Polish Historical Committee* (London: Vallentine Mitchell 2005) pp.172-173.

¹³⁰ Chamberlain cited in Watt p.401.

¹³¹ Garnett p.36.

¹³² Farago p.122.

¹³³ They were Dalton, Bill Hooper, F.U. Taylor, Jack Hooper and W.E. Lambert. The new PCO, major M.R. Chidson, saw fit to sack Lambert on his deathbed. Jack Hooper wrote: ‘Suffering from a disease that caused his extremities to turn black and mortify [trenchfeet], he died in excruciating pain and in the knowledge that his wife was left with six months’ [severance] pay. His widow was so enraged that she threatened to shoot the Major. He informed the Dutch police, who searched her house at his request and confiscated a pistol.’

¹³⁴ West p.62.\ Andrew pp.345-346.

episode in 1936 to strengthen Hooper's cover as a double agent. Sacking the entire PCO staff could be seen as dissatisfaction with their performance. If the outside world were to be told of Bill Hooper's 'outrageous' behaviour, he would be seen as a man not to be trusted, and without an income. Such a man would fit the profile of someone ready to do a disservice to his country. Another example of such a ruse can be found in the dismissal of Claude Dansey in the same year 1936.¹³⁵ According to the journalists Anthony Read and David Fisher it was Dansey who put to Sinclair the proposition to keep the PCO in The Hague running 'as though head office was unaware that it had been penetrated. The agents working from it would go on exactly as before. [...] Dansey proposed to take the system one important step further, into a triple cross. As long as the Germans could be made to believe that the British were unaware of what was going on, the blown elements of the SIS could be isolated and used as a perfect decoy. If they did not know that the British were setting up a replacement organisation, the Abwehr would have no reason to go looking for it, but would be content to concentrate on their "successful" surveillance and misinformation operation.'¹³⁶

Hoogeveen

In those prewar days the Netherlands as a neutral state were an ideal place for agents of several nations, and the German military intelligence and security service Abwehr was keenly interested in activities opposed to German interests. One of the Abwehr officers involved in counter-espionage was Kapitän zur See T.A.R. Protze.¹³⁷

He had recruited several Dutch agents and one of them was Klaas Hoogeveen.¹³⁸ In 1915 Hoogeveen had been fired as a policeman on the suspicion of having taken a bribe from a German agent.¹³⁹ Subsequently he was recruited by the German Marinenachrichtenstelle at Antwerp, and he and his informers reported on flotsam and jetsam and bodies of German or British sailors, as these were indications of German victory or loss at sea. After the First World War he was without an income, but incidentally performed jobs for the Germans and others. According to him they were innocent ones, like the one Dalton of PCO Rotterdam had given him. About 1923 Dalton had asked him to investigate the smuggling of arms from German and Baltic ports to India. In about two weeks Hoogeveen was able to inform Dalton and received 600 Dutch guilders, a large amount of money in those days.

Early in 1936 Hoogeveen was introduced to Protze alias Manning and he was recruited as an Abwehr agent. He had to investigate Germans living in the Netherlands suspected of actively opposing the Nazi regime. Hoogeveen tried to supplement his income with business activities. In the summer of 1937 for example he had in commission a German patent which he tried to sell through a patent bureau owned by Bill Hooper and Han Pieck. In February 1936 Pieck had moved to a stately house in The Hague, paid for by the NKVD in order to give him a cover.¹⁴⁰ After his dismissal from the PCO in September 1936, Hooper got into financial difficulties – he had for instance to discharge his Austrian maid Anna – and he was forced to move to a less expensive house.¹⁴¹ In October 1939 he told MI5: 'I had got into a state where my financial position was very precarious, and for a month I was very worried indeed. This was the end of 1936.' In September or October 1936 he had accepted an offer from Pieck to join his firm: ' "What about you coming in with me 50 50?" which was a big chance for me. So I went into business with him. For the first month or so I did not have the heart [or chance] to look into his filing system. We interviewed all sorts of people – patent holders, people wishing to sell things in England; as a matter of fact a little business was done in the Hague.' According to Hoogeveen, he knew Hooper had worked for the British during the First World War (given Bill Hooper's year of birth, 1905, he seems to have been somewhat young for that), but he was unaware of any intelligence link in 1937. During his contact with Hooper the assignments from Protze ceased. In 1938 Protze showed Hoogeveen the patent description the latter had presented to Hooper. Hoogeveen concluded that Protze's distrust of him was due to his trying to sell the patent, and that Hooper had to be a German agent who had warned Protze of Hoogeveen's selling German 'secrets'. Thus Hooper had sown the seeds of suspicion, thereby cutting out Hoogeveen temporarily.¹⁴²

In February 1938 Hooper and former PCO officer Frank Taylor¹⁴³ established a company called Anglo-American Agencies.¹⁴⁴ Probably this firm was only a new cover for Hooper's counter-espionage activities – like

¹³⁵ Anthony Read; David Fisher, *Colonel Z: the secret life of a master of spies* (New York: Viking 1985) p.172.

¹³⁶ Read; Fisher pp.173-174.

¹³⁷ Traugott Andreas Richard Protze, 18760718 Barnewitz (Germany).

¹³⁸ Klaas Hoogeveen, 18820623 Hardenberg – 19510713.

¹³⁹ Archief Ministerie van Justitie (hereafter AMJ), Centraal Archief Bijzondere Rechtspleging (hereafter CABR), K. Hoogeveen. Reports 19470207 and 19470209.

¹⁴⁰ 'Sunny Home', Emmapark 3 The Hague.\ Cornelissen p.174.

¹⁴¹ TNA, KV 2/815. Hooper interview 19391006.

¹⁴² On 19490503 Hoogeveen was released on parole.

¹⁴³ Frank Uttley Taylor, 18901008 Burton-on-Trent.

¹⁴⁴ Archief Kamer van Koophandel Haaglanden. Charter of Anglo-American Agencies (nv io). Apparently on 19381115 this firm already had served its purpose, because it was then registered in the name of E. Kempen, who two weeks later named someone else (O.G. Sterkenburg) as the new owner.

his job as representative in Belgium of the Dutch airplane builder Frits Koolhoven¹⁴⁵ – because he and Taylor had a meeting with Abwehr officers in Switzerland.¹⁴⁶ Around this time, Hooper had a meeting with staff members of Abwehrstelle (Ast) Hamburg in the south of Germany, during which a bunch of PCO-agent reports were exchanged for money.¹⁴⁷ It looks like a tempting appetizer had been offered.

The business world seems to have been an important playing field for Bill Hooper, because in or about 1937 we find him as a representative of an engineering office in The Hague, owned by M.J.A. van Dugteren^{148, 149}. This electrotechnical engineer was thought to have had contacts with persons suspected of spying for Germany. Being a representative would be good cover to investigate such suspicions. During the interrogations after the war Hoogeveen has shown a somewhat hazy memory – he was 64 years old at the time – and it is possible that his story about the patent and Hooper might be connected to this engineering office of Van Dugteren instead of to a patent office of Hooper and Pieck. According to Hooper, his business contact with Pieck had ended in January 1937.

Hooper's representation of the Koolhoven firm in Belgium, starting in July 1938, is less easy to explain. According to A.F. Grote (to be introduced later), Hooper had been introduced to Koolhoven by captain Jerry Wright¹⁵⁰, a director of a paint factory, and, like Hooper, an agent of the PCO. Grote was right, because Wright is known to have been employed by Stevens for trying to obtain information on certain suspicious characters.¹⁵¹ In November 1938 Hooper had moved to Brussels and a few days later he registered someone else as the owner of the Anglo-American Agencies.¹⁵² It is only known that about July 1939 he was informed by Koolhoven that his job would end on 1 August 1939.¹⁵³ Already in 1936 the minute sheets of file KV 2/809 in The National Archives noted: 'We are now informed by S.I.S. that there is reason to believe that [Dirk] BUISMAN is responsible for supplying to a firm in Paris details of aeroplane construction belonging to one of S.I.S.'s contacts, who is concerned in aeroplane designing in Holland.' Perhaps Hooper was meant. In 1940 or 1941 he was described as one John who was a father of three children, representative of machines, and later to have worked for Koolhoven.¹⁵⁴ He was about 1.68 meter long, around 37 years of age (a fair estimate), with a slim posture, medium full face and very blond hair.

Hauptmann Giskes

In January 1939 Hauptmann Hermann Giskes¹⁵⁵ was attached to Abwehr III, the counter-espionage division of Ast Hamburg, and in April 1939 he was ordered to have a 'Treff' with Hooper in Cologne.¹⁵⁶ Since Giskes was still under training as a CE-officer, evidently his superiors considered this meeting as of minor importance or just routine.¹⁵⁷ In exchange for information about PCO The Hague Giskes would have to hand over some money.¹⁵⁸ According to Giskes, Hooper proposed the following: if the Abwehr paid him 500 Dutch guilders a month, a royal sum in those days, Hooper would send someone to one of his acquaintances, an architect called 'Piek', who was a former Soviet operator. Pieck would be approached under the flag of the NKVD in order to 'reinstate' him as an agent. According to Hooper, Pieck had a very friendly relationship with a female secretary of 'Lord Van Sittard', who, like Pieck, had contacts with the NKVD. This Lord was of course Sir Robert Vansittart, the former Chief diplomatic adviser to the Foreign Secretary.¹⁵⁹ According to Gleses, Vansittart had described the entire German people as a 'race of bone-headed aggressors ... the scum of the earth'.¹⁶⁰ The possible connection be-

¹⁴⁵ Hooper had a Belgian address at the time: Pension Haute, Boitsfort, Brussels. NA JL ds 140 250. Letter 19410526 W.J. Hooper to Van 't Sant with enclosure photocopy letter 19390704 Koolhoven to Hooper. He had moved to Brussels on 19381111.

¹⁴⁶ AMJ CABR, F.A. van Koutrik. Report 19470318, extract of interrogation report concerning Protze.

¹⁴⁷ 'Diese Akte speziell stellte einen ziemlich umfangreichen Band dar. Sie trug Bleistiftbemerkungen, die Gutachten darstellten seitens des führenden Referenten im PPCO.' NA BNV, 2933. Undated and anonymous report [by Protze].

¹⁴⁸ Matthias Jacobus Arnoldus van Dugteren, 18880614 Rotterdam – 19640315.

¹⁴⁹ JUSLON, 4751. Note 19420518 concerning M.J.A. van Dugteren.

¹⁵⁰ BNV, 2374. Harold Ralph (Jerry) Wright, 18960617 Newark.

¹⁵¹ NARA, RG 226 E119A B9 F270. Summary of traces 19441228.

¹⁵² Archief Kamer van Koophandel, 25114.

¹⁵³ JUSLON, 3240. Letter 19410526 Hooper to Van 't Sant with enclosure.

¹⁵⁴ NIOD, 215, CDI, Volksgerichtshof, box 19a, folder Majoor.

¹⁵⁵ Hermann Joseph Giskes, 18960928 Krefeld (Germany).

¹⁵⁶ BNV, 2689. Interrogation report 19461127, concerning Giskes. AMJ CABR, F.A. van Koutrik. Report 19470318, interrogation of Giskes.

¹⁵⁷ In 1946 Giskes' interrogator concluded that Giskes, as a novice, was only being shown the ropes till June 1940. West calls Giskes (in *MI 6*, p.51) incorrectly a 'counter-intelligence expert'; Protze certainly would not have passed on Hooper to such a inexperienced officer.

¹⁵⁸ According to Protze, this money originated from the PCO. A member of the PCO staff had recruited the German F.W.L.K. (Friedrich) Günther who was really working for Ast Hamburg. He was paid large sums of money for his 'information' about Germany, money he had to hand over to his case officer of the Ast. Thus one double agent was indirectly 'paying' another double agent.

¹⁵⁹ Robert Gilbert Vansittart, Baron Vansittart (1881-1957), entered Foreign Office as attaché in Paris, 1903; private secretary to Secretary of State, 1920-1924; private secretary to Prime Minister, 1928-1930; Permanent Under-Secretary, 1930-1938; Chief diplomatic adviser to the Foreign Secretary, 1938-1941. When E.H. (Hugh) Dalton was nominated chairman of SOE in July 1940, with authority to co-ordinate Section D, MI(R) and Department EH, Vansittart became his principal adviser. Dalton 'empowered him to recruit such additional staff as they might find necessary.' Garnett pp.35-36. Mackenzie pp.75, 754.

¹⁶⁰ Vansittart cited in Gleses p.121.

tween Hooper and Vansittart is intriguing, because the latter had developed a private detective agency, dealing in German intelligence.¹⁶¹ This agency was described by Gleses as: ‘Another one [of the networks] involved no less a personage than Lord Vansittart. Indeed this was, perhaps, the most paradoxical network of all, because it proved that people could end up doing one thing in the mistaken belief that they were actually doing something completely different. This particular network was a mixture of formal and informal structures.’¹⁶² One of its agents was Freiherr Wolfgang von und zu Putlitz, the second man of the German legation in The Hague.¹⁶³ According to Ellic Howe, someone connected to the Political Warfare Executive, it had been Zu Putlitz who had leaked to London the news of Ribbentrop’s forthcoming journey to Moscow to sign the non-aggression pact with Stalin.¹⁶⁴ Zu Putlitz did not mention this in his book, nor was he very forthcoming in mentioning persons in relation to his spying, but he did write about ‘one Vansittart or one Cooper’.¹⁶⁵ He most probably meant Alfred Duff Cooper¹⁶⁶, till 1 October 1938 First Lord of the Admiralty.¹⁶⁷ In the beginning of 1938 Dick White, the German expert in MI5, was authorised by both MI6 and MI5 to work with Zu Putlitz.¹⁶⁸ Shortly after the war had started, Zu Putlitz’s activities for Vansittart were close to being discovered by the Abwehr, and Zu Putlitz asked him to be exfiltrated.¹⁶⁹ Just after arriving in London, Zu Putlitz met Vansittart, a meeting which was witnessed by Rex Leeper of the Foreign Office.¹⁷⁰ Leeper has been introduced earlier on as the man who called the non-aggression pact the ‘strongest propaganda weapon’.

Hooper’s proposal to Giskes may point to the possibility Hooper worked for Vansittart’s agency as well. According to Giskes, Vansittart would give Pieck information which would eventually reach the Abwehr. Abwehr Berlin turned the proposal down as being too farfetched. It was. It can be seen as a ploy of Section V in MI6 in which Pieck as a minor player could be sacrificed.

A most interesting twist to this story about Pieck and Vansittart was given by Vivian of Section V in 1939.¹⁷¹ In his report on the leakage he wrote: It is of the highest interest to note as a side-light on his technique that, in confiding to “X” [Hooper] all these facts [about his spying], which have since proved entirely accurate, PIECK should have included in his confidences one conscious and artistic lie – for the purpose undoubtedly of discrediting “X’s” story in the unlikely event of his passing it to the British authorities, – i.e. he gave the name of his “inside agent” in the Foreign Office as “Sir Robert VANSITTART”.

“Sir Robert”, he stated, had installed a mistress named Helen WILKIE in an establishment in the West district of London, who acted as intermediary, arranged meetings, etc., and generally, served the purpose of cut-out in these illicit relations between PIECK and “Sir Robert”. Certain other details were also given such as that “Sir Robert” was an epicure, and was most interested in cooking, that “Sir Robert” greatly worried, when the connexion with PIECK began to falter in 1937, by the cost of his double establishment and his expenses in connexion with the education of his son, etc.

It is clear to us now that the inclusion of this artistic lie was intended to ensure that any story “X” might tell the British authorities would be treated with derision. It is a tribute to PIECK’s intelligence that this is precisely the effect it had, though it must be recorded in defence of the section handling the information that the theory was always firmly held that the details given, grotesque as they might be as applied to Sir Robert VANSITTART, were true of some other, as yet unidentified, individual in the Foreign Office.’

In 1947 M.F. Serpell of MI5 commented on this story of Giskes in his Dutch interrogation report, acquired in 1947: ‘So far as I can recollect we have had most of this information about HOOPER before, though his offer of the “VANSITTART” source to the Germans was never before described in such detail. I find it hard to believe that the Germans did not take some action about PIECK beyond clapping him into a Concentration camp.’¹⁷²

¹⁶¹ Andrew p.382.

¹⁶² Gleses pp.147-148. According to Patrick Howarth, Ian Fleming had been recruited for intelligence work by Vansittart on the recommendation of the Governor of the Bank of England, Montagu C. Norman. At the time Fleming had been a junior partner of the stockbroking firm of Rowe and Pitman. It was probably in his new capacity that he returned to Moscow in the spring of 1939 – officially as a correspondent of *The Times* (in 1933 he had been there as a correspondent of Reuters News Agency) – on a brief trip to make a report for the Foreign Office. After that he was chosen to be the personal assistant to admiral John Godfrey, the new Director of naval intelligence. Patrick Howarth, *Intelligence chief extraordinary: the life of the Ninth Duke of Portland* (London: Bodley Head 1986) p.121. \ Donald McCormick, *Who’s who in spy fiction* (London: Sphere 1979) pp.89-90.

¹⁶³ Wolfgang zu Putlitz, in *Rok tussen de Bruinheden: herinneringen van een duits diplomaat* (bewerkt en van aantekeningen voorzien door Cor Dommelshuizen jr) (’s-Gravenhage: Bert Bakker; Daamen 1964) p. 210.

¹⁶⁴ Howe p.39.

¹⁶⁵ Zu Putlitz p.210.

¹⁶⁶ A. Duff Cooper, 1st Viscount Norwich; Secretary for War, 1935-1937; First Lord of the Admiralty, 1937-1938; Minister of Information, 1940-1941; Minister of State in Far East, 1941-1942; British Representative with the FCNL, 1943-1944; Ambassador to France, 1944-1947.

¹⁶⁷ Dilks pp.111, 833. \ It is certainly less plausible he had in mind the alias of Pieck: Cooper. West; Tsarev p.76.

¹⁶⁸ Tom Bower, *The perfect English spy: Sir Dick White and the secret war 1935-90* (London: Mandarin 1996) p.31.

¹⁶⁹ Zu Putlitz p.245.

¹⁷⁰ Zu Putlitz p.252.

¹⁷¹ TNA, KV 2/816. Report 19391030 by Vivian.

¹⁷² TNA, KV 2/963. Letter 19470226 Serpell to MI6.

Krüger and Van Koutrik

At a second meeting at the end of May 1939, Giskes told Hooper Berlin had turned down his proposal to use Pieck. As Hooper had nothing new to tell, Giskes suggested discontinuing their meetings. Hooper did mention something Giskes remembered, the name of a Passport Control Office officer: Dalton. The deception is obvious – Dalton had killed himself in 1936 – but evidently succeeded, because Dalton was mentioned in the *Sonderfahndungsliste* of September 1939, a record of persons the Germans wanted to arrest after occupying the West. According to Giskes, Hooper then tried to talk him out of not meeting again by betraying a German, spying for the PCO in The Hague: Krüger.

In order to refute Giskes' accusation of betrayal, the Dutchman Folkert van Koutrik¹⁷³ must be introduced. In the spring of 1938 Van Koutrik had been recruited by Passport Control Officer Monty Chidson.¹⁷⁴ In the autumn of 1938 he was ordered to watch the house of Sigismund Rifczes alias P.E. Roberts, who posed as a rich Canadian but had refused to answer a request from the PCO to contact it.¹⁷⁵ Unwittingly the PCO had pinpointed an agent of Protze, very active in espionage as well as in counter-espionage.

In 1938 the chief of the Abwehr, Admiral W.F. Canaris, had thought it worthwhile to establish an outpost in the Netherlands, solely for the purpose of collecting intelligence about the British, French and Belgian services. The man for the job was his friend and recently retired head of Abwehr III F (counter-espionage), Richard Protze. In September 1938 Protze moved to Wassenaar, a suburb of The Hague, under the name of Richard Paarmann.¹⁷⁶ While looking for a suitable residence he temporarily moved in with his agent Rifczes.

It was Protze who at once noticed the rather clumsy observation of Rifczes' house and ordered his agent Hoogeveen to investigate. During a talk with Hoogeveen Van Koutrik confessed working for the PCO and expressed his willingness to be paid by the other side too.¹⁷⁷ Protze agreed, and Van Koutrik alias Walbach started to betray all secrets of the PCO he could lay his hands on. He was for instance instrumental in unmasking Zu Putlitz.¹⁷⁸ It looks like he caused more damage than Stevens and Best after their arrest. It is plausible Van Koutrik betrayed its agent Krüger too. After the war he admitted passing on the name of Doktor Krüger¹⁷⁹, and both Protze and his secretary had the impression it was Van Koutrik's intelligence which led to the discovery of Doktor Otto Krüger as agent 33016.¹⁸⁰ Hoogeveen recalled Van Koutrik mentioning a Doktor Krüger from Godesberg as an British agent.¹⁸¹ Van Koutrik was present at a meeting between Krüger and his case officer at a hotel in Utrecht.¹⁸² After reporting his findings Krüger received a questionnaire. He learned it by heart and then

¹⁷³ Folkert Arie van Koutrik, 19120805 Rotterdam – 19881114.

¹⁷⁴ AMJ CABR, F.A. van Koutrik. Report 19470318. Van Koutrik had agent no 33012A. His case officer Vrinten had agent no 33012. AMJ CABR, F.A. van Koutrik. Report 19470207.

¹⁷⁵ AMJ CABR, F.A. van Koutrik. Report 19470207.

¹⁷⁶ Eventually Protze was spotted by GS III. It asked the police at Wassenaar to watch him. The police tried to identify Protze's visitors by recording the registration numbers of cars seen at his house, but the searching of his garbage can turned out to be more successful, although senior police officer detective P.J. van der Krogt had not expected this. The time consuming glueing together of shreds of paper produced documents which seemed to relate to the French Maginot Line. Hazenberg ea, *Wassenaar in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* (Wassenaar: Stichting Wassenaar '40-'45 1995) pp.53-55. Concept manuscript by W.P. van der Krogt.

¹⁷⁷ According to Ian Colvin, the PCO paid Van Koutrik 700 guilders a month, and Protze started to pay him 800 guilders monthly. This is exaggerated, it most probably was in the order of 200 to 400 guilders a month. Ian Colvin, *Hitler's secret enemy: (Chief of Intelligence)* (London: Pan 1957) p.94.

¹⁷⁸ Van Koutrik's alias Walbach turned up in an extract from British Intelligence Report of 19400221, cited by Allen: 'Saw Walbach again this evening. He informed me that Bedeaux is visiting Z-B [consul Julius von Zech-Burkersroda] on an almost fortnightly basis... W[albach] has had an opportunity to see the transcribed information that B[edeaux] brings verbally, and says it is of the best quality – defence material, strengths, weaknesses, and so on.' Allen identifies Walbach as a 'British agent in Germany's Hague Embassy'. Brown described Charles Eugene Bedeaux as a 'Franco-American Fascist [...], a Nazi agent of influence [...]' In order to explain this the original extracts were studied to no avail. Later it was discovered that false documents have been inserted into the files. This would explain the improbable information in Allen's book. Martin Allen, *The Hitler/Hess deception: British Intelligence best-kept secret of the Second World War* (London: HarperCollins 2003) p.298.\ Brown p.186. TNA, FO 371/28741.

¹⁷⁹ In May 1940 Van Koutrik and Vrinten managed to reach London. In MI5 (B.24) Van Koutrik was tasked with interrogating travellers from abroad. In 1941 he was posted to MI6, but his work did not change. Calling himself Kendall he tried to induce Dutchmen to tell all they knew by posing as an official representative of the Dutch government. His statements that their reports would reach the Dutch were untrue. Despite complaints from Derksema of the Dutch CID, MI6 kept him on the payroll. In despair Derksema even suggested Van Koutrik's conscription. Only after complaints about his duping arriving Dutchmen into selling their valuables for too low a price, he was dismissed on 19420829. Then he was conscripted. His prewar duplicity was only discovered later and he was arrested in June 1946. After two years of detention he was released on parole, probably because it could not be proven beyond any doubt he was solely responsible for the arrest of Dutchmen whose names he had reported to Protze. Vrinten in *Parlementaire Enquêtecommissie Regeringsbeleid 1940-1945* (hereafter *PEC*) ('s-Gravenhage: Staatsdrukkerij- en uitgeverijbedrijf 1950) 4C II p.1368.\ JUSLON, 10450. Letter 19430120 Dutch Ministry of War to Dutch Ministry of Naval Affairs, and note 19410813; 14274. Letter 19420714 Derksema to Van Angeren.

¹⁸⁰ AMJ Afdeling Politie Bureau Kabinet (hereafter PolKab), Zaak Sanders, box 1, file 1, no 1. Treatise concerning CE, undated.\ AMJ CABR, F.A. van Koutrik. Report 19470318, interrogation of H.O.K. Skrodzki.

¹⁸¹ As former head of Abwehr III F Protze had been able to compare the information from Hooper and from Van Koutrik. He stated that the information from Hooper about the PCO 'had been good', but he himself had had a 'much better source' there and then. BNV, 2640. CSDIC fifth interim report on Major Adolf von Feldmann 19451022.

¹⁸² NA BNV, 2933. Undated and anonymous report [by Protze]. According to this report, it was Hendricks, the second man of the PCO, who had been running Krüger.

burned it in a toilet; Van Koutrik had been able to smell burned paper. At that time he only knew it was a German with an academic degree. Berlin ordered an all-out investigation, and Van Koutrik was promised a bonus if he could identify this agent. Eventually he succeeded: one Doktor Krüger from Godesberg am Rhein. The last meeting at which Van Koutrik was present took place at the house of Van Koutrik's case officer, Aad Vrinten, in Rotterdam, where Van Koutrik had been once again entrusted with securing Krüger's safety. Now that Krüger had been identified, he was observed, and was arrested on the Dutch frontier. On him he had plans and drawings referring to U-boat buildings and he confessed to his activities at the first interrogation.¹⁸³ He killed himself in a prison cell in Hamburg on 4 September 1939.¹⁸⁴

Nevertheless, in 1948 Giskes still stated (in translation): 'I do not know if there have been other reports concerning Doktor Krüger, but it is certain that thanks to Hooper's statement Krüger was arrested.' It is possible that Giskes did not want to attribute the discovery of Krüger's activities to Protze? The professional relationship between the two officers was not quite well, probably due to Protze's straight line to Canaris. There were others who claimed the unmasking of Krüger. When the war in Europe was over, an officer of Abwehrstelle Münster, Richard Gerken, was interrogated, and the report stated: 'In Mar 1940 GERKEN, who had been on the trail some time, had a German named KRUEGER arrested.'¹⁸⁵ The year 1940 is obviously wrong, but there is no reason to suspect the month mentioned.¹⁸⁶ In March 1939 Gerken had been head of the Osnabrück Kriminalpolizei, and in that capacity he was authorized to arrest criminals. So if Krüger had been arrested in March 1939, it was nearly two months before Hooper divulged his name to Giskes, for which he was paid, according to Farago, the incredible sum of 10.000 guilders, nowadays worth something in the order of € 50,000.¹⁸⁷ It now looks like Hooper already knew about Krüger's arrest, and therefore could 'betray' him. Gerken's statement concerning Krüger has more or less been corroborated by another independent source. The daughter of a fellow officer of the Abwehrstelle had typed the reports of her father Matthias Janssen. She remembered 'one case in 1938 of a German by the name of Karl KRUEGER, who was acting as paid spy for Engeland. Evidently through efficient work of Janssen and some of his colleagues, this had finally been discovered and after his arrest the man committed suicide.'¹⁸⁸ The keyword here is 1938.

And then there has to be considered what Alan Judd has written about 'TR 16', identified by him as 'Herman Krueger'.¹⁸⁹ In April 1938 this agent reported that, while attempting to recce a German secret airfield, he had been stopped and questioned by a civilian foreman who reported the incident to the Gestapo. Krüger managed to talk his way out of it, but took the precaution of destroying any papers that might have been suspicious. Next morning the police arrived at his home, but he was able to present himself as an innocent nature-lover. However, the next time he crossed the Dutch border – unfortunately Judd does not specify the date – Krüger was subjected to an 'unprecedentedly thorough search, and his portable typewriter stripped.' Nothing was found, because it was his habit to type his reports on that typewriter only after arriving in the Netherlands. He was advised by his case officer to lie low and skip meetings for a couple of months. During his next Treff in November 1938, he was being shadowed throughout by Van Koutrik in order to re-establish Krüger's bona fides. According to Judd, Krüger had his last Treff on 18 July 1939, during which the next meeting was fixed for 20 August.

In theory Hooper could have betrayed Krüger during his Treff with Giskes at the end of May 1939, because Krüger's last meeting still had to occur. It can be concluded that the suspicions nurtured by the Gestapo and the Abwehr seem to have been aroused by three independent ways in 1938. If Hooper has mentioned Krüger's name, it was rather late in the day.

The capture of Krüger, a naval engineer, turned out to be a bonus for the Abwehr which had a deception operation running.¹⁹⁰ According to Wark, British 'Admiralty calculations of the German submarine fleet showed that, if the reports of the patrols were correct, then the Germans must have managed to construct additional boats in secret.'¹⁹¹ All such reports of U-boat activity were completely false, having been planted on the Admiralty through SIS and other channels by the Abwehr as part, so the DNI [Director of naval intelligence], Admiral Godfrey, believed, of a war of nerves. The NID [Naval Intelligence Division] was bamboozled by the wealth of supporting information accompanying the story; it was a perfect piece of deception on the part of the Abwehr.

¹⁸³ TNA KV 2/968, 27a. CSDIC report 19450723.

¹⁸⁴ Nater p.102.

¹⁸⁵ BNV, 2677. CSDIC report on R. Gerken 19450603.

¹⁸⁶ According to Farago (p.119) and Andrew (p.434) Krüger was arrested on 7 July; according to West (p.51), the following day. Giskes mentioned the month of August. AMJ CABR, F.A. van Koutrik. Report 19470318, interrogation of Giskes.

¹⁸⁷ Farago p.119.

¹⁸⁸ BNV, 2853. Field interrogation report on M.G. Janssen 19450718.

¹⁸⁹ Alan Judd, *The quest for C: Sir Mansfield Cumming and the founding of the British Secret Service* (London: HarperCollins 1999) pp.339-345. TR 16 had been recruited by R.B. Tinsley in November 1914. He is identical with R 16, mentioned by Occleshaw. Michael Occleshaw, *Armour against fate: British Military Intelligence in the First World War* (London: Columbus Books 1989) p.204.

¹⁹⁰ Wark p.148.

¹⁹¹ 'Godfrey remembered, "We actually went into the German dockyards and counted them. We were very new to the game, the rumours kept flooding in through MPs, business men and Canaris [head of the Abwehr]." Godfrey, "Memoirs," VIII, 119.'

[...] The effect in September 1939 was that the NID overstated the size of the German fleet by nine U-boats (from fifty-seven to sixty-six).’ It is unclear what purpose the Abwehr had in mind in promoting this overstatement. Maybe it tried to convince Great Britain it would be unwise to engage Germany over Poland.

Oberstleutnant Giskes’ guile

According to Farago, Hooper hatched a plan to tempt Giskes into coming to the Netherlands.¹⁹² In early October 1939 Protze was informed by Van Koutrik that Hooper was working for the PCO again (which very probably was incorrect¹⁹³) and warned Ast Hamburg. As the story goes, it was only just before crossing the frontier that Giskes could be warned. After the war Giskes told Charles Whiting he was still angry with Hooper: ‘After all, he had tried to murder me.’¹⁹⁴ [...] undoubtedly he would have plunged me there into the nearest *graacht* [the Dutch word ‘gracht’ means canal] to keep me silent for good.’ Whiting swallowed it with hook, line and sinker. It did not occur to him that Giskes’ death would have been senseless, because his knowledge would die with him. It would have been much more profitable to tap Giskes’ knowledge of the modus operandi of the Abwehr, its staff and its agents.

Giskes told Whiting yet another story about Hooper. In June and July 1945 Giskes was interrogated in Latchmere House.¹⁹⁵ There he recognised the ‘double-traitor Jack Hooper, dressed in the khaki uniform of a British captain.’¹⁹⁶ He told his interrogators about Hooper’s doubledealing. ‘Some time later he asked his interrogator what had happened to the man. The answer was a laconic: “We’ve hanged him!” ’ It is indeed credible Giskes has seen Hooper in Latchmere House. As a counter espionage officer Hooper of course would have been interested in interrogating an old adversary. The real reason for Giskes’ anger must be the humiliating fact that Hooper had outwitted him, a curse for every counter-espionage officer, especially as Giskes considered himself a successful key player in Operation ‘Nordpol’, otherwise known as the Englandspiel.¹⁹⁷ As recently as 2000 Whiting only succeeded in promoting the mythologization of Hooper. Giskes’ accusation can be explained in two ways: his timeline was wrong, or he lied outright. Either way it can be concluded that his book about the Englandspiel may have some flaws too.¹⁹⁸

HOOPER IN LONDON

Early in 1940 the Germans put Bill Hooper on the Fahndungsliste – Holland, a hastily compiled list of persons to be arrested immediately after the occupation of the Netherlands. Although not on this Fahndungsliste, Han Pieck was convinced he would be arrested by the Germans. When it seemed not feasible to flee the Netherlands, he handed some personal papers he did not want to fall into German hands over to Bill, convinced as he was that Bill was working for the NKVD too.¹⁹⁹ In June 1940 Pieck remarked somewhat offended to his wife that in German eyes he apparently was too small fry to be arrested.²⁰⁰ One year later he was, in connection with the printing of illegal leaflets. He was put in a concentration camp, but (thanks to his communist background) he managed to survive the war, surprised he was not wanted or known as a former NKVD-agent. As, according to Giskes, Hooper had exposed Pieck as a former Soviet agent, the Abwehr surely could have traced and interrogated him. Apparently Giskes never investigated this part of Hooper’s proposal. Serpell’s disbelief at the absence of any action against Pieck has already been quoted.

During the invasion in May 1940 of the Netherlands, a copy of the Fahndungsliste – Holland had fallen into Dutch hands by accident. At the time Bill was not aware of his name being on this list, and at first he decided to stay and await instructions until after the evacuation of British officials and residents was effected.²⁰¹ ‘A request for instructions was taken to London by Mr. van ’t Sant to be handed to Capt. Cowgill.’ Van ’t Sant arrived in

¹⁹² Farago p.122.

¹⁹³ According to Farago, major R.H. Stevens, the PCO at The Hague, had taken on Bill Hooper as a member of the PCO. In view of the security risks involved it is unlikely that Hooper had any contact with the PCO, although according to Jack Hooper there has been at a time a direct contact between Bill and Stevens. During his interrogations Van Koutrik never mentioned Hooper, just a ‘John’ (never identified by Protze) who visited Vrinten from time to time. Farago p.148. \ Letter 19960806 H. Hooper to author.

¹⁹⁴ Charles Whiting, *Hitler’s secret war: the Nazi espionage campaign against the Allies* (Barnsley: Cooper 2000) p.195.

¹⁹⁵ Whiting pp.194-195.

¹⁹⁶ According to Jack Hooper, his brother Bill never held a military rank. West already had varied the theme: ‘After the war it was reported that Giskes spotted his former agent [Hooper] exercising in the central compound at MI5’s Camp 020, Latchmere House, Ham Common.’ West p.75.

¹⁹⁷ This ‘Spiel’ resulted in the deaths of more than sixty Dutch SOE-agents and in severe ‘collateral damage’. In Latchmere House Giskes boasted that ‘he had even governed senior SOE appointments in London.’ H.J. Giskes, *London calling North Pole* (London: Kimber 1953) pp.50-51. \ Oliver Hoare [ed], *Camp 020: MI5 and the Nazi spies: the official history of MI5’s wartime interrogation centre* (London: Public Record Office 2000) p.356.

¹⁹⁸ See for an alternate, and well thought through study of the Englandspiel: Jo Wolters, *Dossier Nordpol: het Englandspiel onder de loep* (Amsterdam: Boom 2003).

¹⁹⁹ Cornelissen pp.166-167. Pieck’s MI5 file however contained a letter from MI6, dated 19400512, stating that Pieck received a visa for France and Britain. He somehow heard about King’s arrest and probably for this reason did not use his visa. West; Tsarev p.292. It is conceivable it was Hooper who told him about King’s arrest, because in London Pieck would become a liability for MI6.

²⁰⁰ Cornelissen pp.236, 238.

²⁰¹ JUSLON, 3670. Memorandum 19410318 to Rabagliati.

Britain in the afternoon of 13 May.²⁰² But ‘As there were no instructions forthcoming I had to make my way out of Holland after its capitulation the best way I could.’ Hooper managed to get his family and his brother Jack aboard a ship sailing from IJmuiden.²⁰³ On 15 May 1940 they arrived in London, where Bill was affectionately welcomed by major J. Felix Cowgill, second-in-command in Section V in MI6.

Section V of MI6

According to the official history of MI5, the functions of the service were changed as a result of an enquiry in 1931.²⁰⁴ This involved a transfer of Scotland Yard staff who previously had been responsible for the observation of Communists. In MI6 Section V was established ‘as a circulating section to serve as a channel for all communications’ between MI6 and MI5.²⁰⁵ Prior to the establishment of this section individual officers in these organisations had corresponded and dealt with one another indiscriminately, and according to MI6, the ‘creation of Section V with expert knowledge of the requirements of MI5 would conduce to greater efficiency in the despatch of the business of the two sister services. The section was charged too with the responsibility of counter-intelligence abroad.’²⁰⁶ Apparently Vivian had still grander designs. Guy Burgess, another one of the Cambridge agents, was introduced to Vivian in an attempt to penetrate MI6 in 1938.²⁰⁷ He was impressed by Vivian’s encyclopaedic knowledge of Marxist theory and a grasp of Comintern politics that left even him overwhelmed. Vivian wanted him to broaden his knowledge, because he was to work as an undercover MI6 agent in the British Communist movement, especially in the underground Communist organization. Later on he was to arrange for being sent to Moscow. So Vivian considered Great Britain to be part of his playing ground too.

Later, Vivian, head of Section V, had been instructed to concentrate his counter-espionage efforts on the German intelligence organizations.²⁰⁸ Years before, when the Foreign Office had allowed MI6 to post its officers to embassies as Passport Control Officers, there had been trouble: ‘When the appointment of Passport Control Officers to embassies abroad was mooted, MI5 was insistent that they come under their wing. “C” fought a hard battle [...] and won, the argument being that a division of “security authority” was bad enough in this country, but would amount to suicide abroad.’²⁰⁹ According to the official history of British Intelligence in the Second World War, already in the autumn of 1938 a MI6 ‘counter-espionage station was established in Holland to work in collaboration with the French, Dutch and Belgian authorities. It was reinforced in April 1939 and an officer was also posted to Brussels for counter-espionage operations.’²¹⁰ This reinforcement must relate to captain Rodney Dennys’ appointment as Section V-officer at PCO The Hague, that is, according to West.²¹¹ One can question the wisdom of stationing a counter-espionage officer at the PCO itself. It would perhaps have been wiser to open a separate office for counter-espionage activities and maybe that is why the official history of British Intelligence spoke of establishing a counter-espionage station ‘in Holland’. According to West, after the new instructions were given, the first thing for Vivian to do was to increase his small staff, so he offered Cowgill a job. This former Special Branch officer in India took up his post in February 1939. Soon after, Section V urged the appointment of counter intelligence officers at each of the overseas stations. PCO The Hague readily complied. It is unknown if there existed any contact between Dennys and Bill Hooper, but one is tempted to relate the establishment of this ‘counter-espionage station’ in the Netherlands to Hooper. It seems likely, however, that Hooper maintained his position as an independant operative with his own courier straight to London. The warm welcome by J.F. Cowgill can indeed be seen as an indication Hooper had been working for Section V, and apparently successful.

²⁰² Van ’t Sant in *PEC* 4C I p.475.

²⁰³ Bill Hooper had managed to obtain a laissez-passer from the chief of the Dutch naval intelligence service Bureau MS I, but in IJmuiden he still had trouble convincing the captain of the destroyer HMS Havock to take him and his family aboard. Kluiters p.319.

²⁰⁴ *The Security Service* p.102.

²⁰⁵ According to MI6, Section V was created around 1925. TNA, KV 4/205, 14a. Letter 19401204 MI6 to J. Curry (MI5).

²⁰⁶ West p.62.

²⁰⁷ Costello; Tsarev pp.234-237.

²⁰⁸ West pp.63-64.

²⁰⁹ Frank Stagg cited in Judd p.338.

²¹⁰ F.H. Hinsley; C.A.G. Simkins, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: security and counter-intelligence*, 4 (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office 1990) p.11

²¹¹ West p.64. According to *Who’s who*, Rodney Onslow Dennys already was posted to The Hague in 1937. *Who’s who 1971: an annual biographical dictionary* (London: Black 1971) p.829. After war had broken out in September 1939 Dennys added to his CE-section Jules Benoni Albert Mac Kee (18960128 Brussels, Belgium), a private English language teacher in The Hague. In May 1940 Mac Kee escaped to London, like Dennys. According to West (p.74), Dennys had been transferred to PCO Brussels after the Venlo incident in November 1939, from which he made a twice-weekly visit to The Hague. However, in March 1940 Dennys was still listed as PCO staff to be evacuated from the Netherlands in case of an impending invasion. Dennys’ transferral also does not agree with the appointment of Keith Liversidge as Section V officer in Brussels. JUSLON, 9601. Note 19450712; 14299. Gemeentearchief ’s-Gravenhage. Register of residents, index card Mac Kee. TNA, FO 371/24398, 63. List of personnel to be evacuated 19400327. West p.130. According to Stephen Dorril, Dennys joined MI6 in 1937 and received an OBE for his ‘double-cross’ work in Section V. After the war he succeeded Philby as head of station in Istanbul. Stephen Dorril, *MI6: fifty years of special operations* (London: Fourth Estate 2000) pp.363, 391.

Shortly before, as from the 15th April, MI5 had ordered their officers that, instead of sending all their letters to Vivian of Section V, they had to address correspondence upon certain subjects to three captains of this section.²¹² One of them was Cowgill, who would ‘personally handle all “special agents” and the correspondence with Major Sinclair relating thereto.’²¹³ He will be responsible for all work, including case work, relating to Holland and Belgium and the administration of the C.E. organisations in those two countries. He will continue to act as liaison officer on C.E. matters with the French Military authorities under the general supervision of Colonel Vivian.’

After the capitulation of the Netherlands, Belgium and France in May-June 1940, Section V’s new field of operations, ‘which, willy-nilly, necessitates our working in this country, is mainly amongst refugees of all classes (including crews of ships), Czechs (though this is not a new problem), Poles, Danes, Norwegians, Dutch, Belgians, French, Spaniards and Portuguese.’²¹⁴

On 2 July 1940 MI6 concurred with a suggestion from captain Guy Liddell, a former subversion expert transferred from Special Branch to B Branch in MI5 in 1931.²¹⁵ As MI5 had found itself overwhelmed by the problems of expansion necessitated by the outbreak of war, and more so by the time of the fall of France,²¹⁶ Liddell had suggested that certain Section V staff should be made, as it were, honorary members of MI5, thus giving them direct relations with the various authorities, such as port security officers, chief constables, commandants of prisons and internment camps and officers in charge of refugee camps, until then the sole province of MI5. According to MI6, the best method of effecting this would be for Section V to become a section in B Branch and to be allotted the next unoccupied B number. ‘We can then arm ourselves with your permission with your office stationary and write to the authorities concerned with Harker’s authority. Acting in my dual capacity, I would, I believe, be able to ensure that our excellent relations with you would be unimpaired. You and your organisation as a whole would thus be relieved of a large amount of pure “Post Office” work, with which we are compelled to saddle you and with which you are already finding it difficult to cope, if the old division of functions according to the 3-mile limit is to continue to be rigidly observed.’

This resulted in Director’s circular no 150: ‘With affect from the 1st August, 1940, Section V of S.I.S., (Colonel Vivian and Captains [omitted, S.H.H. Mills²¹⁷], Cowgill, [omitted, Blake-Budden²¹⁸] and Jarvis²¹⁹), will become, for the purposes set forth in para. below, Section B.26 of M.I.5. working in S.I.S. H.Q.’²²⁰ Their duties were to relieve other sections of MI5 of the routine action then necessary on behalf of MI6 in respect of, among others, the interrogation of prisoners and the planting of agents in prisons, internment camps, ships, etc. for strictly MI6 purposes.²²¹

Hooper and MI6

According to West, Vivian wanted to send Bill Hooper back to the Netherlands as a double agent.²²² This plan was vetoed, as it should have been. Hooper starred in the Fahndungsliste – Holland, so should he contact the Abwehr, he would have had some explaining to do. Moreover he would have to do this as a double agent, not knowing what information this service had in its files. It simply was too much of a gamble.²²³ Although at the time unaware of this, he had his own misgivings. In March 1941 he heard of his name being on the list, and he remarked: ‘You will recall the German’s endeavours to get me into Germany + Italy! I seemed to have just saved my life on 14/5/40!’²²⁴ Furthermore, already on 30 May 1940 a report ‘Untersuchung in Sachen Hooper und Wright’ had been written for the Abwehr.²²⁵ The writer was an economist, doctor A.F. Grote, suspected of fiddling in concert with another shadowy character, the German Doktor F.A. Mucke, who was to make a fortune during the war.²²⁶ Grote stated that Hooper, till 1938 number two of the PCO The Hague, had been introduced to

²¹² TNA, KV 4/205, 1z. B Branch circular no 11/40 19400404.

²¹³ Major Sinclair of MI5 became responsible for running double agents, ‘special agents’, in 1938. *The Security Service* pp.245-246.

²¹⁴ TNA, KV 4/205, 1a. Letter 19400702 MI6 to Liddell (MI5).

²¹⁵ *The Security Service* pp.6, 141-142.\ TNA, KV 4/205, 1a. Letter 19400702 MI6 to Liddell.

²¹⁶ *The Security Service* p.163.

²¹⁷ Mills, a retired Indian police officer, was the assistant of Vivian. West pp.62-63.

²¹⁸ Blake-Budden headed the transport section of Section V, known as V(c). West p.131.

²¹⁹ R.G.E. Jarvis, a former officer in the British Expeditionary Force, began working for Section V in July 1940. West p.130.\ TNA, KV 4/205, 3a. Letter 19400722 MI6 to O.A. Harker (MI5).

²²⁰ TNA, KV 4/205, 4b. Circular no 150 19400727.

²²¹ This arrangement continued until after the war, although already in 1946 the wisdom of it was questioned. Liddell, then Director B Division, was against continuation. TNA, KV 4/205, 38a. Note 19460910; minute sheets.

²²² West p.74.

²²³ Later Hooper was also listed in the Sonderfahndungsliste G.B. as a British agent (alias Konrad). *Invasion 1940: the Nazi invasion plan for Britain* (London: St Ermin’s 2000) p.200.

²²⁴ JUSLON, 3670. Letter 19410318 W.J. Hooper to Van ’t Sant.

²²⁵ AMJ CABR, S.F.W. Koolhoven. Copy report 19400530 by A.F. Grote. Suspected of espionage, Grote had been arrested by the Germans after the capitulation. He somehow had known that a certain major Wood had been working for MI6. Grote was able to convince his captors that he was innocent, and he probably wrote his report to prove his good intentions. Later he indeed worked for the Abwehr.

²²⁶ Bob de Graaff; Cees Wiebes, *Gladio der vrije jongens: een particuliere geheime dienst in Koude Oorlogstijd* (’s-Gravenhage: Sdu 1992) p.66.

airplane builder Koolhoven by captain H.R. Wright. This director of a paint factory was, according to Grote, an MI6 agent, who, just like Hooper, had disappeared in May 1940.

Instead of being sent to certain detainment, Hooper was tasked with recruiting Dutch agents, training them and sending them back to the Netherlands.²²⁷ There is an indication that these activities were directed by Section V of MI6, because Van 't Sant thought that captain L.L. Loewe had been working for Cowgill of this section, but (in translation): 'I never quite understood for whom he worked, for MI5 or for the other side [MI6]. He helped me in searching for accommodation for the Queen. He always quarreled with Hooper. Later, I think, he joined Mr. Laming.'²²⁸ Well, only the release of file KV 4/205 in November 2003, about Section V of MI6 becoming B26 of MI5, explained Van 't Sant's confusion. The official history of MI5 does not mention such an arrangement. Indeed there exists a letter from Hooper to Cowgill dated 9 January 1941. Its letter head mentioned 'B.24 b./599' and the letter was directed to Cowgill of B.26.²²⁹

Hooper was appointed intermediary between MI6, the Dutch government in exile and François van 't Sant CBE, head of the new Dutch intelligence service in London, the Centrale Inlichtingsdienst (CID). Van 't Sant had been adviser to Queen Wilhelmina, and Hooper had known him for years. He had even warned Van 't Sant regarding Pieck. 'In fact I warned you that this man was presented to Her Majesty and that his intimate relations with very high placed Dutch Officials was becoming a source of great anxiety.' Because of his co-operation with MI6 during the First World War, in London Van 't Sant had been able to contact the chief of MI6, who then put his secretary at Van 't Sant's disposal.²³⁰ Given the confusing chain of command and the ambiguous titles of the principal lieutenants²³¹, it is not possible to know whom Van 't Sant was referring to.

Hooper's first agent to reach the Netherlands was L.A.R.J. van Hamel²³², a Dutch naval officer who had fled his country during the invasion, and who had subsequently played an active part in the Dunkirk evacuation. In a short while he was able to set up two separate espionage groups which maintained wireless contact with MI6. Before he left London it was agreed Van Hamel would return after he had accomplished his task: organizing several independent espionage groups. In the beginning of October 1940 he expressed a wish to do so, but MI6 was unwilling to comply. Probably it wanted him to stay, because at the time he was its only Dutch agent there. In the official history of British Intelligence it is stated that since the summer of 1940 the 'ability of the SIS to acquire reliable information had not improved, and had in some areas markedly declined.'²³³ Furthermore MI6 had trouble securing transport for its missions.²³⁴

In mid-October 1940 the Dutch CID then organized an escape for Van Hamel by Dutch seaplane, but it failed. During this attempt he was arrested, and in June 1941 he was executed without having disclosed details of his networks. His arrest however had fatally disrupted the functioning of his two groups. The official history of British Intelligence incorrectly states that the Dutch were unjustly 'highly critical' of MI6 'when an operation to send additional agents to Holland [...] ended in failure in the following October.'²³⁵ The Dutch Prime Minister at the time, P.S. Gerbrandy – he then headed the Ministry of Justice as well – after the war even stated that it was MI6 which was 'immensely deterred' by this 'failure'; from then MI6 regarded the Netherlands as most unsafe.²³⁶ The fact remains that it all began to go wrong when MI6 reconsidered its arrangement with Van Hamel. Because of that the CID had to arrange Van Hamel's retrieval without help from MI6, although there is evidence of some exchange of information. On 1 October 1940 captain Loewe asked Van 't Sant: 'Would you be good enough to see if you can help to pin-point the precise spot where Lamb [Van Hamel] wishes to be taken off.'²³⁷ Taking into account CID's unfamiliarity with retrieving agents, it is understandable the attempt was carried out with less expertise than could be expected, although all communications were conducted through MI6 channels. At the end of October 1940 R.D. Howard – captain Rex Howard RN had been the Chief Staff Officer of Hugh Sinclair²³⁸ – of 54 Broadway (MI6) wrote to Van 't Sant: 'It is very distressing that we have had no news of our friend who did such valuable work, but I feel that all possible steps were taken to endeavour to retrieve him. [...] I hope that everything will be all right to send away our other friend who is now under instruction. I hope also that you have several others in view.'²³⁹ The next day he wrote again in order to convey his 'high appreciation of

²²⁷ Hooper had his desk in Fountain Court, Buckingham Palace Road SW1. JUSLON, 12556. Letter 19400918 Van 't Sant to Minister of Justice.

²²⁸ Van 't Sant in *PEC 4C II* p.1562.

²²⁹ NA JL ds 196, P 62/705.

²³⁰ Van 't Sant in *PEC 4C I* p.481.

²³¹ West p.247.

²³² Lodewijk Anne Rinze Jetse (Lodo) van Hamel, 19150606 Loenen aan de Vecht – 19410616.

²³³ F.H. Hinsley ea, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: its influence on strategy and operations*, 1 (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office 1979) p.275.

²³⁴ Hinsley ea 1, p.276.

²³⁵ Hinsley ea 1, p.277

²³⁶ Gerbrandy cited in *PEC 4C I* p.405.

²³⁷ JUSLON, 10080. Letter 19401001 Loewe to Van 't Sant.

²³⁸ West p.xviii.

²³⁹ JUSLON, 10080. Letter 19401026 Howard to Van 't Sant.

the great courage and skill displayed by Lieutenant Schafer [H. Schaper²⁴⁰] in the recent Windmill [Van Hamel] operation, and my sympathy that all his efforts and the dangers encountered were of no avail. If, as we hope however, Windmill is still alive and at liberty, we may yet bring this operation to a successful conclusion with the help of this skilled and resourceful officer.²⁴¹ Had Van Hamel been exfiltrated by MI6, his two espionage groups probably would have still been functioning properly after his departure. Another way of looking at it is to conclude that MI6 was not capable at the time to handle its agents properly.

The 'other friend' – the second Dutch MI6 agent, C.H. van Brink²⁴² – had come from Australia to London in order to fight for his country.²⁴³ After his parachute drop in November 1940, he tried in vain to set up a network for collecting military intelligence. He had been given contact addresses by A.J.J. Vrinten²⁴⁴ who had become Hooper's Dutch assistant in July 1940.²⁴⁵ These two had known each other for years as Vrinten had been a veteran agent of PCO The Hague. It was Vrinten who in 1938 had suggested to Chidson to recruit Van Koutrik as a subagent. Thanks to Van Koutrik's treason the Germans were watching most of Vrinten's acquaintances.²⁴⁶ When Van Brink discovered that his contact addresses could not be used, he suggested other ways of organizing a network, but MI6 lost interest. He did some reconnaissance concerning German efforts to adapt a fleet of craft for invading Great Britain (Operation 'Sealion'), but MI6 did not ask for more details. Thanks to Ultra, the interception and decoding of German wireless traffic, MI6 already knew about the cancellation of Sealion on 17 September 1940, at least for that year.²⁴⁷

Van Brink met the same unwillingness of MI6 in helping him to return to London.²⁴⁸ Like Van Hamel he was to be exfiltrated by Schaper, but by that time this flyer had been shot down, or so he was told.²⁴⁹ This was not true, but Schaper had become too scared by his being shot at while trying to pick up Van Hamel; he then barely had managed to return to his base.

It is probable that Hooper's initial consent with Van 't Sant's wish to exfiltrate Van Hamel – Van 't Sant wanted him to become the new chief of the CID – was at the root of the discontent with and the subsequent sacking of Hooper. According to Pieter Brijnen alias Van Houten, who during the war was employed by MI5 for some time, the search for Hooper's successor possibly already started in October 1940, after the arrest of an agent, despatched by Hooper.²⁵⁰

Hooper's sudden move to London had caused financial troubles. In October 1940 he asked MI6 for a raise, but was told it would not be forthcoming until he had three to five agents operating abroad.²⁵¹ He could not comply, because there were no agents ready to go, and he was, like Van 't Sant, against dispatching untrained agents. He objected to the 'inhumanly' chucking out of people. According to Van 't Sant's deputy in the CID, MI6's policy was to dispatch large amounts of agents in the hope that one in twenty managed to survive and succeed in transmitting intelligence.²⁵² He stated (in translation): 'This was the system, propagated by the British. If you said so, they of course denied it. Every day they insisted on: We need more people, the more the better.' Van 't Sant declared that the British always asked for more agents.²⁵³ This was in line with Howard's remark 'I hope also that you have several others in view.' In March 1941 Hooper observed: 'Repeated endeavours to obtain agents from Mr. van 't Sant have failed. Mr. van 't Sant stated that for the present he could not suggest anyone.'²⁵⁴

It is plausible MI6 was dissatisfied with the number of Dutch agents in the Netherlands and wanted to get rid of Hooper and his Dutch assistant Vrinten. According to Vrinten, MI6 wanted to have less Dutch influ-

²⁴⁰ Flying officer 2 (Dutch Royal Navy) Heye Schaper of 320 (Dutch) Squadron. He had flown one of the Dutch airplanes that managed to reach Great Britain at the end of May 1940. According to Van 't Sant, it was Schaper who had parachuted Van Hamel in August 1940. On 19420530 he was shot down during a convoy strike near Holland, became a prisoner of war, but survived the war. H Schilp in *PEC* 8C II p.1437; Van 't Sant in *PEC* 4C I p.482.

²⁴¹ JUSLON, 3329. Letter 19401027 Howard to Van 't Sant.

²⁴² Cornelis Hendrik (Cees) van Brink, 19140320 Schiedam.

²⁴³ Van Brink in *PEC* 4C I pp.906-912.

²⁴⁴ Adrianus Johannes Josephus (Aad) Vrinten, 18931113 Loon op Zand – 19810303.

²⁴⁵ Vrinten in *PEC* 4C I, p.417.

²⁴⁶ It has been alleged that Vrinten had left much of his papers on intelligence activities unattended, due to his hasty flight from Holland. For instance, Engelen maintains in his official history of the Dutch security service that Vrinten had left a card index with names of his sub-agents, which fell into German hands. However, careful examination of these accusations has led to the conclusion that they are unfounded. One source in particular, Van Koutrik, had all reason to blacken Vrinten, thereby casting doubt on his own guilt. D. Engelen, *Geschiedenis van de Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst* ('s-Gravenhage: Sdu 1995) p.52.

²⁴⁷ F.W. Winterbotham, *The Ultra secret* (New York: Harper & Row 1974) pp.58-59.

²⁴⁸ Belgian agents had received similar promises of exfiltration, but none of these were redeemed. E. Verhoeven, 'Un mythe du début de l'occupation: les soi-disant atterrissages d'avions anglais (1940-1941)' in *Regards sur la guerre aérienne en Hainaut occidental*, 1995 no 1 pp.114-119. Van Brink managed to return under his own steam. According to West (p.178), a third Dutch MI6 agent, W.B. Schrage, was dispatched in 1940, but in fact this happened in 1941.

²⁴⁹ Van 't Sant in *PEC* 4C II p.1562.

²⁵⁰ P. Brijnen van Houten; J.G. Kikkert, *Brandwacht in de coulissen* (Houten: De Haan 1988) pp. 95, 142.

²⁵¹ JUSLON, 3240. Letter 19410328 W.J. Hooper to Van 't Sant.

²⁵² Derksema in *PEC* 4C I p.372.

²⁵³ Van 't Sant in *PEC* 4C II p.1559.

²⁵⁴ JUSLON, 3670. Memorandum 19410318 to Rabagliati.

ence regarding agent activities.²⁵⁵ They were not the only ones to go. Captain Loewe – the prewar PCO liaison officer with the Dutch military intelligence and security service GS III at The Hague, who headed the PCO after the Venlo incident²⁵⁶ – was seeking out Dutch aspirant agents for MI6 in Great Britain. He was sacked in December 1940, at the same time as Hooper and Vrinten. Thereupon Loewe joined N(etherlands) Section in SOE.²⁵⁷ It so happened that all three figured on the Fahndungsliste – Holland.

It must have been difficult for MI6 to broaden the distance between Hooper and the Dutch, because of his close ties with them. In March 1941 Hooper had stated (in translation): ‘I feel I always worked for the interests of the Netherlands and that my way of doing things was one of being as honest I could be to you.’²⁵⁸ It is possible that Hooper’s superior, lieutenant-colonel C.E.C. (Euan) Rabagliati, resorted to some defamation, because in February 1941 Van ’t Sant wrote to Rabagliati: ‘In connection with your confidential information to me regarding your experiences with Mr. Hooper of the last few days, and referring to your discussion with His Royal Highness [prince Bernhard of the Netherlands] on the 26th [...] Leaving out of consideration the measures to be taken by the English service against Mr. Hooper [...] We would appreciate a quick solution of the question-Hooper, as we intend to break off every connection with Mr. Hooper, as soon as we are no longer bound to observe the secrecy which you have enjoined upon us.’²⁵⁹ The next day Van ’t Sant informed his superior, the Dutch minister of Justice Gerbrandy, that MI6 had informed him of certain actions by Hooper which made it desirable to discontinue further cooperation.²⁶⁰ Van ’t Sant was only willing to explain the reasons for this decision to Gerbrandy in person, so it is not possible to know what story Rabagliati has told. It is however probable that Rabagliati hinted at some financial misconduct of Hooper.

He most probably told something too for which we have only one source; a handicap often encountered in research. In the diaries of Guy Liddell of MI5 one finds two brief references to Hooper. On 18 March 1941 he wrote:

‘After lunch I discussed with Valentine Vivian and Felix Cowgill the question of [Bill Hooper]²⁶¹, who is working with Commandant François van ’t Sant, the head of the Dutch Combined Intelligence Bureau. It seems that there has been some inter-office intrigue with Claude Dansey employing an agent to watch him. He is apparently associating with Mrs Tregenna who is of foreign extraction. I do not think there is anything in it except sex but we are going to make further enquiries.’²⁶²

And on 24 March he wrote about one Cunninghame, whose ‘métier was to steal suitcases. He had disclosed to the police that he had found in a suitcase a document, the property of W.J. Hooper. This document was relating to Soviet espionage.’²⁶³ Unfortunately one can only speculate about the possible implications.

Because Van ’t Sant was bound by secrecy enjoined upon him by Rabagliati, he had to refrain from discussing these ‘actions’ with Hooper himself. Hooper did not understand what had happened.²⁶⁴ In April 1941 he volunteered (in translation): ‘Apparently already a long time ago it was the intention to take away my liaison as soon as things were running.’²⁶⁵

Even Van ’t Sant himself had to resign as chief of the CID on 14 August 1941, due to allegations in the Dutch community in London that he had blackmailed somebody in the past, and rumours that he had received large amounts of money from MI6 without proper accountability.²⁶⁶ He had the misfortune to meet an adversary of old times as head of N Section in SOE, major R.V. Laming CBE. In 1916 they had taken opposite sides in a treason trial in Rotterdam, and they ‘had never been able to forgive each other.’²⁶⁷ It was Laming who was tell-

²⁵⁵ Vrinten in *PEC 4C I* p.419.

²⁵⁶ TNA, FO 371/24397, 196. Letter 19400215 British legation The Hague to Kirkpatrick with enclosure list of persons to be evacuated, 19400103.\ West p.74.

²⁵⁷ Loewe’s aliases were Anderson and Major Lane. He joined N Section in SOE with effect from 19401202 but bureaucratic uncertainties seem to have delayed the actual date until 19410227. On 19420212 he left SOE as a major for a posting to the War Office. Letter 19911128 G. Cowell to author.

²⁵⁸ JUSLON, 10506. Letter 19410328 W.J. Hooper to Van ’t Sant.

²⁵⁹ JUSLON, 10506. Letter 19410228 Van ’t Sant to Rabagliati.

²⁶⁰ JUSLON, 12607. Letter 19410301 Van ’t Sant to Gerbrandy.

²⁶¹ West identified Bill Hooper wrongly as Jack Hooper.

²⁶² TNA KV 4/187. Liddell diaries, 19401001-19410531.\ Nigel West [ed], *The Guy Liddell diaries, volume I: 1939-1942: MI5's Director of Counter-Espionage in World War II* (London: Routledge 2005) pp.135-136.

²⁶³ West [ed] p.138.

²⁶⁴ In March 1941 Van ’t Sant, despite this wilderness of mirrors, showed compassion, offering to settle Hooper’s debt of £ 70. In May Hooper expressed his ‘heartiest thanks for the generous offer you made me some months ago. I feel, however, that however much it was appreciated, I cannot avail myself of this offer either privately or officially.’ JUSLON, 10506. Letter 19410310 Van ’t Sant to W.J. Hooper, and letter 19410516 W.J. Hooper to Van ’t Sant.

²⁶⁵ JUSLON, 10506. Letter 19410412 W.J. Hooper to Van ’t Sant.

²⁶⁶ Rumour had it this would have amounted to £ 25,000, paid by R.B. Tinsley and E.A.L. Dalton to Van ’t Sant for services rendered during WW1. A.Q.H Dijkhoorn in *PEC 4C I* p.190.

²⁶⁷ M.R.D. Foot, *SOE in the Low Countries* (London: St Ermin’s 2001) p.83-.\ In June 1939 Laming became commercial secretary to the British legation in The Hague. In January or February 1940 he was transferred as Acting vice consul Examiner exemption applications from the Foreign Office to the local Ministry of Economic Warfare staff. SOE came under this Ministry. TNA, FO 371/24397, 204. List of persons to be evacuated, undated; 207. List of persons to be evacuated, 19400210.

ing some of those stories in London. Till now the rumours about Van 't Sant have remained unproven. However, given the fact that Van 't Sant had been awarded an CBE – not Officer, but Commander of the British Empire – in 1930, it is obvious that Great Britain thought the money well spent.²⁶⁸ Laming was not willing to divulge any details about his Dutch agents to Van 't Sant who was ‘not a man to whom he would entrust the lives of his friends, even at the request of the queen herself.’ This somewhat strong statement was his answer to a plea by prince Bernhard to trust Van 't Sant in May 1941. Laming's opinion was mirrored by Van 't Sant and his deputy captain R.P.J. Derksema, who assessed Loewe's performance in SOE's N Section.²⁶⁹ They regarded him as a blunderer who did not properly organise the activities in the Netherlands. Van 't Sant even expressed the opinion he would not and could not take any responsibility for the lives of agents to be dispatched by Loewe.

There was another problem involving the internment case of A.D. van Buuren, a Dutch businessman. After arriving in London he had been interrogated by Bill Hooper and Van 't Sant. He admitted that he had maintained relations with the Fascist leader Mussolini. Another point not in his favour was Van Buuren's friendly relationship with Kurt Wenzel, a German business associate living in The Hague.²⁷⁰ Wenzel had tried to persuade PCO agent K.A. Funk²⁷¹ (agent number 33126) to tell him everything about the PCO, so MI6 suspected Wenzel of being a German agent. Van Buuren's internment had been recommended. Within the Dutch government, however, there were ministers lobbying for Van Buuren's release and finally, in November 1940, they succeeded.

Van 't Sant's position had been undermined and in August 1941 Gerbrandy was forced to let him go. Already in May Laming had reported gleefully that Van 't Sant had been ‘“successfully sidetracked” and would have no chance to interfere directly in SO2's affairs.’²⁷² This information probably came from the Dutch Ministry of Defence, whose Minister A.Q.H. Dijkhoorn had abandoned confidence in Van 't Sant as chief of the CID in mid-May.²⁷³ Van 't Sant's deputy Derksema was temporarily put in charge. After the dismissal of Bill Hooper and Van 't Sant the official liaison between British and Dutch services was no longer regulated. On 15 September 1941 it was decided that the Dutch Minister of Internal Affairs H. van Boeyen would handle all Dutch contacts with MI6 and SOE.²⁷⁴ During a meeting between Churchill, Gerbrandy and prince Bernhard in September 1941, it was decided to appoint Rabagliati of MI6 the official and only intermediary ‘in connection with Intelligence and Secret Service’ as of 1 October 1941.²⁷⁵ Van Boeyen already had appointed Derksema as the Dutch intermediary for MI5, MI6, and SOE. This meant Rabagliati was to be the liaison with MI6 and SOE, as Jack Hooper was Derksema's liaison with MI5.²⁷⁶ It turned out to be a bad decision. Derksema was having difficulties obtaining information about Dutch SOE agents, a subject entirely new to him. Either Rabagliati or SOE itself were reluctant in sharing this information. Laming was still running N Section in SOE, and it is unlikely he regarded Van 't Sant's former deputy Derksema as a more cooperative opposite number. After succeeding Derksema as temporary chief of the CID in February 1942, colonel M.R. de Bruijne²⁷⁷ experienced similar difficulties. After the war he concluded (in translation): ‘It was a very sloppy affair, that service of *Rabagliati* [MI6], inasmuch it was sloppiness. I found him to be an extremely untrustworthy person and I thought him capable of anything.’²⁷⁸ According to Rabagliati there was a reason: ‘In this business there's no such thing as straightforward. Honesty and all that, splendid! But in this game all it does is kill people. Deceit is the tool of any intelligence service, always has been, the end justifies the means. If you do this, it must look like that. Appearances and reality are not allowed to have something in common.’²⁷⁹ He had told this to Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema who, with other young and enthusiastic Dutchmen, ran a semi-official in- and exfiltration operation by sea in close co-operation with Rabagliati. Erik became more and more disenchanted with British co-operation. Already in No-

²⁶⁸ Frans Kluiters, *R.B. Tinsley, a biographical note*. <http://www.nisa-intelligence.nl> (February 2004).

²⁶⁹ JUSLON, 10160. Letter 19410605 Dutch Minister of Defence to Dutch Minister of Justice.

²⁷⁰ JUSLON, 10506. Report 19400912, concerning Van Buuren.

²⁷¹ The German Kurt Andreas Funk had moved to The Hague in 1938, where he became a chauffeur. Gemeentearchief 's-Gravenhage. Register of residents.

²⁷² Foot p.84. SO2 was one of the designations of SOE. Wolters p.93.

²⁷³ NA Ministerie van Oorlog Londen (hereafter MvOL) (2.13.71), 274. Letter 19410515 Dijkhoorn to Gerbrandy.

²⁷⁴ Kluiters p.124.

²⁷⁵ JUSLON, 3797. Letter 19410919 Dutch Ministry of Internal Affairs to British Air Minister. The precise nature of the role prince Bernhard played in matters of intelligence still has to be determined.

²⁷⁶ MI6 already had liaised between MI5 and the CID. In 1940 correspondence concerning security matters (mostly from '12650') was directed to '33200'. It can be assumed this agent 33200 was either Bill Hooper or Vrinten. In the latter half of 1941, very probably in September, a direct contact between MI5 (Jack Hooper) and the CID was established. JUSLON, 3282-3350. Correspondence to '33200' and Van 't Sant.

²⁷⁷ Foot thinks that because De Bruijne 'signed his wartime letters as de Bruyne', he has to follow this spelling. These letters, however, were typed by De Bruijne's secretary, who had the habit, probably for the sake of speed, of typing an 'y' instead of an 'ij'. De Bruijne's personal correspondence was conducted on paper with the letterhead 'M.R. de Bruijne'. To differentiate between 'ij' and 'y' is important in searching in an alphabetical order: the 'ij' is a composite character and must be arranged under the 'i'. So one has to search in two places, instead of one (the 'y'). Foot p.79. Jelte Rep, *Englandspiel: spionagetragedie in bezet Nederland 1942-1944*, 3rd edition (Bussum: Holkema & Warendorf 1979) photo no 136.

²⁷⁸ De Bruijne in *PEC* 4C I p.451.

²⁷⁹ Rabagliati cited in Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema, *Soldaat van Oranje '40-'45* ('s-Gravenhage: Stok ny) p.185. Part of this citation quoted in Foot p.119.

vember 1941 he wrote: 'I suggest, very friendly though, that Whalley should stick to his naval business [organizing the sorties of the MGB's] and leave the rest to Colonel R. and myself. This would end friendly but intense arguments, futile as they do not impress me, nor the Colonel I'm sure.'²⁸⁰ In May 1942 he threw in the towel after discovering that he was completely cut off from planning and execution of operations. On top of that he observed another MGB carrying out another operation some 800 yards from him on the same stretch of Dutch coast, something he had not been informed of. Disappointed in the Dutch and British secret services, and in politics, he joined the RAF thereafter.

Rabagliati as intermediary

An illustration of the way in which Rabagliati handled Dutch affairs follows here. Because of the link with the Dutch SOE agent H.M.G. Lauwers and the Englandspiel, it is interesting to see how things have been handled in London: a prelude not adequately covered in M.R.D. Foot's book *SOE in the Low Countries*. Dijkhoorn – the first Dutch Minister of Defence and a former opponent of Van 't Sant regarding Van Buuren – had been helpful in supplying SOE with Dutch aspirant agents without being informed about their further employment. In June 1941 Van Boeyen succeeded Dijkhoorn ad interim – meanwhile the ministry had been renamed Ministry of War – and he took a different view to this lack of knowledge. Later Rabagliati made to Derksema a remark which is enlightening in more ways than one: 'You will remember that in the old days, when General Van 't Sant was running the organisation and again at lunch with Mr. Van Boeyen and yourself on 7th October, I was promised practically anybody for our joint purposes.'²⁸¹ So the Dutch were not unhelpful, and Van Boeyen had shown an active interest in matters relating to SOE and MI6.

In October 1941 Derksema heard a rumour about a Dutch agent being dispatched in a short while, and in his capacity as temporary chief of the CID, he reminded Rabagliati of the new arrangement since 1 October. On the 16th he wrote: 'Referring to the decision to keep me informed of people returning to Holland I would be glad if you would find out who is returning to Holland, how and when he is going, what his mission is, etc. I would appreciate an early reply.'²⁸² The next day Rabagliati promised: 'I will endeavour to find out the replies to the questions you ask as soon as possible.'²⁸³ That same day Derksema wrote another letter to Rabagliati: 'The Dutch pilot SCHAPER [who in 1940 had tried to exfiltrate Van Hamel] has made preparations for a commission for Mr. LAMING. His expenses are £ 30.0.0, which amount is chargeable to Mr. LAMING's service. Would you be so kind as to ask him to remit this amount to me? I should also like to know whom SCHAPER is going to drop in Holland.'²⁸⁴ Derksema had the distinct impression that MI6 was sending Dutch agents to the Netherlands without informing him.²⁸⁵ On the 24th Rabagliati answered part of this letter: Laming had asked that 'Schaper be good enough to itemise, roughly, his expenses of £30. I imagine Mr. Laming's Accountants require such details.'²⁸⁶ On the 29th Rabagliati wrote to Derksema that Laming had informed him of the following: 'One of our Agents, H.N.G. [sic] LAUWERS, who has been instructed in W/T work, and whose services were lent us by the Ministry of Defence, is shortly proceeding to the Netherlands to act as a W/T Operator. We had, as you know, been in touch with Mr. Klein, and in order to provide Lauwers with a suitable job we were contemplating asking Mr. Klein to give our man an introduction to his brother, so that for the first period of his stay he would have an ostensible occupation. The nearest period of departure is fast closing in, and it would therefore be extremely useful if we could get in touch with Klein as soon as possible.'²⁸⁷ The next day Derksema informed Rabagliati that Van Boeyen was not satisfied with Laming's answer.²⁸⁸ 'I would request you to ask Mr. Laming to state what the commission is of Mr. LAUWERS, when he returns to Holland and with whom he will get in contact. Will we be kept informed in due course of the messages which Mr. LAUWERS will send and receive?' On 1 November Rabagliati handed him a letter in which he simply acknowledged that Van Boeyen 'would like further information about this proposition. I am looking into the whole matter and will write to you again shortly.'²⁸⁹

Lauwers was dropped in the night of 7/8 November 1941. It may have been Derksema's awkward use of the English language, rivalry between SOE and MI6 or plain hindrance by Rabagliati, but Derksema had to remind the latter of Van Boeyen's wish to be informed. On 18 November he wrote: 'May I, please, remind you of my letter of October 30th inst., concerning the sending out of LAUWERS by Mr. LAMING. (No. 1005) The Minister wishes to be completely informed about the mission with which LAUWERS has been charged, and all

²⁸⁰ NA Archief Parlementaire Enquêtecommissie Regeringsbeleid 1940-1945 (2.02.27), 132 (346). Reports by S.E. Hazelhoff Roelfzema.

²⁸¹ JUSLON, 4253. Letter 19411121 Rabagliati to Derksema.

²⁸² JUSLON, 3715. Letter 19411016 CID to Rabagliati.

²⁸³ JUSLON, 3722. Letter 19411017 Rabagliati to Derksema.

²⁸⁴ JUSLON, 3329. Letter 19411017 CID to Rabagliati, no 410.

²⁸⁵ Derksema in *PEC* 4C I p.369.

²⁸⁶ JUSLON, 3329. Letter 19411024 Rabagliati to Derksema.

²⁸⁷ JUSLON, 3722. Letter 19411029 Rabagliati to Derksema.

²⁸⁸ JUSLON, 3722. Letter 19411030 CID to Rabagliati. There are two duplicates of this letter with slight textual differences.

²⁸⁹ JUSLON, 3722. Letter 19411101 Rabagliati to Derksema.

the communications which he is sending out, and which he receives, or those that are sent to him. I would be grateful if you would be so kind as to impress on Mr. LAMING to treat this matter with the greatest urgency.²⁹⁰

Rabagliati must have made some excuse about not being able to retrieve Derksema's letter, because the CID had to send him a copy of this letter on 19 November ('As requested by you over the telephone, please find enclosed copy of letter to you dated the 30th October 1941, No. 1005.').²⁹¹ Rabagliati now used a common bureaucratic tactic, because on 22 November he wrote a letter in which he referred to Derksema's letter 'of 18th November' instead of to the original letter dated 30 October.²⁹² He had 'ascertained that Lauwers has in fact been despatched. So far as we know, he has arrived. I will inform our friends of the contents of your letter.'

On 27 November Rabagliati wrote again: 'I am glad to be able to give you the information about LAUWERS for which you asked:-

Lauwers was despatched to Holland on 7th November. According to the report received, he landed safely but there is, as yet, no communication from him. His instructions were to contact two couriers who were despatched to Holland two months ago and who, up to the present, have failed to put in an appearance at the rendezvous arranged with them, although four attempts have now been made to pick up from this rendezvous. If Lauwers does not succeed in finding the two couriers, they will proceed to carry out the instructions which were issued to them.'²⁹³ Derksema must have wondered who those two couriers had been.²⁹⁴ Rabagliati continued his letter with something Derksema must have appreciated. 'I am informed that both Laming and Loewe have now handed over the duties, which up to now they have carried out.' Rabagliati did not inform Derksema of the reason for dismissing Loewe who had been Lauwers' conducting officer, nor for dismissing Laming.²⁹⁵ According to Foot, the reason for Laming's dismissal was his opinion that the Netherlands were too crowded with people who knew each other too well for secret work there to be feasible.²⁹⁶ In all, less than one percent of the Dutch population was involved in resistance activities. The chief of SOE thought this defeatist and sent Laming back to the Foreign Office.²⁹⁷ Rabagliati thought it would be advantageous if Derksema could meet Laming's officially not yet appointed successor in order to come to a 'satisfactory working arrangement. I would suggest that we might all lunch together one day next week if this is convenient to you. [...] If either of these dates is possible, I will ask my new colleague.' This turned out to be major C.C. Blizard alias Blunt who became the official head of N Section on 19 December.²⁹⁸ Laming stayed on for another three months as number two. However, the SOE Dutch Section History, General, continued to indicate Laming as head of Section during the months of January and February, Blizard from March 1942.²⁹⁹

There seems to have been a mix-up of letters, because Derksema had written two letters on 18 November, one of which was numbered 1652.³⁰⁰ 'I herewith beg you to be so kind as to ask Mr. LAMING to produce a complete statement of all persons (with their addresses) whom he has been sending off to Holland, and of those who are in training with him. I would appreciate to have full particulars about them who have already left for Holland, such as regarding their mission, the persons they are having, or going to have contact with; messages and communications they are to send and to receive; names of towns and places where they are operating [sic], or going to operate from, etc. About those who are in his training, I expect statements of the dates on which they are supposed to leave, and information about their mission, etc. I will have to discuss Mr. LAMING's statement with the Minister on November 26th inst., therefore I thank you kindly asking Mr. LAMING to furnish the things mentioned at his earliest convenience.' By letter of 21 November Rabagliati complied in part: 'On 28th October (A.133) [³⁰¹] you wrote and asked for a nominal roll of those persons about whom you wrote on 18th November (No. 1652). I have pleasure in enclosing this.'³⁰² The title of this list was: 'Provisional list of Dutch subjects employed, as on 31st October, 1941'. Is it really suspicious-minded to note the difference in time be-

²⁹⁰ JUSLON, 3722. Letter 19411118 CID to Rabagliati, no 1005.

²⁹¹ JUSLON, 3722. Letter 19411119 CID to Rabagliati.

²⁹² JUSLON, 3722. Letter 19411122 Rabagliati to Derksema.

²⁹³ JUSLON, 4180. Letter 19411127 Rabagliati to Derksema. Lauwers had been equipped with a nonfunctioning transceiver. Only after he managed to get it repaired, he succeeded in contacting Home Station on 19420103. MvOL, 3007. Report 19450530. According to Foot (p.110) this report puts the date 'as late as 3 February.' However, the copy of the report in the Dutch archive correctly states (in accordance with the War Diary): 'As arranged I notified H.Q. of our safe arrival by letter via Zurich, but only on January 3rd, 1942, did I succeed in establishing wireless contact with base from the Hague, the delay being due to faulty wiring of W/T set.'

²⁹⁴ This was Operation 'Glasshouse': A.A. Homburg and C. Sporre who jumped in the night of 7/8 September 1941. Foot p.103 (in his Appendix 3 (p.474) incorrectly stated as by 'sea ferry'.

²⁹⁵ Rep p.64.

²⁹⁶ Foot p.85. According to Laming, there arose a difference of opinion after the parachuting of SOE-agent A.A. Homburg in September 1941. Laming in *PEC* 4C I p.430.

²⁹⁷ Unpublished recent research of the author has confirmed Laming's opinion in part. Secret work was feasible, and was being done, although the necessary partition, so much desired by MI6, was not always possible, due to the indeed small circle of participants. Indiscretion, due to the unfamiliarity with the 'need to know' principle, and very active Dutch traitors, caused many losses. The second half of the war showed improvement regarding the sticking to the rules of clandestine activities.

²⁹⁸ Foot p.86.

²⁹⁹ Wolters pp.264-265. TNA, HS 7/159, 1942.

³⁰⁰ JUSLON, 4180. Letter 19411118 Derksema to Rabagliati, no 1652.

³⁰¹ The letter to which Rabagliati referred ('On 28th October (A.133) you wrote [...]') has not been found.

³⁰² JUSLON, 4180. Letter 19411121 Rabagliati to Derksema.

tween the state of affairs regarding Dutch SOE agents as of 31 October, and Rabagliati's letter dated 21 November? In all, it took three weeks just to obtain part of the information asked for, a list with names, some misspelt, without further particulars about, for instance, their missions. This course of events suggests that Derksema, described by Foot as 'noted for incompetence'³⁰³, was, instead of a stubborn incompetent opposite number, much more a victim of Rabagliati as intermediary. According to Van 't Sant, Rabagliati detested writing letters about intelligence matters.³⁰⁴ It must however be noted that already in May 1941 Laming had turned down a suggestion from prince Bernhard to supply Van 't Sant with the names of all Dutch SOE agents.³⁰⁵ Even the prince had been forced to acknowledge that SOE operations were not within Van 't Sant's province. Oil on the fire was put by the ACSS of MI6, Assistant Chief Claude Dansey, who had 'assumed personal responsibility for maintaining good relations' between MI6 and SOE³⁰⁶, when warning SOE on 11 June 1941 of attempts by allied secret services to play off MI6 and SOE.³⁰⁷ He underlined the necessity of the prevalence of British interests; personal preferences were absolutely subordinate.

The successor of Derksema as temporary chief of the CID, M.R. de Bruijne, has already been cited in connection with the trustworthiness of Rabagliati. He was convinced that Rabagliati withheld messages. After the war he said (in translation): 'He [Rabagliati] had promised to pass on the information from agents he had sent, concerning the Netherlands. However, what he passed on, was just about nil.'³⁰⁸ One of the few examples of MI6's attitude that can be reconstructed is to be found in the messages sent by MI6 agent W.J. van der Reijden. This professional radio-operator had been disqualified by Derksema as a potential agent because of his questionable past, but Rabagliati had been more impressed by the high speed in morse signals of this agent. Despite Van der Reijden's denials after the war, he co-operated fully with the Germans after his arrest.³⁰⁹ Because Rabagliati learned of this arrest, and as he received telegrams from Van der Reijden after that date, he knew this agent had been turned, although his security checks had been in order. He passed on the telegrams to De Bruijne, without informing him of Van der Reijden's duplicity.

Too few drops

In December 1940 Hooper had left his Dutch-related activities to Rabagliati. In March 1941 he wrote in a letter to Van 't Sant (in translation): 'Regarding BB's attitude to my case, I have to admit I do not understand. Being sidetracked seems a possibility, but must have been a special "policy".'³¹⁰ It is unclear who or what BB was, but it is conceivable Hooper meant the chief of MI6, brigadier Stewart Graham Menzies.³¹¹ In November 1939 Menzies had succeeded Sinclair as chief of MI6 after a fierce battle, and with help from within MI6.³¹² Cadogan had his doubts – 'I am not sure Menzies is the man' – and he tried to overhaul MI6; only marginal improvements were made.³¹³ According to a report by Vrinten it was 'BB' who had not spent £ 200.000 of his budget in 1940.³¹⁴ Maybe Menzies's preference for military men in his service has been a factor in dismissing Hooper, a civilian.³¹⁵ And then it is also plausible MI6 indeed wanted more agents very much, because it had money to burn. Menzies' own position had been repeatedly under fire too. In February 1941 one of his acquaintances wrote that brigadier Reginald Alexander Dallas Brooks told him that 'question of new head of Secret Intelligence Service is again under discussion.'³¹⁶ By March 1941 Cadogan had assessed him as second-rate. So Menzies had to strengthen his own position, maybe even to the point of dispatching amounts of not sufficiently trained agents.

Although in 1941 some Dutch MI6 agents were dispatched, Rabagliati remained set on more. In January 1942 he wrote in a letter to Derksema: 'We are seriously deficient in information from Holland of enemy movement and activity. This information is a serious factor in the forming of general Allied strategy. I have frequently told you that we are in a worse position regarding information from Holland than from any of the other countries occupied by the enemy. It is vital to our future that we should take steps to place agents in the country who can give us early and accurate information of any German preparations for invasion of this country, and as you are

³⁰³ Foot p.79.

³⁰⁴ Van 't Sant in *PEC 4C II* p.1565.

³⁰⁵ Wolters p.93.

³⁰⁶ Mackenzie p.383.

³⁰⁷ Wolters p.93.\TNA HS 7/217, 1020.

³⁰⁸ De Bruijne cited in *PEC 4C I* p.455.

³⁰⁹ See Schreieder in *PEC 4C I* p.51-.

³¹⁰ JUSLON, 3240. Letter 19410328 W.J. Hooper to Van 't Sant.

³¹¹ The abbreviation BB was used for Brendan Bracken, who had become Churchill's Political Private Secretary in 1939. In 1941 he took office as Minister of Information. However, somehow he does not seem to fit, although he certainly could hold strong dislikes. See for example his letter cited by Garnett in which he expressed his views on certain Americans. Garnett p.358.

³¹² Richard J. Aldrich, *Intelligence and the war against Japan: Britain, America and the politics of secret service* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2000) pp.93-94.

³¹³ For Menzies' appointment see Brown pp.221-223.

³¹⁴ JUSLON, 3240. Report 19410411.

³¹⁵ Dorril pp.26, 494.

³¹⁶ Robert Bruce Lockhart cited in Howarth p.149.

aware, the possibility of this may occur at any time after the next two months.³¹⁷ Rabagliati must have been referring to Operation ‘Sealion’, but in the autumn of 1941 this invasion already was considered as a ‘somewhat remote threat’.³¹⁸ Because Derksema came to distrust Rabagliati, he was reluctant to provide aspirant agents to MI6.³¹⁹

In the end, all MI6’s efforts to get more Dutch agents were to no avail. In these first years there simply were not enough young Dutch men in Great Britain aspiring and able to become agents. Most of them, like Van Brink and Lauwers, had not come from the Netherlands, but had resided in non-occupied territory, thereby lacking the necessary knowledge of recent developments in Holland. Those who had, the ‘Engelandvaarders’ – young people who had fled their country in order to reach Britain and eager to fight for the allied cause – were stranded in Vichy-France, Switzerland or Spain, where some of the Dutch authorities did not have the same drive. There they languished, becoming progressively disillusioned, some even to the point that they returned home. From one to two hundred men who had fled their country overland in 1941, only ten³²⁰ succeeded in reaching Great Britain that same year. Others arriving there in 1941, 87 men³²¹, had managed to do so over sea, either over the North Sea or via Sweden. Less than eight percent of them were eventually sent back to the Netherlands, either as MI6 or SOE agents. Out of these eight agents, three were dispatched in 1941, and of these three, only one by MI6. Here it must be pointed out that MI6 had priority over SOE in selecting promising aspirant agents; only in May 1942 SOE was allowed an equal share.³²²

Even in 1944 Menzies objected to the recruiting of agents by other services than MI6 as there was a great scarcity of qualified persons.³²³ He was alarmed by the requirement of increased numbers of agents for a PWE/SOE plan regarding Belgium, and he directly accused Political Warfare Executive agents of endangering those of MI6 when in dire need, with results ‘which have been almost uniformly disastrous’. David Garnett, after the war commissioned by the Cabinet Office to write PWE’s secret history, remarked: ‘Documents prepared in PWE Low Countries Region rebut ‘C’’s charges and state that in no known instance did field activities of PWE agents compromise or result in casualties to the SIS. Moreover, PWE had countercharges to bring, particularly in regard to instructions given to SIS agents regarding Othello [³²⁴] that he was extremely dangerous and “if he annoys you betray him”. The words used were “le livrez” which Mr de Sausmarez could only suppose was a mis-reading for “le laissez” “abandon him”. Fortunately the instructions from London were ignored by the SIS agents in the field.’ Like De Sausmarez, Garnett was understating Menzies’ ruthlessness.

According to West, Rabagliati resigned from MI6 after a clash with a colleague, head of the French section.³²⁵ His resignation from A2 (Dutch Section) must be placed at the end of June 1942.³²⁶ In 1944 colonel RM J.K. Cordeaux of MI6 wrote of ‘very limited results which were obtained in the old days’.³²⁷ Before December 1942 results were ‘confined to an average of about fifteen telegraphic reports, each of about six lines, per month, produced by a group of agents working entirely independently and whose number never exceeded a total of six. They were most of them very able and devoted men but, as they worked entirely on their own without contacting any of the underground organisations in Holland, they could not be expected to produce any useful quantity of information and, lacking any organisation in Holland to protect them, they were almost without exception finally taken by the enemy until, by mid-summer 1942, not one remained.’ It is untrue that these agents worked entirely on their own. Most of them had contacts with one or more organisations, and because of penetration of these groups by Dutch collaborators, or by direction finding, they were vulnerable to arrest. MI6’s aversion came to light after the war as well. In the CIA-MI6 agreement, concluded in the late 1940s, it was stated that resistance movements invariably provided ‘frequent and complex political problems, often of a sporadic and unforeseen nature’.³²⁸ It is unclear if Cordeaux’s misrepresentation had a purpose. Anyway, the CID was not able to chal-

³¹⁷ JUSLON, 4138. Letter 19420121 Rabagliati to Derksema.

³¹⁸ F.H. Hinsley ea, *British Intelligence in the Second World War: its influence on strategy and operations*, 2 (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office 1981) pp.78-79. On 19410520 the Dutch government by way of prince Bernhard was officially informed that an invasion, for the time being, was not anticipated. MvOL, 189, 142. Report 19410523 concerning the weekly conference in the War Office.

³¹⁹ Derksema in *PEC 4C I* p.373.

³²⁰ Information from Agnes Dessing who is currently writing a thesis on the Dutch Engelandvaarders.

³²¹ Jan Bruin; Jan van der Werff, *Vrijheid achter de horizon: Engelandvaart over de Noordzee 1940/1945* (Houten: Van Reemst 1998) pp.26-92. Information from Agnes Dessing.

³²² Foot p.37.

³²³ Garnett pp.366-367.

³²⁴ Othello, the code name of Michel Losseau, was parachuted into Belgium on 19430614 with the mission ‘to contact people with influence on the distribution of food’; he returned successfully to Britain on 19431225 ‘having accomplished one of the most skilful pieces of economic and political warfare.’ His organisation was responsible, ‘after liberation, for taking possession of and handing over the Ministry of Food and Agriculture in working order.’ Foot considers him to be an SOE agent. Garnett pp.224, 425. Foot pp.332-333, 494.

³²⁵ West p.138.

³²⁶ L. de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog 9* (’s-Gravenhage: Staatsuitgeverij 1979) p.889. According to De Bruijne, Rabagliati’s resignation was due to Gubbins’ appeal to Churchill in person. De Bruijne in *PEC 4C I* p.453.

³²⁷ MvOL, 319. Letter 19440808 Cordeaux to Dutch Minister of War.

³²⁸ Richard J. Aldrich [ed], *Espionage, security and intelligence in Britain 1945-1970* (Manchester: Manchester University Press 1998) pp.204-205. After the war MI6 met similar difficulties in regard to American actions. Aldrich, *The hidden hand* p.315-.

lenge these ‘facts’, because this service received few copies or paraphrases of telegrams, sent by these Dutch MI6 agents, relating to information about the German armed forces in Holland.³²⁹ According to Derksema, he had not even been allowed to talk to Van Hamel regarding his instructions and task in the Netherlands.³³⁰ However, Van Hamel’s superior at the time, J.Th. Furstner, knew that Van Hamel only would have to establish contact, and would be exfiltrated after two months.³³¹ Furstner had Rabagliati’s personal assurance of Van Hamel’s return.³³²

Hooper and MI5

Unaware of high office politics, in March 1941 Bill Hooper was in touch with MI5 concerning Pieck. MI5 still had not closed Pieck’s case and called in Hooper for assistance. He had already given them documents which Pieck had handed him in May 1940. On 11 March the minute sheets indeed speak of Pieck’s ‘address book and an envelope containing a number of visiting cards.’³³³ Hooper had a conversation with deputy director-general Jasper Harker, who offered him a job in MI5. Hooper was glad at least someone appreciated his former work. In December 1941 MI5 charged him with counter-espionage regarding merchant navy personnel at Glasgow.³³⁴ Most probably he began working for B.I.L (Seamen and the personnel of airlines).³³⁵ The work of this section was largely of a security nature, but its other function was to employ agents among seamen. It was this other function Hooper became involved with.

In December 1941 he wrote to Derksema: ‘I am taking up another appointment in Scotland. I am moving off to night. [...] I further wish you all success in your work. I think the most difficult time is now over. Things were not so easy in the beginning, were they?’³³⁶

EPILOGUE

Unlike King, Pieck has not faced trial, because his prewar activities had not been detrimental to the security of the Netherlands. He remained someone of interest however. The forerunner of the Dutch security service BVD³³⁷ became interested in prewar Soviet espionage, probably encouraged by MI5.³³⁸ In September 1946 it was decided to have Pieck followed, although this had to be done circumspectly ‘since it was assumed P. was very watchful.’ According to Igor Cornelissen the first conversations with Pieck took place as early as in 1946.³³⁹ Pieck’s following and the talks with him at the same time can be seen as parallel research.

In March 1950 Pieck was approached by a certain Van Oosterzee who told him he was a BVD-staff member and asked him to be so kind as to elaborate on his former activities and communist friends.³⁴⁰ Pieck decided to check on this person. In 1937-1938 he had gotten acquainted, probably through Bill Hooper, with Vrinten who was working for the Dutch Ministry of Justice since 1940. Pieck asked him about Van Oosterzee, and on behalf of old acquaintances Vrinten could assure him that Van Oosterzee, an alias of J.A. Cijfer, was indeed working for the BVD. Pieck answered a questionnaire regarding Dutch subjects and informed Van Oosterzee he was willing to discuss activities of certain Soviet agents and British citizens, if necessary, in London. MI5 minuted that Pieck ‘should be treated as a source of valuable intelligence, and that accordingly no step should be taken which might involve the risk of impairing it. I [J.H. Marriott, deputy head of B.1(a)³⁴¹] think it exceedingly unlikely that, however sinister his motives may be, he will have, on this visit at any rate, a straightforward espionage mission, and I do not therefore think that we ought to keep him under physical observation.’³⁴² In April 1950 he visited MI5 for some days in order to tell M.B. Hanley about the Soviet secret service during the years 1936-1939. MI5 was grateful. After the war Pieck’s papers had ended up with the BVD, and Pieck was dumbfounded to see them again, in a BVD-file.³⁴³ The conversations with Pieck can be seen as a prelude of Project

³²⁹ Cordeaux forgot to mention that at least some of the numerous written reports, sent by courier from Holland, had reached London in May 1942. J.M. Somer, *Man in oorlog: de dagboeken van majoor dr. J.M. Somer, hoofd bureau inlichtingen te Londen 13 maart 1942 – 22 september 1943* (Baarn: Bosch & Keuning 1981) p.86.

³³⁰ Derksema in *PEC 4C I* p.368.

³³¹ J.Th. Furstner in *PEC 4C I* p.401.

³³² NA Archief J.Th. Furstner (2.12.46), 59. Memorandum, undated, by Furstner.

³³³ TNA, KV 2/810. No 189.

³³⁴ JUSLON, 10506. Note 19411213.

³³⁵ *The Security Service* p.262.

³³⁶ JUSLON, 3240. Letter 19411215 W.J. Hooper to Derksema.

³³⁷ This forerunner was the Centrale Veiligheidsdienst, which changed into the BVD in 1949. In 2002 the BVD was transformed into the AIVD, the Algemene Inlichtingen- en veiligheidsdienst, a combination of a security service and an intelligence service: an interesting development after fifty years of strict segregation.

³³⁸ BNV, 3109. Note 19460912.

³³⁹ Cornelissen p.257.

³⁴⁰ AMJ PolKab, P 94/50. Reports 19500320 and 19500602.

³⁴¹ Nigel West, *MI 5: British Security Service operations 1909-1945* (New York: Military Heritage Press 1988) p.212.

³⁴² TNA, KV 2/813. No 363.

³⁴³ Cornelissen p.167.

‘Antiek’ (Antique), which the BVD started in the fifties in the opinion that prewar agents of the Soviet intelligence service had to be considered as at least potential Soviet agents.³⁴⁴ It did not yield much.

After the war Bill Hooper started an import-export firm in Scotland: W.J. Hooper & Co (Glasgow) Ltd, Exporters and Distributors.³⁴⁵ Towards the end of the forties he started visiting the Netherlands again. In 1951 he became a translator, and travelled a lot as such, visiting countries like Japan, Pakistan and the Middle East. In July 1955 he again settled in The Hague, where he became involved in organizing world fairs. One is inclined to think that this was because he wanted to be near his daughters who were living there, but, because his ex-wife had thoroughly soured the relationship³⁴⁶, this cannot have been the reason. For the Dutch Dairy Bureau he promoted the export of cheese to the Near East. In the telephone directory he was listed as a certified English language translator. While organizing a fair at Tokyo he cooperated with Han Pieck, so he must have managed to convince him of an innocuous reason for his papers being in the files of the BVD. According to Jack Hooper, his brother Bill later became a successful businessman in Ghana, Africa, where he somehow managed to get a statue erected in his honour. Since Western Europe had become burned territory for Hooper, Africa with its responsiveness to communism would have been good and new hunting grounds for MI6. At the end of the fifties Ghana had become a KGB-headquarters for the whole continent. The local MI5 officer was isolated from the Ghanaese security service, and he had been unable to gather information on the KGB.³⁴⁷ In 1960 John Bruce Lockhart reported that Africa was a perfect USSR laboratory for experimenting; it fulfilled all Lenin’s conditions for revolt: poverty, colonialism and exploitation. Because of the lack of massive resources needed for counter-subversion the British secret services countered the problem by concentrating limited resources on the elites in developing countries in the early 1960s.³⁴⁸ In practice, MI6 concentrated on counter-intelligence.³⁴⁹ This could fit in with Bill’s re-employment by MI6. Perhaps significant here is the year in which Menzies retired as head of MI6: 1952.³⁵⁰

Bill Hooper had been able to pull the wool over everybody’s eyes (including those of the BVD), although it is fair to point out that already in 1986 the Dutch maritime historian K.W.L. Bezemer has written: ‘From September 1939 he [Hooper] was re-employed [by the PCO] and succeeded in being recruited as a paid agent by both the German and Sovietrussian secret services, but forwarded important information to the British.’³⁵¹

Bill Hooper died on 17 November 1970 in Europe, a forgotten man and a victim of his success as a double agent.

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³⁴⁴ Engelen p.273.

³⁴⁵ TNA, KV 2/1740. Minute sheets, 37. Address: 103 Bath Street, Glasgow. Private address: 1, Whittinghame Gardens, 1098 Great Western Road, Glasgow.

³⁴⁶ The divorce in Edinburgh came into effect on 19490302. Copy index card of Centraal Bureau voor Genealogie.

³⁴⁷ Bower pp.219-223.

³⁴⁸ Aldrich, *The hidden hand* p.603.

³⁴⁹ Dorril p.721.

³⁵⁰ Brown p.715.

³⁵¹ K.W.L. Bezemer, *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Koopvaardij in de Tweede Wereldoorlog I* (Amsterdam; Brussel: Elsevier 1986) (3rd edition) p.240.

A2, 26
 Abwehr, 18
 Abwehrstelle Hamburg, 12
 Aldrich, 9
 Anderson, 21
 Andrew, 5
 Anglo-American Agencies, 11
 Antiek, 28
 Ast Hamburg, 12, 16
 B Branch, 18
 B.1(a), 27
 B.24, 14
 B.24 b., 19
 B.26, 19
 B26, 19
 Bartlett, 10
 BB, 25
 Bedeaux, 14
 Bernhard, 7, 21, 22, 26
 Best, 10, 14
 Blake, 3
 Blake-Budden, 18
 Blizard, 24
 Blunt, 5, 6, 7, 24
 Boeyen, 22, 23, 24
 Brijnen, 20
 Brink, 20, 26
 Brooks, 25
 Bruijne, 22, 25
 Buisman, 12
 Burgess, 9
 Buuren, 22, 23
 BVD, 2, 3, 27, 28
 Cadogan, 4, 5, 7, 9, 25
 Canaris, 14, 15
 Carriere, 4
 Carrière, 4
 Chamberlain, 8, 9, 10
 Chidson, 10, 14, 20
 Churchill, 22, 26
 Cijfer, 27
 Cooper, 13
 Cordeaux, 26, 27
 Cornelissen, 27, 28
 Costello, 5
 Cowgill, 16, 17, 18, 19
 Dalton, 1, 10, 11, 12, 14, 21
 Dansey, 25
 Deacon, 5
 Dennys, 17
 Derksema, 14, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27
 Dessing, 28
 Dijkhoorn, 22, 23
 Dilks, 5
 Dugteren, 12
 E1a, 7
 Engelen, 20, 28
 Farago, 1, 10, 16
 Firmin, 5
 Fleming, 13
 Fletcher, 2
 Foot, 22, 23, 24, 25
 Fuchs, 7
 Funk, 22
 Furstner, 27
 Garnett, 26
 Gerbrandy, 19, 21, 22
 Gerken, 15
 Giskes, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16
 Godfrey, 13
 Grote, 12, 18
 GS III, 14, 21
 Gubbins, 26
 Günther, 12
 Hamel, 19, 20, 23, 27
 Hardt, 3, 5, 6, 7
 Harker, 5, 18, 27
 Hazelhoff Roelfzema, 23
 Helm, 28
 Hendricks, 14
 Hitler, 10
 Homburg, 24
 Hoogeveen, 11, 12, 14
 Houten, 20
 Howard, 19, 20
 Internationale Rode Hulp, 2
 Janssen, 15
 Jarvis, 18
 Judd, 15
 Kempen, 11
 Kendall, 14
 KGB, 6, 28
 King, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 27
 Klein, 23
 Klop, 10
 Kluiters-Gilbert, 28
 Knight, 4
 Konrad, 18
 Koolhoven, 12, 19
 Koutrik, 14, 15, 16, 20
 Kremer, 7
 Krivitsky, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
 Krogt, 14
 Krueger, 15
 Krüger, 14, 15
 Kuczynski, 7
 Lamb, 19
 Lambert, 10
 Laming, 19, 22, 23, 24
 Lane, 21
 Lauwers, 23, 24, 26
 Leeper, 9, 10, 13
 Liddell, 18
 Lier, 2
 Litvinov, 3
 Lockhart, 28
 Loewe, 19, 21, 22, 24
 Losseau, 26
 Mac Kee, 17
 Maginot Line, 14
 Mallet, 4
 Mally, 3, 4, 5, 6
 Manning, 11
 Marriott, 27
 Mary Joyce, 2
 Menzies, 8, 25, 26
 MI(R), 12
 MI5, 4, 5, 6, 7, 13, 17, 18, 19, 20, 28
 MI6, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 26, 28
 Mills, 18
 Mucke, 18
 Mussolini, 22
 NKVD, 2, 6
 Norman, 13
 Oosterzee, 27
 Othello, 26
 Paarmann, 14
 Parlanti, 3, 4, 7
 PCO, 1, 2, 10
 Philby, 6, 17
 Pieck, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 16, 19, 27, 28
 Political Intelligence Department, 10
 Political Warfare Executive, 10, 13, 26
 Protze, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16
 Putlitz, 13, 14
 R 16, 15
 Rabagliati, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26
 Reijden, 25
 Rificzes, 14
 Roberts, 14

Sant, 4, 16, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25
Sausmarez, 26
Schaper, 20, 23
Schrage, 20
Sealion, 20, 26
Section B.26, 18
Section D, 10, 12
Section V, 5, 10, 13, 17, 18, 19
Serpell, 4, 13
Sinclair, 2, 9, 10, 18, 19, 25
SO1, 10
SOE, 7, 12, 22, 26
Sporre, 24
Stalin, 10
Sterkenburg, 11
Stevens, 10, 12, 14, 16
Stichting Wassenaar '40-'45, 28
Sykes, 1
Taylor, 10, 11
Tinsley, 15, 21
TR 16, 15
Tsarev, 3, 6
Vansittart, 12, 13
Venlo incident, 10, 21
Visser, 28
Vivian, 1, 5, 10, 13, 17, 18
Vries, 2, 3
Vrinten, 2, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27
Walbach, 14
Watt, 6, 28
Wenzel, 22
West, 1, 2, 3, 6, 17, 18, 26
Whalley, 23
White, 13
Whiting, 16
Wilkie, 4, 13
Windmill, 20
Wood, 18
Wright, 12, 19