

49378

ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF HOSTAGE-TAKING
PREVENTION AND CONTROL IN THE NETHERLANDS

Willem FRACKERS

Police Bureau
Ministry of Justice
The Hague, The Netherlands

THE NETHERLANDS - ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS.

The Police Organisation

Each municipality of over 25,000 inhabitants has a municipal police force. The other municipalities are policed by the State Police Force. There are 134 municipal police forces, counting about 19,000 men, about 7,000 of them in the 3 largest towns. Each separate force is administered by the "burgomaster" and is competent only in its own territory, in effect, creating an enormous splintering of resources.

For the past 5 years we have been working on reorganisation, but this will most probably not come about for the next 10 years. The State Police Force polices the remaining approximately 700 municipalities and has an establishment of about 12,000. The force is administered centrally by the Minister of Justice.

Operationally, the police -- municipal and state police alike -- are subordinate to the "burgomaster" and the public prosecutor. The "burgomaster" is responsible for the maintenance of public order and the public prosecutor for the detection of criminal offences, a division which, I believe, is not known in the United Kingdom, since the dividing line between these two tasks is not clearly drawn.

It means that the "burgomaster" as well as the public prosecutor can give orders to the police. We call this, in our jargon: duality in authority.

In certain serious cases the police can receive assistance from military personnel. In the first place from the Royal Military

Police, which has an establishment of about 3,500 men and which force is, inter alia, also charged with the control of the frontier under the supervision of the Minister of Justice. In special circumstances also from what the Police Act calls "other military", in case of attacks on airports and of hostage-taking, such as the Royal Marines and armoured infantry battalions.

Organisation of the Judiciary

Now for a bird's eye view of the organisation of the Netherlands judiciary. The country is divided into five departments, in each of which there is a Court of Appeal. To each of these courts belongs an Attorney-General, who acts at the same time as Director of Police, which means that he sees to it that the police fulfil their task in aid of the judiciary properly. Each department is subdivided into a number of districts, in each of which there is a District Court. Attached to each District Court is a Public Prosecutor, who is responsible for the prosecution of criminal offences.

In this organisation the Attorney-General is the superior of the Public Prosecutor. Likewise, the Queen's Commissioners in each of the 11 provinces are the superiors of the "burgomasters". I give you this outline as a working-hypothesis. The reality is much more complicated.

In other words: in the handling of hostage situations, the following are involved:

the "burgomaster" of the municipality where the incident occurs; the chief of local police (in a State Police area a high-ranking Officer of the State Police Force);

the Public Prosecutor in whose district the site of the incident is situated;

the Attorney-General, acting Director of Police in question;

the Queen's Commissioner in the province.

The parts they play will presently be discussed.

A permanent squad of 17 police officers has been formed to detect, in advance, if possible, terrorist acts of national importance. It consists of members of the State Police and of municipal police forces and its activities are guided by a Public Prosecutor, who is attached to all district courts for giving guidance to investigations of this nature.

You will have noticed meanwhile that in these matters simplicity is not the seal of truth. I will return to this in due time when I discuss the investigative aspect.

The Organisation in cases of hostage-taking.

Immediately after the incident has been reported, three groups assemble to handle the case.

a. As close as possible to the place of the incident a special police headquarters will be set up. The site of the incident will be isolated. As a rule, the police make no effort at that moment to terminate the incident by violent means. For that matter, circumstances can be imagined in which immediate action would be justifiable, e.g., when there is only one assailant who would expose himself. In cases where there is no suitable accommodation in the vicinity of the incident, we use caravans which provide office room and other facilities. The police unit has direct telephone and two-way radio communications with what is termed "the competent authority".

b. This competent authority (i.e., the local Police Centre) meets at some distance from the location of the incident, preferably not much farther than about a ten minutes' drive by car. This is because frequent contacts between the two units is necessary. Leader of the Policy Centre is the Attorney General of the department in question. Hostage-taking is regarded as a most serious crime and as an incident that must not be treated as an infraction of local public order. As a result of this, the Minister of Justice is responsible for its handling, and on behalf of him the highest judicial authority in the area responsible for crime detection. Members of the Policy Centre are: the Queen's Commissioner, the local chief of police and the "burgomaster". To this group are added tactical and technical experts in the field of the behavioural sciences. I will return to these latter aspects later on.

c. At the Ministry of Justice in The Hague, a Crisis Centre will be formed, headed by the Minister of Justice. Taking part in the deliberations are, dependent on the case, the Prime Minister, the Ministers of Home Affairs, of Foreign Affairs and of Defence, and also, if necessary, another Minister whose domain is involved in the incident (e.g. the Minister of Transport in case of hijacking of an airplane). To the Crisis Centre are further attached officials of the Ministry of Justice, Home Affairs, Defence, Foreign Affairs (if it is a case with international aspects) and, if necessary, a representative of another Ministry involved in the case (e.g., Social Affairs in the cases of the Moluccans).

There is a special Steering Committee which is responsible for the preparation of measures for the suppression of terrorism.

Representatives of the Ministries of Justice, Home Affairs, Defence and of the Prime Minister deliberate in this committee under my chairmanship. This committee is responsible to the Minister of Justice for organisation, tactics and techniques. A sub-committee occupies itself with technical means and logistic problems, another one with the analysis of hostage cases in our country and abroad and a third one with training and equipment and tactical use of the special assistance-units.

The Investigative Aspect

I mentioned already that a special detective squad has been formed. This squad investigates cases in which there are suspicions that a terrorist action is being contemplated. It collects information, observes suspects, etc., in close co-operation with the local police. The squad is also fed with information by the Central Criminal Information Service and it in turn reports the information gained on its own initiative to this Service. The Central Criminal Information Service collects and compiles, compares and co-ordinates all information about convicted criminals as well as criminal intelligence; there is a close co-operation between the Central Criminal Information Service - which comes under the Ministry of Justice - and the National Security Service, which comes under the Minister of Home Affairs. The information compiled by the Central Criminal Information Service is forwarded, partly in the shape of general surveys, partly as reports on specific incidents, to the police forces involved and, if pertaining to the terrorist crime, also to the special squad.

Until now the criminal investigation services in The Netherlands have succeeded in preventing two hostage-takings. Some 10 months ago a conspiracy of Moluccans to take Her Majesty the Queen hostage was discovered. The conspirators were arrested and convicted. About six months ago, four Syrian terrorists who intended to hijack a train were arrested and convicted. Probably it was the discovery of this plan and the publicity it received, which inspired a group of Moluccans recently to hijack a train near Beilen.

The Tactical Aspects

In this connection a few words about the strategic approach. Hostage-taking is a serious encroachment on the legal order, which has

to be restored as soon as possible. This restoration must not be achieved by complying with the demands made by the terrorists. The lives of the hostages must in principle be saved. However, not at any conceivable cost. The aim to be reached is in principle the arrest of the terrorists and the liberation of the hostages, safe and sound. What, now, are the tactics that enable us to reach these aims as fully as possible? To begin with: it is necessary to establish as quickly as possible who the terrorists are and what their objective is. Sometimes this is immediately clear. In other cases (e.g., Beilen and Amsterdam) it takes contacts with the terrorists and further inquiries. Establishing contact is also necessary for another purpose, namely to keep the terrorists talking. Hostage-takings based on the illusion that the demands will be met within half a day, and, if not, that the hostages will be killed, have not been encountered so far. This is not to be expected either, for in that case the purpose of the action would not be reached, since publicity would be short-lived and utterly negative. Moreover, the terrorists would lose their lives or their freedom. Up till the present the impression has not been obtained that terrorists, however brave they pretend to be, are anxious to sacrifice their lives and to go down in the history of their group as martyrs. Should it be the intention to kill the hostages immediately, the terrorists would resort to other methods such as bomb attacks or other direct killings. This means that tactics may be based on the assumption that time as a rule will be available. This does not alter the fact, however, that the organisation, the communications and the necessary instruments of power must be put into a state of readiness as soon as possible.

In two situations the use of weapons will be necessary. Firstly, when the terrorists actually proceed to putting to death one hostage after the other. In that case they force the government to use armed intervention. Emergency plans for such intervention must therefore be prepared right after the hostage situation has arisen.

A second necessity to use force arises when the government, considering that the situation is dragging on too long, that the hostages are suffering excessive damage, or for other reasons, should decide to put an end to it. For this purpose, plans of attack should be devised immediately, and afterwards, the emergency and attack plans will merge into each other. Unless, the circumstances are such that an intervention can with a high degree of certainty be carried out without bloodshed (e.g., Scheveningen prison), an intervention not induced by repeated killings by the other party remains an utterly dangerous undertaking, literally an ultimum remedium. In some cases a show of strength, and so intimidation, may have wholesome effects.

Technical Means

Group action by normal police units, aimed at the termination of a hostage situation, be it with use of weaponry differing from the standard police equipment or not, would in itself be in line with our notion that the handling of hostage situations is a task for the police. The following considerations have nevertheless induced us to reject this solution. In the first place, it is our opinion that training police officers for such duties would render them unfit for the exercise of normal police duty. Secondly, it stands to reason that such personnel would then have to be established in barracks so as to have them immediately at hand in the few instances that hostage situations occur and to enable continuous training. For these reasons, too, they would no longer be usable for daily police duty. And finally, the setting apart of a number of policemen would be utterly inefficient.

We must not forget that the Armed Forces have professional personnel, who, as regards training and discipline, are already of excellent quality and who need only a relatively small additional training to be able to act effectively in hostage situations. For this purpose a company of Royal Marines is now being trained and, in a sense, retrained. Retrained because their normal training is aimed at using violence with intent to cause a maximum of damage to the enemy. In a hostage situation, however, the damage caused by the action is to remain as small as possible. So they have to be taught what I would call for convenience's sake "controlled violence", at least utterly selective action. For this reason the Marines who receive this training are most thoroughly tested on mental stability. Their training is given in close co-operation with a psychiatric expert. They form a close combat unit of carefully selected men, hard trained in sports and combat, skilled in the use of all kinds of weapons and led by Officers, competent through study and experience to design plans of attack which enable termination of a hostage situation with a minimum of bloodshed. This as regards the close combat unit, which operates in platoons of about 25 men.

A second group that has been formed consists of sharpshooters. The group consists of two units, at present about 40 men each. One of these units is made up of officers of the State Police Force, and so an exception -- and in our opinion an acceptable one -- to the rule that policemen should not be specially trained for these purposes; the second, of Army personnel. They use Fal rifles and Heckler and Koch rifles, for distances of up to 500 and 350 meters respectively. They are regularly trained as a team to shoot at the same time at their targets at an order given by radio. Three marksmen will be assigned to one target.

Close combat unit and sharpshooters act in unison. As soon as the sharpshooters have terminated their action, the Marines take over and occupy the object. The lessons of Munich, where only sharpshooters carried out the action, lie at the base of this joint action. A Co-ordinating Officer, who also maintains the communication with the Policy Centre, co-ordinates the activities of the two units.

Finally, we can dispose, if necessary, of one or more battalions of armoured infantry to assist the police in sealing off the place of the incident.

This as regards the special means of power at our disposal in hostage situations. We use them - I repeat that - as an ultimatum remedium only. In this connection, I take the liberty to cite an undisputed expert on violence, namely Napoleon Bonaparte, in his Mémorial de St-Hélène: "Ce qui me frappe dans le monde, c'est l'impuissance de la violence; de ces deux puissances, la violence et l'intelligence, c'est à la fin la violence qui est toujours vaincue". Or in English: "What strikes me in this world is the impotence of violence; of these two forces, violence and intelligence, it's in the end always violence that is the loser".

Communications

Marines and sharpshooters communicate with each other by means of portable radio. Telephone lines, often specially installed for the purpose, connect the Police Headquarters with the Policy Centre. The enormous and often impeding interest of publicity makes it necessary to scramble the radio messages as much as possible and to check the telephone lines for tapping.

For the recording of arrangements in these confusing circumstances, a teletype communication will usually be indispensable. The General Post Office and the Police Communication Service attend to these things at the initiative of the Steering Committee.

Logistics

As a rule, the police, the assisting units and the staffs of the two centres will be able to provide for their own housing and catering as well as for food and drink for the hostages.

One can think of circumstances, however, - and this was actually the case at Beilen - in which it is difficult to make suitable provisions for these needs on the spot, head over heels. A

working group of the Steering Committee prepares the logistic provisions for food and drink and medical care, particularly for the hostages after the event. It seems unnecessary to build up a special logistics unit. What has to be done in advance is that arrangements must be made with medical services of the largest cities, with catering businesses, supply units of the Army, etc. It would be well to reckon with the possibility that scores of hostages will have to be sustained for weeks and weeks, possibly at places where central facilities are lacking.

Recording

Among the technical aspects, I also reckon the recording of everything that happens and that is being done. The purpose of this recording is in the first place to enable staff-members of the centres to work in relays, so that the centres are adequately manned day and night. Do not wear yourself out by remaining on the spot continuously and taking a dogsleep now and then. If you do that, your capacity will deteriorate; you will easily get irritated and that is unacceptable in such circumstances. The first 12 days, 12 hours per 24 hours on duty, and after that only 8 hours. So those functionaries who play a permanent part in the handling of the incident have to supply substitutes. By consultation of the logbook the latter can inform themselves in a short time about what has passed during their absence. If you had to tell them all that, it would cost you a lot of time and your account would probably be incomplete.

For this purpose we use memo-recorders, the tapes of which are typed out regularly. A second reason to record at the Policy Centre, as well as at the Crisis Centre, everything that happens, is that this recording makes it possible to compose a public report afterwards, which may also serve as a basis for discussions in Parliament.

The third reason is to create the possibility of analysing the incident afterwards and introducing improvements in organisation, tactics and techniques.

One more observation in this connection. The soldier marches on his stomach. But so does the general. See to it that you, your collaborators and all other personnel are well cared for as regards food and drink. Nothing proves more frustrating than to find it impossible to have a cup of coffee, a hamburger or a drink when you feel the need of it.

Other technical means

Other technical means such as thermic lances to remove locks and parts of walls, explosive devices to blow out closed doors (e.g., a door of a train) need further development and should be available.

Various kinds of roles of the psychological aspects

I remarked earlier that Napoleon already was aware of the fact that intelligence is of more value than violence. The intellectual means to be used also include, in our opinion, the knowledge gained by the behavioural scientists. Consequently, psychiatrists and psychologists are attached to the staff of the local Policy Centre. It is our experience that making an appeal ad hoc to a psychiatrist or a psychologist who happens to be present near the place of the incident is not the right thing to do. They, too, must have had the opportunity in advance to prepare themselves for such a situation, to think about it, and to consult literature on the subject. In view of this, we are now forming a group of four or five psychiatrists and psychologists who are willing and able to assist a Policy Team if needed. This assistance is not confined to the keeping up of contacts with terrorists and hostages but also extends to advice about the policy to be adopted. They may, e.g., have a say in the design of plans of attack and in the choice of the right moment to carry out such plans. To give an example: the use of much noise and of star shells — son et lumière — in the course of the termination of the hostage situation in the prison at Scheveningen was in part based on psychiatric advice.

Sometimes it will be best for a psychiatrist to act as a negotiator himself, in other cases it may be better to leave this task to a policeman, instructed by a behavioural scientist. This also depends on the man who arranges the first contact with the terrorists. We believe that the behavioural scientist, if he is to be able to give valuable advice, must have a place in the Policy Team. His place should not be on a side line, whence he will no doubt say wise things, but often things that are useless in practice, however.

I will not tire you with wisdom which I myself have largely from the mouths of behavioural scientists. I restrict myself to bringing a few slogans to your attention:

- Get to know who and what the terrorists are.
- How far they are trained
- How much stress they can take

- The terrorist lives in a state of narrowed consciousness. His functions of thought are aimed at one goal only, which, certainly if it is of a political nature, may become a "sacred" goal. In that case their end also sanctifies the means. They are prepared, or imagine so, to sacrifice their own lives for their goal, so why not someone else's too? The terrorist must have the impression that he is being taken seriously, in any case in the beginning. He must be "recognized". After all, he has the power over the hostages which he threatens. When the situation has been stabilised more or less, a second stage enters. At this stage we often see develop a strange relationship between terrorists and hostages. A relationship which sometimes continues long after the incident, as we have seen, particularly in the Beilen case.

Finally, the third and last stage, which may become very unstable again. The terrorist becomes less certain of himself and may then be tempted to show just once more who he really is. A sober-minded, contemplative, rational, realistic approach, demonstrating inner certainty --even if actually non-existing --is called for.

Until the present we have not yet trained police officers in the technique of negotiating as applied by the New York police. We are still in doubt on this point. The hostage-takings in the United States have so far essentially been criminally motivated and were carried out by Americans. We, on our part, have largely been confronted with politically motivated hostage-takings, in most cases carried out by aliens or people of foreign origin. In such cases the language problem starts playing a part. We are giving further thought to this subject.

"Publicity" and "Information"

We take the view that public relations officers should be posted at the site of the incident to take care of the communication between the Policy Centre and the news media. Such officers should for the same purpose also be present at the Crisis Centre, as well as at the Ministry of Justice. Since the Minister of Justice is the final one responsible for the handling of the incident, it is natural that the Information Service of his Ministry is charged with these duties. Without prejudice to its own responsibility, this Service may, and will, make use of public relations officers of other Ministries and organisations involved in the handling of the case. In this way the supply of information is in one hand, under clear ministerial responsibility.

To enable him to fulfil his task in the right way, the Head of the Information Service of the Ministry of Justice must be a member of the staff of the Policy Centre (and he must keep close contact with the Crisis Centre). Supply of good information forms part of the overall policy and should be made instrumental in a good solution of the incident.

In many cases one of the aims of the terrorists will be worldwide publicity for their cause. In principle, the policy to be adopted would therefore be to deny them this publicity. This, however, is a dream that may turn into a nightmare. For, the simple fact is, that a hostage situation does arouse worldwide interest. When the government itself fails to satisfy this curiosity as much as possible, the media will make their own inquiries and publish the results, which may lead to a disastrous flow of rumours. Another aspect is that the people have a right to know that the government is dealing with the situation in an adequate manner. For these reasons we strive for as much openness as possible as regards facts, backgrounds and the policy decided upon. This openness makes it possible sometimes to prevent, by mutual agreement with the media, publicity which might have damaging effects. As a prime example in this regard, I consider the preparations for an attack to end the hostage situation.

Apart from the external news supply, the public relations officers also have a task with regard to internal communication. They show the policy team how their policy is represented by the media to the public and advise them about the effects on the public of certain measures.

Both elements, external and internal supply of information, have to be attended to. The information officers are not only there to release news and to give interviews on being asked, but they also take active action, if possible, to release information immediately after new developments. This is necessary to prevent rumours.

Press conferences and interviews to be given by Ministers will be arranged by the public relations officers.

Following are two case reports which demonstrate all these organizational aspects "in action".

Case Report I

On Friday, the 13th of September, 1974, at 16:28 hrs, the police of The Hague received a report that an armed Japanese had forced his way into the French embassy. During an enquiry by a number of police officers, a shooting occurred between a terrorist and the police. Two constables and the terrorist got wounded. Later on, it appeared that 11 persons, the French Ambassador among them, were being held hostage by 3 armed Japanese, belonging to the so-called Japanese Red Army. The terrorists had ensconced themselves, with the hostages, in the office of the French Ambassador.

Immediately after the alarm, and in accordance with the existing directives, the necessary measures were taken. A policy-making centre and a crisis centre were set up. The Minister of Justice alerted the special assistance units and ordered them to the place of the incident. The embassy building was evacuated and cordoned off by the police. At 18:02 hrs, the terrorists made their first move. They threw a pamphlet out of a window, in which they stated their demands. They demanded the release of their comrade Furuya, who was detained in a French prison. This Furuya would have to join them in the Embassy. They further demanded that a bus should be made in readiness to take them to Schiphol Airport, where a Boeing 707 should be ready to take off immediately. All these demands would have to be complied with before 03:00 hrs on Saturday, September 14, otherwise hostages would be executed.

The negotiations with the Japanese terrorists took place by telephone through an interpreter of the Japanese embassy. In connection with the demands of the terrorists, the government took up contact with the French government. The French government decided to convey Furuya by airplane to the Netherlands. At midnight that day, the airplane with Furuya landed at Schiphol Airport. He remained under guard in the airplane at Schiphol. After contact between Furuya and the terrorists, it was agreed that Furuya would stay at Schiphol. The other demands of the terrorists were maintained. The ultimatum was extended several times because the terrorists' demands could only be granted by the French government, which cost much time. The Egyptian ambassador was found prepared to act as negotiator.

The Netherlands government took the view that on no account would it be possible to allow the terrorists to leave the country with one or more hostages and that everything possible should be done to prevent the terrorists from leaving by airplane, taking their arms with them. At first the French government refused to supply a French airplane and the terrorists did not accept a Dutch airplane, so that a stalemate occurred.

A visit by the Netherlands Prime Minister to Paris, on the evening of Saturday, September 14th, which was also used for a discussion between him and the French President, opened the possibility to break this dead-lock. The French viewpoint was formulated on the morning of Sunday, September 15th. It was to the effect that the French government would release Furuya in exchange for all the hostages. The exchange should take place on Netherlands territory and under Dutch guarantee. The departure of the terrorists was a matter within the competence of the Dutch authorities and could take place via an airplane of any nationality, provided no French crew operated the plane. That Sunday afternoon, a French Boeing 707 arrived at Schiphol. The terrorists reacted to this by releasing two female hostages and by granting permission for the catering of the hostages.

Next, the negotiations arrived at a new dead-lock, because the terrorists wanted to keep their arms when leaving. At the same time, they demanded one million dollars from the French government. The negotiations assumed an ultimative character again. The Netherlands government made a proposal. This proposal was: exchange of Furuya for all the hostages, handing in of all weapons, pistols excepted, supply of an airplane with a Dutch crew, supply of an amount of 300,000 dollars. At 08:30 hrs, on the morning of Tuesday the terrorists accepted these terms. About noon that day was the earliest that the agreement could be put into effect. At 19:45 hrs, the bus with driver arrived at the embassy. After searching the driver, one of the terrorists - fearing that during the drive, gas would be released in the bus - smashed all the windows. After all the hostages but three, who were released, and the terrorists had got into the bus, it left for Schiphol, under escort, by roads that had been cleared of traffic. In the meantime, Furuya had received the 300,000 dollars and he had inspected the airplane.

The bus stopped at 80 metres from the airplane. At that place, the Egyptian ambassador was already present. He was to supervise the exchange. After leaving the bus, the terrorists laid down their explosives and subjected themselves to a search by the Egyptian ambassador. They were allowed to keep two pistols. Then the exchange procedure started. Three hostages were exchanged for the crew. The remaining hostages, the French ambassador last of all, were exchanged for Furuya and the money. At 22:22 hrs on Tuesday, September 17th, the airplane took off from Schiphol.

After some wandering, the Boeing landed the next day in Syria, after the Syrian authorities had granted landing permission.

Case Report II

On Tuesday the 2nd of December, 1975, at 10:07 a.m., the Groningen - Zwolle stopping-train, soon after having left Beilen Station, was brought to a stop by means of the safety-brake. Inside the train a group of 7 young Moluccans, firing handguns, moved to the driver's cabin. By closing the door, the driver tried to keep them out. However, he was shot down through the door and badly wounded. Later on, in the luggage compartment, he was killed by the terrorists.

The train consisted of two carriages. The passengers in the front carriage were rounded up in the rearmost compartment, those in the second carriage remained under guard in that part of the train.

The passengers of the front carriage were forced by the Moluccans to blind the windows with newspapers and adhesive tape. The doors of the train were locked by means of chains and padlocks, to which they attached what looked like dangerous explosives, but afterwards appeared to be fireworks. Everyone who tried to find out what was going on was shot at by the terrorists.

After about an hour of uncertainty the responsible authorities were alerted in conformity with the existing directives. As of about 11:30 a.m., a policy-making centre at Beilen and a crisis centre at The Hague were in operation. The Minister of Justice called in the special assistance units (sharpshooters and close combat unit) and ordered them to the site of the incident. Without delay the necessary measures to cordon off the site of the incident were taken. An inner ring was formed at a distance of about 300 metres from the train and an outer ring of 8 kilometers in circumference. In forming this cordon, use was made of a battalion of armoured infantry, because there were rumours that quite a few Moluccans were on their way to the train.

At 11:15 a.m. three hostages were allowed to leave the train, bringing with them the demands of the terrorists. They demanded among other things: provision of a bus, handcuffs for the hostages and an airplane in readiness at Schiphol Airport. Obviously they wanted to move to Schiphol, taking a number of hostages with them. The destination of the airplane was not stated. Attached to these demands was an ultimatum, which expired at 12:45 hrs, when executions would follow.

The answer was to the effect that the demands had been passed on to the government, which had to decide.

At 13:47 hrs the murdered driver was thrown out of the train onto the track. A few minutes later some shots were heard. They were

fired at a hostage, who managed to avoid execution and who reached the police cordon.

At 15:02 hrs that day, a Moluccan appeared in the open door of the train with a handcuffed hostage. This hostage -- a 22-year-old man -- was executed while he was pushed out of the train.

After this execution new efforts were made to contact the terrorists. This was done through a State Police constable, who acted as a courier. In the days to come this courier was to be threatened repeatedly by the terrorists during his contacts with them. On some occasions he was even beaten. Maintaining their earlier demands, the terrorists asked for food, medicine, cigarettes and so on, while in addition they demanded a new driver for the train. The government agreed to the demands regarding food and medicine. It rejected the demands regarding the bus, the airplane and the train driver.

In the course of the night, from Tuesday the 2nd to Wednesday the 3rd of December, a number of hostages escaped from the then unguarded rear carriage of the train. The next night the remaining hostages escaped from that carriage. 31 hostages remained in the front carriage.

On Wednesday, December 3rd, the earlier demands were repeated with a new ultimatum, which would expire at 11:30 hrs. Prior to that hour, the policy-making centre answered that the demands regarding the supply of food and medicine would be met. The other demands were not yielded to. That day, with the consent of the terrorists, a field telephone was installed in the train. As from that day, the train would be provisioned every day. The ultimatum ran out without anything happening. After the installation of the field telephone the Moluccans talked with Mr. Manusama, their president. They asked for the Rev. Metiary and Pessireron to act as intermediaries. They maintained their demands. A new ultimatum was issued: the demands would have to be granted before 10:00 hrs on Thursday, December 4th,

On Thursday, December 4th, the captors handed a statement to Pessireron, which they demanded to be published by the press. They stuck to their other demands. The ultimatum was extended to 12:00 hrs. The answer of the government was that no bus would be supplied and that the statement would not be published until the aged hostages were released. The terrorists did not accept this and at 12:45 hrs they executed another male hostage. After this execution, they repeated their demands.

That same day, a number of young Moluccans occupied the Indonesian Consulate General in Amsterdam. In this case, too, a number of people were taken hostage.

Towards the end of the afternoon of this day, the terrorists changed their demands. They talked no more about the bus, the airplane and the engine driver. They now demanded the release of a number of Moluccans from prison and in addition made some demands of a political nature. No ultimatum was offered.

The period from the afternoon of Thursday, December 4th, till the evening of Sunday, December 7th, is to be regarded as the stage of negotiation.

For the negotiations with the terrorists, the government made use of a group of people, all of them South Moluccans, consisting of Mrs. Soumokil and Messrs. Manusama, Kuhuwael and De Lima. They acted as a permanent group of negotiators.

On Friday, December 5th, the terrorists allowed the dead bodies of the killed hostages to be taken away. In the evening of that Friday, an accident happened in the train. It was due to clumsy handling of a firearm by one of the terrorists. In this accident this terrorist and one of the hostages were seriously wounded. The two wounded men were put outside the train, together with a hostage who suffered from shock.

During the other days of this period, the Moluccans stuck to their demands of December 4th, but in this period they released some of the elder hostages.

The period from Monday, December 8th, till noon of Sunday, December 14th, can be regarded as the closing stage. On the preceding days, the contacts with the terrorists had been kept limited on purpose. The waiting was for an initiative from their side. However, this waiting could not last too long because of the physical condition and the mental state of the hostages. In this, the freezing cold played an important part. The heating of the train functioned badly and as of Wednesday, December 10th, it failed altogether. In this period, a termination of the situation by use of force was seriously contemplated by the government. In the course of this period, a further number of hostages were released.

On Saturday, December 13th, after discussions between the terrorists, Mrs. Soumokil and Mr. Kuhuwael, the terrorists announced that they were willing to surrender, on the condition that they would be allowed to surrender to Mr. Manusama, who could next hand them over to the police. This announcement was a surprise for the government. Although the terrorists asked for a simultaneous termination of the hostage situation in Amsterdam, they did not make this a condition to their surrender.

At 12:00 hrs, on Sunday, December 14th, the terrorists left the train unarmed, accompanied by the members of the group of negotiators. At some distance from the train, they were arrested by the police.



END