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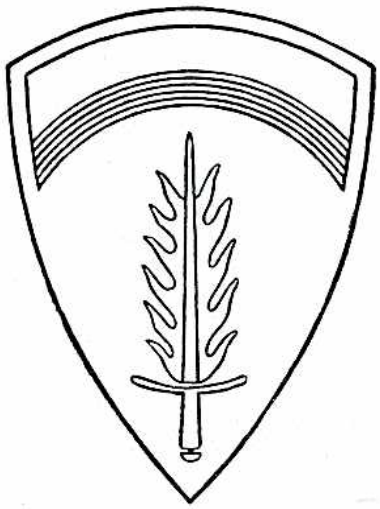

U.S. MILITARY FLOOD RELIEF OPERATIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE

U.S. MILITARY FLOOD RELIEF OPERATIONS IN THE NETHERLANDS

HISTORICAL DIVISION
HQ USAREUR
KARLSRUHE GERMANY
1953

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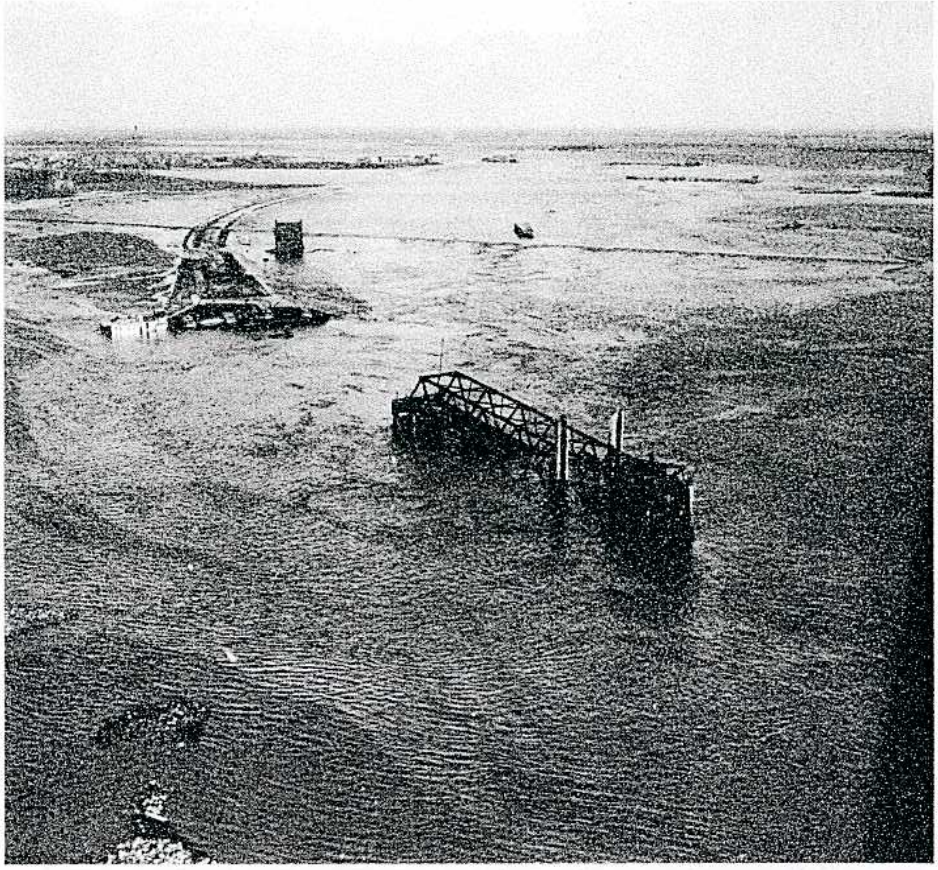

Dike break at Waarden, Zuid Beveland (Aero-Photo Nederland)

Dike break at Dinteloord (Aero-Photo Nederland)

CHAPTER I

Establishment of the American Military Relief Organization

Section I: The Netherlands Disaster

1. The Flood Disaster

On Sunday, 1 February 1953, a disaster of major proportions struck the southwest portion of the Netherlands. High tides, coupled with winds of gale proportions, breached the protective dikes in numerous places causing heavy flooding particularly in the provinces of Holland and Zeeland. Most heavily hit by damaging waters and winds were the islands in the southwest of the Netherlands, immediately off the northern coast of Belgium. Early reports gave the impression that loss of life was not severe, but indicated that heavy property damage had been inflicted and and that the situation represented a national disaster of major proportions.[1] By late afternoon it became evident that the loss of life would be extensive. It was estimated that at least 1,000 victims had been claimed by the flood waters. The complete disruption of communications in the disaster area made it impossible to obtain a true picture of the situation.[2] Approximately seven hundred square miles of land, inhabited by nearly a million people, were affected by the high winds, high tides,

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[1]Cable 2 (SMC In 52 Feb), AMEMB (The Hague) to HICOG Bonn (64) and CINCUSAREUR (2), 1 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Incoming Cables), Tab I.

[2]Memo No. 1, 1 Feb 53, sub: Telephone Call from Lt Col F. G. McBride, MAAG Netherlands re Flood Disaster. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A).

and the floods which resulted from numerous breaches in the dikes. The most critical areas included the deltas of the Rhine, the Maas, and the Schelde Rivers. Completely flooded were the islands of Goerce-Overflakkee, Schouwen-Duiveland, Dordrecht, Tholen, and Noord Beveland. Areas only partially flooded included the islands of Walcheren, Zuid Beveland, Voorne-Putten, and the mainland adjacent to the islands. All of the areas included in the disaster region were west of the highway linking Antwerp, Breda, Utrecht, Rotterdam, and The Hague. (Map 1).[3]

2. Request for U.S. Assistance

The U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR), received official notification of the disaster on 1 February from Mr. Selden Chapin, U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands, who informed the U.S. High Commissioner for Germany (HICOG) at the same time. Mr. Chapin suggested that assistance be offered by the American Red Cross and that USAREUR be alerted with a view to sending equipment if necessary.[4] At 1520, 1 February, the USAREUR Duty Officer was notified by Lt. Col. F. G. McBride of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) Netherlands, that the Netherlands Minister of Defense, Mr. C. Staf, had officially requested aid in combating the disaster from the MAAG Netherlands. Colonel McBride, upon the authority of Colonel T. M. Crawford, Chief, Army Section, MAAG Netherlands, in turn passed this request for assistance to USAREUR. Although Mr. Staf had submitted an exact specification of assistance required in the form of personnel and equipment, Colonel McBride was not in a position to relay this information in detail. He stated that engineer units, possibly construction battalions or combat engineer battalions if the former were not available, were needed with their heavy equipment to aid in the repair of the dikes, and boats were required to assist in the evacuation of personnel. MAAG Netherlands suggested that USAREUR take steps to dispatch a group of competent engineer officers to the Netherlands immediately for reconnaissance purposes pending a detailed request for units and equipment.[5]

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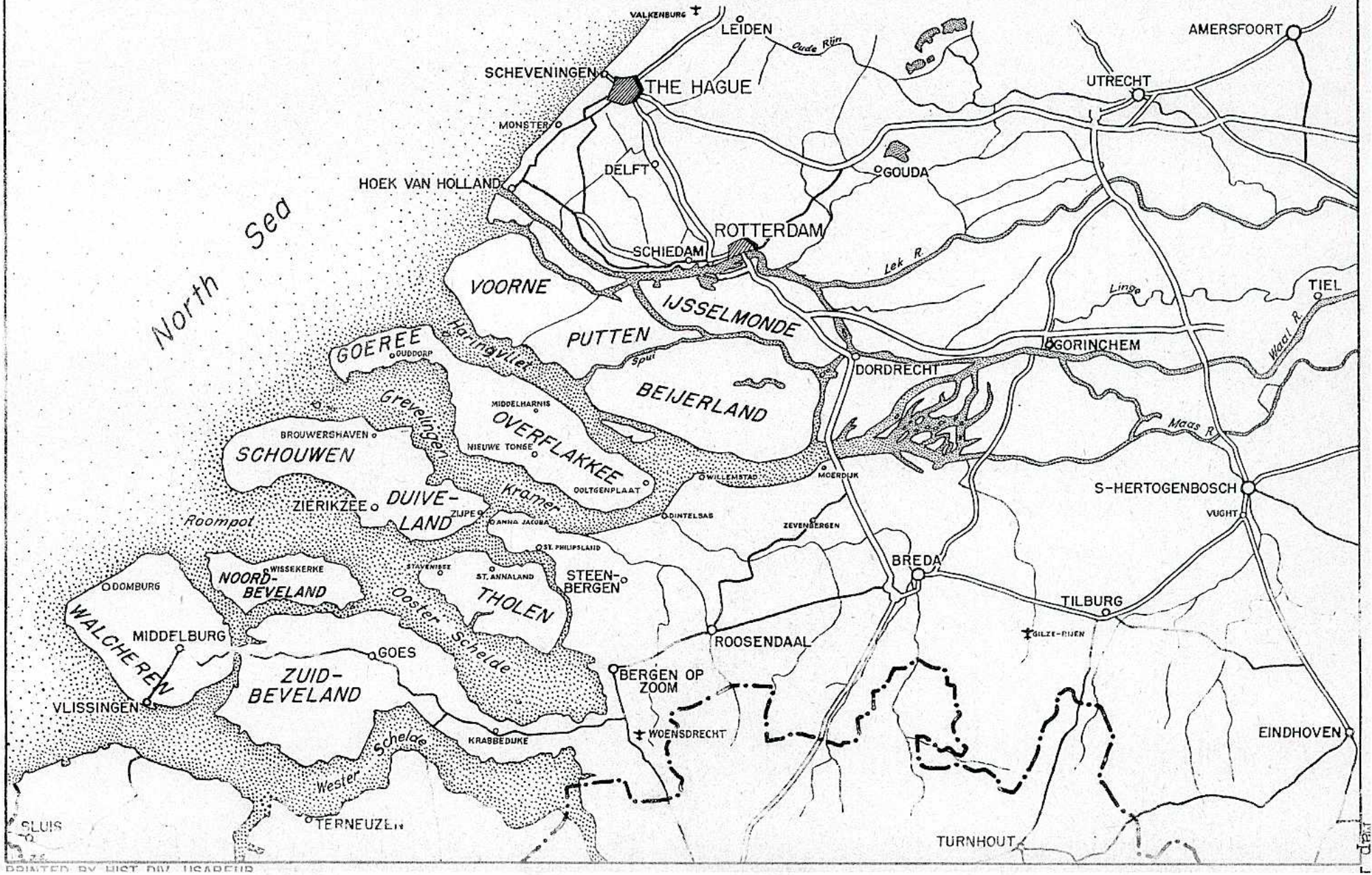
[3]Cable 081200Z (SMC In 1673 Feb), AMRO (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VIII.

[4]Cable 2 (SMC In 52 Feb), AMEMB (The Hague) to HICOG Bonn (64) and CINCUSAREUR (2), 1 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab I.

[5](1) Memo No. 1, 1 Feb 53, sub: Telephone call from Lt Col F. G. McBride, MAAG Netherlands, re Flood Disaster. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A). (2) Cable 011445Z (SMC In 46 Feb), AMEMB (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab I.

SECTION OF THE NETHERLANDS CONTAINING THE DISASTER AREAS



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3. Assumption of Responsibility by U.S. European Command

Although the request for assistance in the Netherlands had been transmitted directly to USAREUR, the U.S. military agency in Europe which would have to produce some of the units and equipment to participate in the disaster relief work, USAREUR was not authorized to act independently in this matter. Immediately after receiving the request for assistance from the MAAG Netherlands, USAREUR apprised the Headquarters, U.S. European Command (US EUCOM), Duty Officer of the situation, requested instructions, and added that USAREUR would take no action until such instructions were forthcoming. At the time of this call to Headquarters, US EUCOM, no information had been transmitted to that headquarters by either the Ambassador to the Netherlands, or by the chief of the MAAG Netherlands.[6] By 2100, 1 February, Maj. Gen. R. K. Taylor, Chief of Staff, US EUCOM, notified Maj. Gen. E. T. Williams, Chief of Staff, USAREUR, that he had been in touch with Maj. Gen. A. H. Noble, Chief, MAAG Netherlands, and that the latter now fully understood the command relationship. General Taylor stated that US EUCOM was charging USAREUR with responsibility for providing assistance to the Netherlands in the current disaster and that General Noble was assuming command of U.S. efforts in the Netherlands pending the arrival of the USAREUR reconnaissance party on the following day.[7] On 2 February, US EUCOM reported to the Department of the Army as follows: (1) MAAG Netherlands had cooperated with the Netherlands authorities from the very beginning; (2) Lt. Gen. Manton S. Eddy, Commander in Chief, USAREUR, had gone to The Hague with a party of U.S. military specialists for the purpose of air reconnaissance of the disaster area; (3) medical, air rescue, and air-drop facilities had been alerted; (4) military units consisting primarily of engineer and signal personnel had been alerted in USAREUR and were ready to move; and (5) in compliance with the desire of the Netherlands that no premature movement of troops and equipment be made, alerted units were being withheld pending completion of reconnaissance and determination of the requirements of the Netherlands.[8]

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[6]Memo No. 2, 1 Feb 53, sub: Telephone Call, Col W. M. Vann, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, to Lt Col Spears, US EUCOM DO, 1545 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A).

[7](1) Telecon, RAdm R. F. Good, US EUCOM, J-3 and Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab G). (2) Memo for rcd, sgd Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I.

[8]Cable 021300Z (SMC In 100 Feb), US CINCEUR to COFSA, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming cables), Tab II.

4. Assignment of Mission to Commander in Chief, USAREUR

During the evening of 1 February, General Taylor notified General Williams that US EUCOM was charging USAREUR with responsibility for providing assistance to the Netherlands during the current disaster period and that General Eddy had been designated to direct the relief operations of all U.S. forces. General Taylor stated that General Eddy was authorized to call on the Air Force and Navy for necessary assistance. He directed that a USAREUR reconnaissance team depart from Wiesbaden Air Field at 0700, 2 February, in conjunction with a group of Air Force experts, for the purpose of making an on-the-ground survey and arriving at concrete recommendations for provision of assistance. On the basis of information obtained by General Noble from the Netherlands Minister of Defense, General Taylor informed General Williams that the following types of assistance and services might be required of the U.S. forces: (a) generators and high capacity water pumps; (b) air-sea rescue, to be provided by U.S. Air Forces in Europe (USAFE); (c) supply by air-drop in conjunction with USAFE; (d) naval assistance, possibly in the form of small boats; (e) one engineer construction group of three battalions with heavy equipment; (f) three engineer dump truck companies; and (g) small boats and amphibious equipment.[9] On the morning of 2 February, USAREUR notified the Department of the Army that General Eddy had been designated by US EUCOM to direct all disaster relief assistance accorded to the Netherlands by the U.S. Armed Forces and that General Eddy had already departed for the Netherlands. In addition, USAREUR informed the Department of the Army that certain USAREUR units had been alerted and were ready to depart for the Netherlands as soon as called for by General Eddy after completion of his reconnaissance mission.[10]

5. State Department Functions

In his cable of 1 February to the U.S. High Commission for Germany and to USAREUR, the U.S. Ambassador to the Netherlands recommended that both the Secretary of State and the President of the United States send immediate messages of sympathy to the Queen of the Netherlands. He suggested that Mr. Harold Stassen, Director of the Mutual Security Agency (MSA), and Mr. John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, who were at that time attending a conference in Paris, authorize immediate use of counterpart funds for direct relief purposes in the Netherlands.[11] The U.S. Embassy at The Hague, unable to contact the Paris Embassy by

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[9]Memo for rcd, sgd Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab J).

[10]Cable S-1759, CINCUSAREUR to COFSA, 2 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab I.

[11]Cable 2 (SMC In 52 Feb), AMEMB (The Hague) to HICOG Bonn (64) and CINCUSAREUR (2), 1 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab I.

telephone, requested USAREUR to forward a message to the Paris Embassy,[12] substantially as follows: (a) the Ambassador to the Netherlands requested authority to use counterpart funds for direct relief purposes; (b) the Ambassador recommended that the Secretary of State dispatch a message to the President of the United States urging him to send a message of sympathy to the Queen of the Netherlands; (c) the Ambassador informed the Secretary of State that he had already requested assistance from the American Red Cross; and (d) the Netherlands Government, through the medium of the U.S. Ambassador, had requested assistance from the U.S. Armed Forces.[13] In addition to forwarding this message to the U.S. Embassy in Paris, USAREUR kept HICOG officials in Bonn informed on the situation because the relief operations also affected the German Federal Government.[14] It soon became evident that HICOG approval and cooperation would be necessary for certain operations. The best units immediately available to USAREUR for evacuation and rescue work were amphibious truck companies manned by German labor service personnel. The only other such units operated by U.S. military personnel were located in the Base Section of the USAREUR Communications Zone, too far removed from the Netherlands to be of immediate assistance. Inasmuch as the movement of German labor service personnel outside the confines of Germany might give rise to serious objections by the government of the German Federal Republic, USAREUR inquired of HICOG whether it had any particular objections to this course of action. HICOG thereupon assumed responsibility for informing the German Federal Government of the action taken and agreed to inform USAREUR immediately if any serious objections were raised.[15]

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[12]Memo No. 4, 1655 1 Feb 53, sub: Telephone call from Mr. Trimble, U.S. Embassy, The Hague. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A).

[13](1) Memo for rcd, sgd Col W. M. Vann, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab B). (2) Cable SX-1758, CINCUSAREUR to AMEMB (Paris), 2 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab I.

[14]Memo for rcd, sgd Col W. M. Vann, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab C).

[15]Telecon, Col J. C. Dalrymple, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, to Mr. J. Davies, HICOG, 2040 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab II (Tab E).

Section II: Initial Planning

6. USAREUR-USAFE Reconnaissance

US EUCOM was informed by General Noble on the evening of 1 February that the Netherlands' authorities desired a joint reconnaissance trip with a U.S. team dispatched for that purpose and that they desired to follow up this trip with a conference of the officials involved. The Netherlands authorities also requested that USAREUR move no personnel or equipment until after these actions had been completed.[16] Since US EUCOM had already directed USAREUR to dispatch a reconnaissance team in conjunction with a USAFE team to make an on-the-spot survey of the situation, and to make concrete recommendations for provision of assistance, there remained only the necessity of coordinating the activities of this USAREUR team with the appropriate Netherlands officials. Earlier in the evening US EUCOM had requested USAREUR to furnish a reconnaissance party consisting of personnel who had had some experience in relief operations. Brig. Gen. F. J. Brown, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, US EUCOM, suggested that the party include medical and engineer personnel.[17] US EUCOM made arrangements with MAAG Netherlands to meet this team at Skipol Airport near Amsterdam and to have the appropriate Netherlands officials on hand for consultation. General Noble, Chief of MAAG Netherlands, announced that he would be on hand to meet the team and that he would be accompanied by Lt. Gen. Buurman Van Vreeden, Commanding General of the Netherlands Territorial Command, Colonel De Wolf, Chief of Engineers of the Royal Netherlands Army, and Mr. Van Veen, Director of the Lower Rivers Rijkswaterstaat (National Waterways Authority).[18] US EUCOM also made the necessary arrangements with USAFE to furnish a C-47 plane for the reconnaissance party and to provide a group of Air Force experts in air rescue and evacuation to round out the team. This plane was scheduled to depart Wiesbaden Air Base at 0700, 2 February, and to arrive at Skipol Airport near Amsterdam at 0730.[19] The USAREUR party consisted of the following officers: Lt. Gen. M. S. Eddy, Commander in Chief, USAREUR; Brig. Gen. R. G. Gard, Deputy Chief of Staff for

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[16]Telecon, RAdm R. F. Good, US EUCOM J-3, with Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2140 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab G).

[17]Telecon, Brig Gen F. J. Brown, US EUCOM DCOFS Opns, with Col W. M. Vann, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, 1820 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab D).

[18]Telecon, RAdm R. F. Good, US EUCOM, with Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2140 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab G).

[19]USAREUR SGS memo for rcd, 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab E).

Operations, USAREUR; Maj. Gen. W. H. Middleswart, USAREUR Quartermaster; Rear Admiral H. E. Orem, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Germany; Capt. W. C. Hughes, Jr., Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations, U.S. Naval Forces, Germany; Col. D. C. Tredennick, Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, USAREUR; Col. L. F. Wells, Jr., Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, USAREUR; Col. L. W. Olmstead, USAREUR Deputy Chief Engineer; Lt. Col. K. H. Bayer, Chief, Movements Section, G-4 Division, USAREUR; Lt. Col. T. J. Brett, Chief, Operations Branch, Public Information Division, USAREUR; Lt. Col. T. C. Fitzgerald, Aide de Camp to General Eddy; Maj. C. R. Lewis, Medical Division, USAREUR; and Capt. G. W. Keyes, Engineer Division, USAREUR. USAFE was represented by two air evacuation experts, one air-sea rescue expert and one air drop expert, as follows: Col. B. B. Smythe; Lt. Col. L. Kossuth; Capt. H. Schmaltz; and Lt. R. L. McNeal.[20] MAAG Netherlands was requested by US EUCOM to provide expeditious transportation for this team and to make all other necessary arrangements. US EUCOM also impressed upon MAAG Netherlands the necessity for expediting a clear estimate of the situation as a basis for the determination of requirements by the reconnaissance team, so that the units and equipment which had been alerted in USAREUR and USAFE could begin their move into the Netherlands.[21]

7. Joint Conference at The Hague

Immediately after the completion of the reconnaissance trip over the disaster area, a comprehensive study of the situation was made at a joint conference of the military representatives of the United States and the military and civilian officials of the Netherlands who were responsible for the disaster relief operations. The meeting was presided over by Lt. Gen. Buurman Van Vreeden, and was attended by members of the General Staff of the Royal Netherlands Army and the civilian officials of both the Provinciale Waterstaat (Provincial Waterways Authority) and the national Rijkswaterstaat. The United States was represented by the USAREUR and USAFE officers of the reconnaissance party, members of the MAAG Netherlands staff, and representatives of the service attaches of the U.S. Embassy in The Hague. General Van Vreeden emphasized that the over-all direction, control, and coordination of the relief operations were in the

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[20](1) Memo for rcd, sgd Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab J). (2) Telecon, Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, with Maj Gen T. H. Landon, USAFE COFS, 2247 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I. (3) Cable SC-11649, CINCUSAREUR to C/MAAG Neth, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab I.

[21]Cable 012046Z (SMC In 53 Feb), US CINCEUR to MAAG Neth, 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab I.

hands of the Netherlands civilian authorities with the military forces, both Netherlands and Allied, rendering assistance only as requested.[22]

a. Assistance Desired by the Netherlands. The conference made it clear that the most urgent immediate requirements of the Netherlands were the evacuation of people from the danger area and the repair of communications in the disaster area. Mr. Van Veen, Director of the Rijkswaterstaat and senior civilian representative at the conference, stated that it was imperative that both DUKW's[23] and helicopters be employed as soon as possible. In addition, sandbags were vitally needed for emergency repairs of the fifty to eighty breaches in the dike system reported by reconnaissance of the area. Lt. Col. Van De Wall Bake, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, Royal Netherlands Army, stressed the need for immediate assistance from the U.S. forces and requested the provision of DUKW's, rubber boats, and other light self-propelled craft; light aircraft and helicopters to aid in the rescue operations; and heavier aircraft to parachute help to the flood victims. Both Mr. Van Veen and Colonel De Wolf, Chief Engineer, Royal Netherlands Army, explained that there was no immediate need for the use of U.S. engineer troops but that an urgent requirement did exist for drinking water and lighting equipment. Both concluded that the Netherlands could be most effectively aided by the provision of pumps, power plants, water purification equipment, and searchlight and floodlight units.[24]

b. Assurance of American Aid. General Eddy, as commander of the U.S. relief effort in the Netherlands, agreed during the conference to send all possible aid from the U.S. forces in Europe. In regard to the Netherlands request for DUKW's, it was quickly determined that at least three DUKW companies were available nearby in Germany and that two of these companies could arrive in the Netherlands within twenty-four hours. With regard to aircraft, General Eddy announced that he would dispatch the requested helicopters and light liaison planes from USAREUR and that USAFE would furnish the necessary cargo planes for paradrop operations. In addition, General Eddy stated he would send whatever engineering aid he could, but indicated that the requested equipment was available only in small amounts and that USAREUR possessed no searchlight units. Finally the American conferees arranged to send the maximum numbers of sandbags

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[22]Neth National Sector memo, G-3/448, 2 Feb 53, sub: Minutes of the Meeting Held on 2 February 1953 at 1400 hours at the Princess Juliana Barracks, The Hague, on U.S. Forces Flood Emergency Relief for the Netherlands. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab III (Tab I-1).

[23]DUKW's are amphibious trucks, 2½-ton, cargo.

[24]Neth National Sector memo, G-3/448, 2 Feb 53, sub: Minutes of the Meeting Held on 2 February 1953 at 1400 hours at the Princess Juliana Barracks, The Hague, on U.S. Forces Flood Emergency Relief for The Netherlands. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief File (Neth Relief Log), Tab II (Tab I-1).

and short-handled shovels that could be spared by USAREUR.[25]

8. General Eddy's Decision on Requirements

Once the requirements of the Netherlands had been made known to General Eddy and his staff, he was able to transmit to USAREUR headquarters his decisions as to troop units and equipment to be employed. General Eddy designated the 39th Engineer Construction Group to constitute the field headquarters at Breda for the relief operations in the Netherlands and requested that an advance party of that organization be flown to the Netherlands as soon as possible. This party was to consist of the commanding officer or his executive officer, a minimum of two S3 officers, two S4 officers, and approximately four clerical personnel. He also directed that a provisional air division, consisting of six helicopters and twelve to fifteen L-19's be dispatched to the air field at Gilze-Rijen, located approximately ten miles to the east of Breda. Because of their proximity to the Netherlands USAREUR decided to employ two DUKW companies manned by German labor service personnel subject to approval by HICOG and the German Federal Republic. In addition, an engineer dump truck company was requested to transport 300,000 sandbags and 50,000 short-handled shovels needed for repair work on the dikes. Finally it was requested that the 17th Signal Operations Battalion be alerted to fulfill the communications needs of the headquarters and units in the Netherlands.[26]

9. Establishment of Temporary USAREUR Headquarters at The Hague

The USAREUR Reconnaissance Team which had accompanied General Eddy on the preliminary inspection trip of the Netherlands disaster area contained representatives of the staff divisions and other officers who could make up a temporary command post to handle the operations in the Netherlands pending establishment of an organizational headquarters. In the conference of 2 February, General Eddy had announced that he and his staff were prepared to remain in the Netherlands at the invitation of the Netherlands Government until a temporary command post was established and functioning smoothly at The Hague as an American military relief mission. Since the required troops would not arrive in the Netherlands before the morning of 3 February it was not necessary to establish the proposed command post immediately. The skeleton organization could function until USAREUR officially established the American Military Relief Organization (AMRO).[27]

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[25] Ibid.

[26] Telecon, Lt Gen M. S. Eddy, CINCUSAREUR, and Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 1615 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A-1).

[27] Cable (Unnumbered) (SMC In 206 Feb), AMEMB (The Hague) from USIS to State Department, 1018 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), (Tab I).

10. Decision to Operate under Dutch Military Administration

Since the Netherlands military were operating under the direction of the civilian government agency known as the Rijkswaterstaat, General Eddy concluded that the American forces to be used in disaster relief would not operate independently but would merely supplement the efforts of the Netherlands military. The decision was thereupon made to integrate the U.S. forces to be employed with the Netherlands military organization, thus eliminating the possibility of duplication of effort. In developing the mission of the American forces in the disaster relief operation, General Eddy stated clearly that the American forces would be present in the Netherlands merely to augment the efforts of the Netherlands military, who in turn were subordinate to the authority of the civilian Rijkswaterstaat, and that only those elements and supplies would be furnished by the American forces which were necessary for this purpose.[28]

11. Headquarters USAREUR Planning

Following the decision of General Eddy to initiate all relief measures as quickly as possible and the determination of the assistance required by the Netherlands, responsibility for moving troop units forward as requested, and for providing logistical and technical service support as required, devolved upon Headquarters, USAREUR. Planning for this operation was governed by the following specific instructions issued to the USAREUR staff divisions by General Williams as USAREUR Chief of Staff. Messages to General Eddy's group should be sent in the clear to facilitate communications. Information for the movement of units was to be forwarded as rapidly as possible to insure that the units would be met at Vught, the Netherlands, which was established as the initial contact point with the Netherlands' representatives for all units. Staff divisions were cautioned not to initiate shipments without previous requests from General Eddy's staff in the Netherlands. Care was to be exercised to avoid shipping excess supplies and personnel, and requirements were to be figured as closely as possible. All technical services were instructed to make certain that signatures were obtained for all supplies shipped in order to permit later accounting. USAREUR G-4 was responsible for screening all requests for rail movement and USAREUR G-3 for screening all requests for units.[29] General planning for the relief operations was begun by USAREUR on

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[28](1) Telecon, Lt Gen M. S. Eddy, CINCUSAREUR, with Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 1615 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I. (2) Cable 081200 Z (SMC In 1673 Feb), AMRO (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VIII.

[29](1) Instructions of the USAREUR COFS to USAREUR Staff Officers, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab III (Tab F-1). (2) Memo for rcd, sgd Col J. C. Dalrymple, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab II (Tab F).

the evening of 1 February 1953, before General Eddy and his reconnaissance party departed for The Hague. General Williams called a staff meeting in his office at 2130, 1 February, which was attended by the following members of the USAREUR staff: Rear Admiral H. E. Orem, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Germany; Brig. Gen. R. G. Gard, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations; Col. D. C. Tredennick, Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3; Brig. Gen. F. A. Henning, Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4; Maj. Gen. G. B. Denit, USAREUR Surgeon; Maj. Gen. W. H. Middleswart, USAREUR Quartermaster; and Col. L. W. Olmstead, Deputy USAREUR Engineer. As a result of this conference General Williams issued orders that USAREUR be prepared to ship medical supplies, blankets, rations, cots, generators, water pumps, or any other equipment called for, immediately upon request.[30]

a. Alerting of Troop Units. Immediately after this conference General Williams issued the first alert orders for troop units which might expect to see duty in the disaster relief operations. The following USAREUR and Seventh Army troop units were placed on a two-hour alert basis for possible movement to the Netherlands: (1) the 39th Engineer Construction Group (USAREUR) consisting of the 354th Engineer Construction Battalion, 406th Engineer Construction Battalion, 334th Engineer Dump Truck Company, and the attached 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company; (2) The 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, and 373d Panel Bridge Company (Seventh Army). In addition, the 17th Signal Operations Battalion (USAREUR) was placed on a stand-by alert basis.[31] The following morning, 2 February, USAREUR G-3 added to the list of alerted units in order to comply with US EUCOM's listed requirements for small boats and amphibious equipment. The 458th and 460th Transportation Amphibious Truck Companies and the 81st Engineer Boat Company of the USAREUR Communications Zone, were placed on a two-hour alert status for possible movement to the Netherlands. At the same time the 497th Signal Photo Service Company was alerted in order to give full picture coverage to disaster relief activities.[32] On 3 February six of the units which had not yet been put on movement orders for the Netherlands were removed from the two-hour alert status and placed on a forty-eight hour alert basis. These six units were the three engineer construction battalions, the engineer boat company, and the two amphibious truck companies. The engineer construction battalions were not needed in the Netherlands because of the decision that the U.S. forces would take no part in rehabilitation work. The other units belonged to the USAREUR Communications Zone (COMZ) and could not be transported to

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[30]Memo for rcd, sgd Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab J).

[31]Ibid.

[32](1) Cable SX-1763, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 2 Feb 53, UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Outgoing Cables), Tab I. (2) Memo for rcd, sgd Col W. M. Vann, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab K).

the Netherlands in time to be of any immediate assistance.[33] On the morning of 5 February all USAREUR units already alerted on a two-hour basis but not yet dispatched were placed on a forty-eight hour alert basis.[34]

b. Dispatch of Troop Units and Equipment. In response to General Eddy's request of 2 February for troop units and equipment, USAREUR immediately dispatched certain of the units which had been placed on an alert status the previous evening. The largest category dispatched were engineer troops consisting of: (a) an advance party from the 39th Engineer Construction Group with a total strength of ten; (b) the 8540th and 8542d Engineer Amphibious Truck Companies (labor service DUKW companies), and the 7972d Labor Supervision Center; (c) the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company, augmented for this occasion; and (d) the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, with a total of thirty-five water points. Transportation units dispatched consisted of a detachment of three sedans of the 519th Transportation Car Company for use at The Hague, and a detachment of the 35th Transportation Army Aircraft Maintenance (TAAM) Company to perform first echelon maintenance on the USAREUR aircraft to be used in the operations. The 42d Ordnance Medium Automotive Maintenance (MAM) Company was directed to provide first echelon maintenance for all vehicles used in the Netherlands. The 17th Signal Operations Battalion was dispatched on specific request by General Eddy. A provisional air division, consisting of eight helicopters, fifteen L-19's, and two L-20's was formed from USAREUR and Seventh Army units and dispatched to Gilze-Rijen Air Field for rescue and evacuation operations. Finally USAREUR dispatched a detachment of the 7738th European Exchange System (EES) Group to provide mobile post exchange (PX) and mobile snack bar service for American personnel engaged in relief operations.[35] The following equipment and supplies were immediately forwarded to the disaster area by USAREUR: 300,000 sandbags; 10,000 short-handled shovels; six 3,000-gallon canvas tanks; 200 parachutes with lashings and containers; 30,000 bottles of halazone tablets and 50,000 calcium hypochloride ampules; and rubber life rafts from USAFE stocks.[36]

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[33]Cable 032015Z (SMC In 474 Feb), AMRO (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab III.

[34]Cable 050730Z (SMC In 930 Feb), AMRO (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab V.

[35]Cable SC-11765, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab II.

[36](1) Cable SC-11766, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab II. (2) Cable-PRO 986 (SMC In 140 Feb), USAREUR QM Pur Off (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab II.

General Matthew B. Ridgway at Gilze-Rijen Airport near Breda with Col. E. W. Niles, Commanding Officer of the 39th Engineer Construction Group.

Section III: The American Military Relief Organization (AMRO)

12. Establishment of AMRO

In accordance with General Eddy's announced intention of establishing a temporary command post at The Hague, Headquarters, AMRO, Lt. Gen. Manton S. Eddy commanding, was established in the Princess Juliana Kaserne, The Hague, at 0800, 3 February 1953. To facilitate communications between this temporary headquarters at The Hague and USAREUR headquarters in Heidelberg, a direct Red Line telephone circuit between the two headquarters was established the same day. Upon establishment of the command post, General Eddy announced that AMRO would continue its work with the Dutch authorities until the gravest aspects of the situation had passed.[37]

a. Mission and Functions. In developing the mission of AMRO, General Eddy emphasized that American forces would assist the Netherlands military in their relief efforts and that the main concern of AMRO was with rescue and evacuation operations rather than rehabilitation. In practice it was difficult to determine the extent of rescue and relief work since what appeared to American engineer troops as rehabilitation projects were essentially rescue operations.[38] Eventually the mission of AMRO was reduced by General Eddy to the following simple phrase, "To assist the Netherlands Armed Forces in evacuation and relief of suffering caused by the flood."[39] On 7 February, General Matthew B. Ridgway, Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) and Commander in Chief, U.S. European Command (US CINCEUR), informed his component commanders--Commander in Chief, U.S. Army, Europe (CINCUSAREUR); Commander in Chief, U.S. Air Forces in Europe (CINCUSAFE); and Commander in Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean (CINCNELM)--that the U.S. mission in the Netherlands was solely that of saving life. Since he did not consider general rehabilitation work a part of the mission of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Netherlands, he directed that all requests for general rehabilitation work by American forces, as distinguished from such initial work as might be necessary or desirable to

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[37](1) Cable PRO-1018 (SMC In 342 Feb), QM Proc Ctr (Frankfurt) to CINCUSAREUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab III. (2) Cable (Unnumbered) (SMC In 206 Feb), AMEMB (The Hague) from USIS to State Dept, 1018 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab II.

[38]Telecon, Lt Gen M. S. Eddy, CINCUSAREUR, and Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 1615 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab K).

[39]Cable 131006Z (SMC In 2906 Feb), AMRO (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR for G-3, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIII.

save or preserve life, be denied except under unusual circumstances.[40] On the following day US EUCOM notified the Department of the Army that the following functions were being carried out by the U.S. Armed Forces in the Netherlands: (1) continuation of assistance to the Netherlands military in rescue, evacuation, and relief of suffering until completion of that phase of the operations, and (2) continuation of assistance to the Netherlands military in effecting emergency repairs where timely temporary work might prevent renewed extensions of the disaster.[41]

b. Organization of AMRO Headquarters. General Eddy's original reconnaissance party which arrived in the Netherlands on the morning of 2 February contained all elements necessary for the temporary command post established as AMRO headquarters at The Hague on 3 February. Brig. Gen. R. G. Gard, Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, USAREUR, assumed the position of Chief of Staff, AMRO. In designating General Eddy as commander of U.S. relief operations in the Netherlands, US EUCOM had authorized him to call upon the component commands of US EUCOM for necessary assistance. Accordingly the Navy and Air Force experts who had accompanied General Eddy on the reconnaissance trip formed the nuclei of the Navy and Air sections of the AMRO staff. The special staff under the chief of staff contained only a public information section and liaison sections for MAAG Netherlands and the Netherlands Army. Originally the general staff contained only G-3 and G-4 sections while the technical services were represented by engineer, signal, quartermaster, and medical sections. (See Chart 1.) A G-1 section, and transportation and ordnance sections of the technical service staff, were to be added subsequently.

c. Establishment of Field Headquarters. To carry out the necessary coordination of ground units in the rescue and evacuation operations it was decided to establish a field headquarters in the town of Breda located near the disaster area. This field headquarters, staffed by the 39th Engineer Construction Group, operated under AMRO headquarters and received its orders from the Dutch military authorities at a level comparable to an area command.[42] General Eddy made arrangements with the Netherlands military authorities for the field headquarters to be housed in the Chassee Kaserne in Breda. An advance party of the 39th Engineer Construction Group consisting of ten persons

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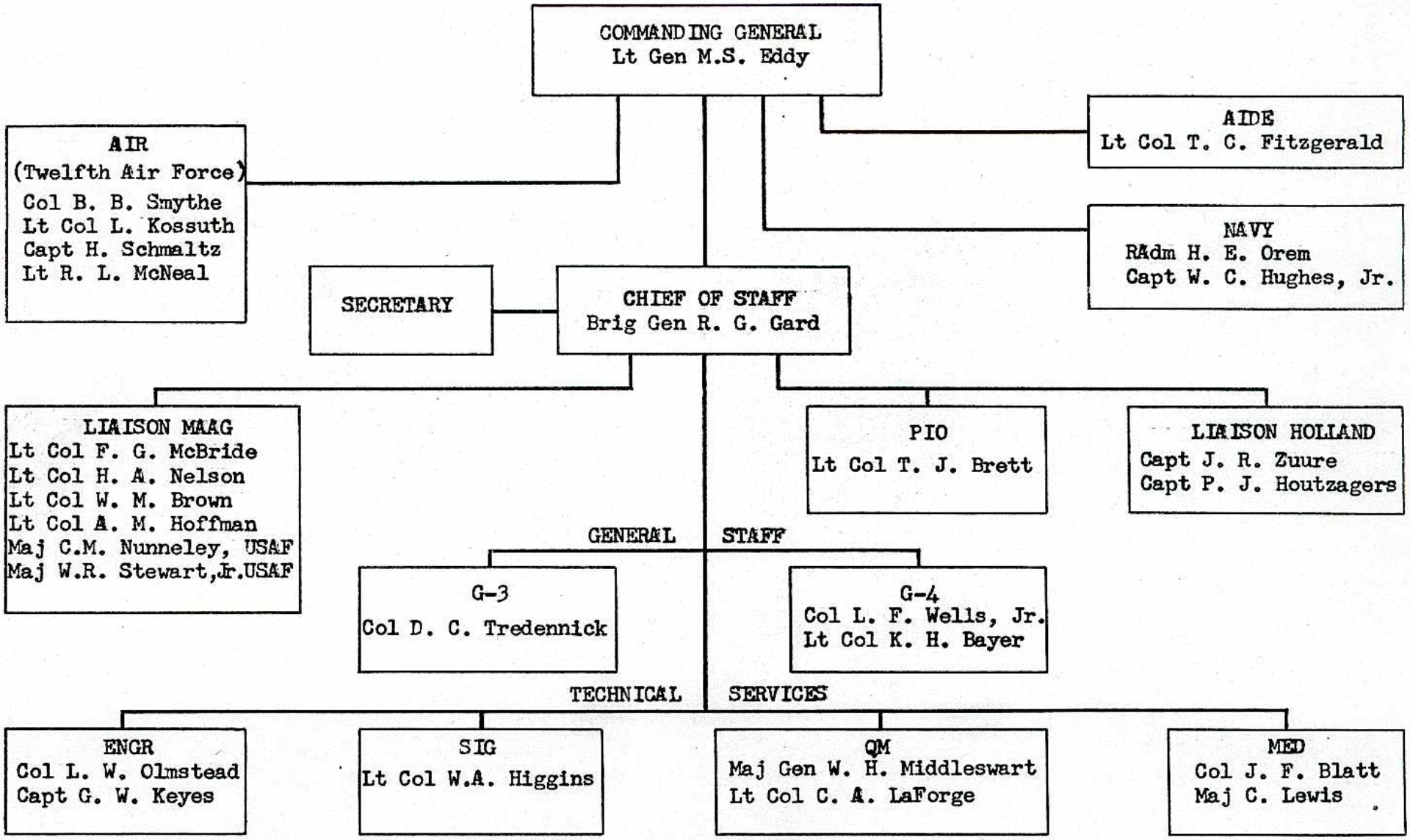
[40]Cable ALO-118 (SMC In 1585 Feb), USNMR SHAPE to US CINCEUR, 7 Feb 53. CONFIDENTIAL. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VII.

[41]Cable 081814Z (SMC In 1699 Feb), US EUCOM to COFSA, 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VIII.

[42](1) Telecon, Lt Gen M. S. Eddy, CINCUSAREUR, and Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 1615 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I. (2) Memo, USAREUR SGS to US EUCOM J-3, 7 Feb 53, sub: Summary of Holland Operations. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab VII.

Staff officers of AMRO Hqs at the Princess Juliana Kaserne, The Hague. Left to right, front row: Lt. J. M. den Hertog, Liaison Officer, Royal Netherlands Army; Lt. Col. K. H. Bayer, Asst G-4; Col. D. F. Slaughter, G-4; Maj. W. H. Lamb, Air Section; Brig. Gen. R. R. Hendrix, Commanding General; Col. D. C. Tredennick, COFS and G-3; Lt. Col. R. M. Walker, Asst G-3; Capt. P. J. Houtzagers, Liaison Officer Royal Netherlands Army; Second row: Lt. Col C. A. LaForge, QM Div; Lt. Col. R. A. Jones, Engr Div; Maj. L. R. Knight, Comptr; Capt W. A. J. Carroll, QM Div; Lt. Falkner Heard, Jr., Aide; Lt. Col. R. D. Hoisington, Trans Div; Capt. E. K. Stewart, Hist Div; Lt. Col. W. A. Higgins, Sig Div; Lt. Col. Eric MacDonald, Ord Div; Third row: Ensign A. P. S. Buyk, Liaison Officer, Royal Netherlands Army; Lt. Wm. Dunn, PIO; Lt. T. H. Tullidge, Asst Sig O; Maj. R. F. Askey, G-1.

AMERICAN MILITARY RELIEF ORGANIZATION



Source: USAREUR G-3. UNCLASSIFIED.

Chart I

STAFF ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - 39th ENGINEER CONSTRUCTION GROUP IN THE NETHERLANDS
12 FEBRUARY 1953

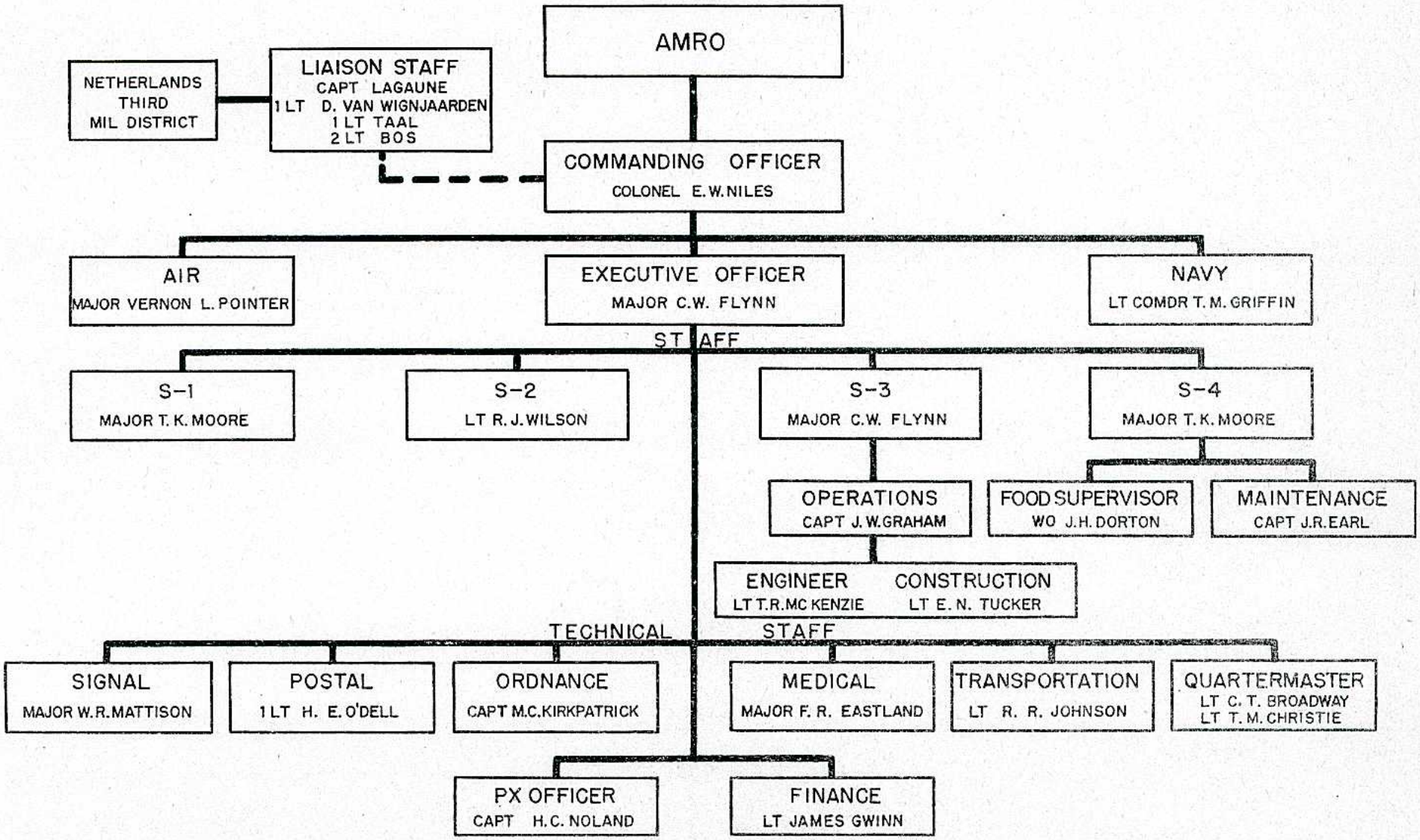


Chart 2

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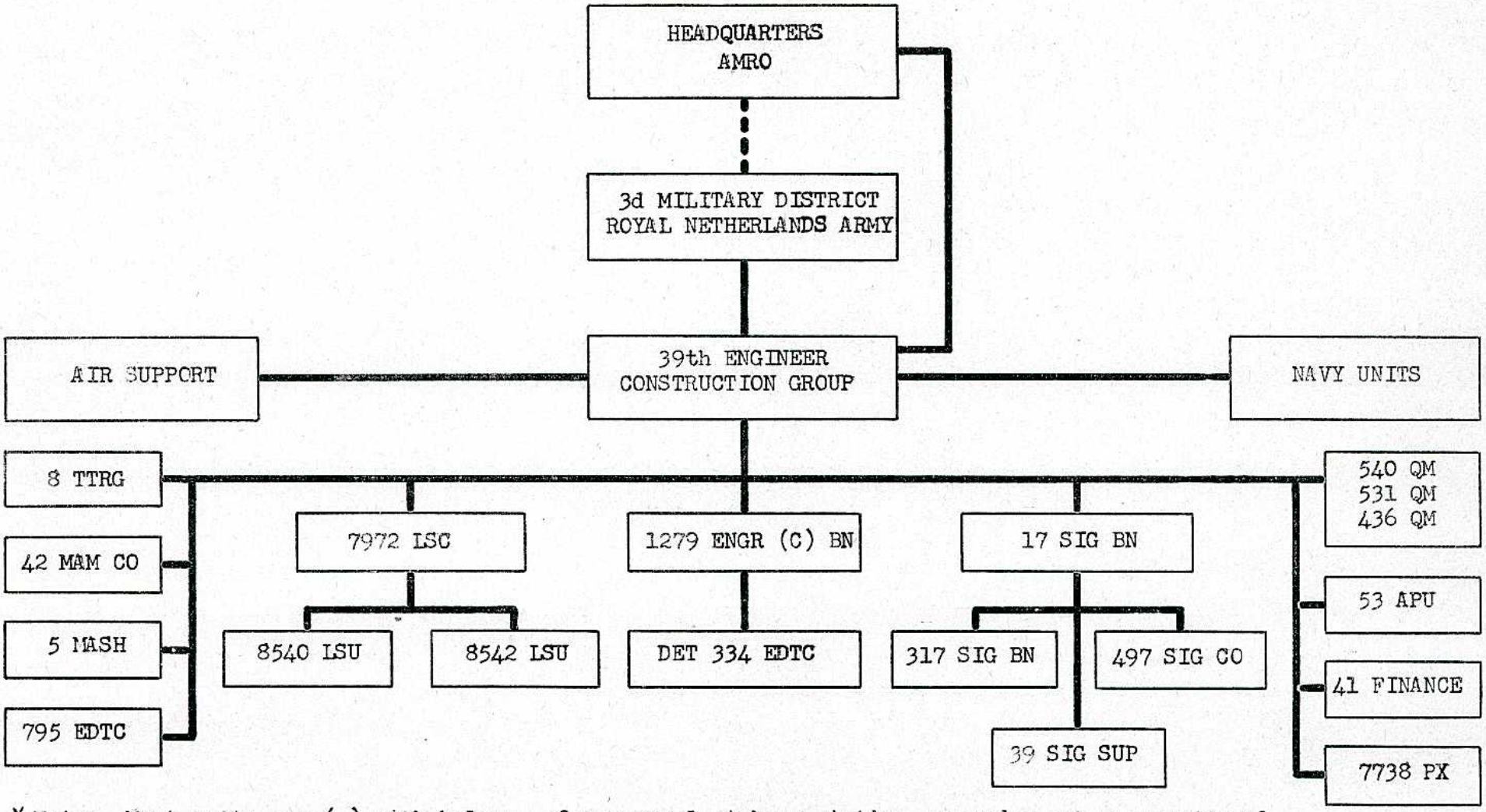
OPERATIONAL CHART FOR THE 39th ENGINEER CONSTRUCTION GROUP IN THE NETHERLANDS *

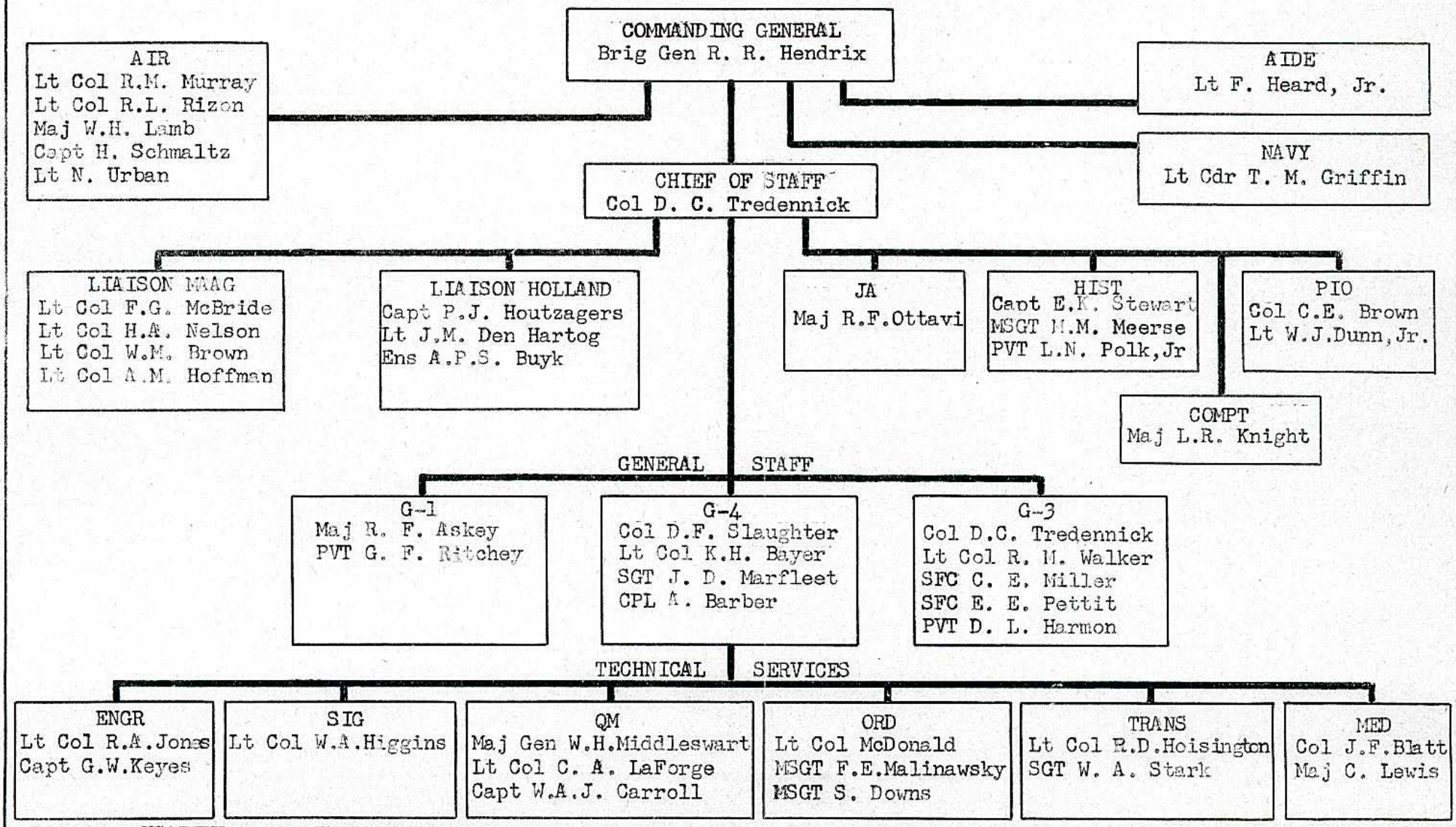
12 FEBRUARY 1953



* Note: Most units are (-) with balance of personnel at home station, or under other operational control.

Chart 3

HEADQUARTERS, AMERICAN MILITARY RELIEF ORGANIZATION, THE HAGUE



Source: USAREUR G-3. UNCLASSIFIED.

Chart 4

under the command of Colonel E. W. Niles, Group Commander, was transported by air from Echterdingen Air Field, Stuttgart, Germany, to Valkenburg Air Field near The Hague early on the morning of 3 February.[43] As of 2200, 3 February, AMRO headquarters was able to report to USAREUR that the field headquarters had been established at Breda and that the 39th Engineer Construction Group was then arranging for the transportation of additional personnel and some equipment from the group's permanent headquarters in Karlsruhe, Germany (Charts 2 and 3).[44]

13. Designation of Key AMRO Personnel

General Eddy's duties as CINCUSAREUR necessitated his return to Heidelberg, Germany, even though he still retained over-all command of the Netherlands relief operations. On the afternoon of 2 February, General Eddy informed General Williams that he desired that a capable organizer be selected, able to take over the actual command of AMRO at The Hague. He also desired the selection of an officer to replace General Gard as chief of staff. The remainder of the staff would stay at The Hague until such time as the chiefs of the various USAREUR staff divisions desired to replace them.[45]

a. Commander. Within a few hours after General Eddy's request, Brig. Gen. Raleigh R. Hendrix, Seventh Army Artillery Officer, was selected to take command of AMRO. General Hendrix was on a train bound for Bremerhaven to meet an antiaircraft artillery battalion enroute from the United States. The Seventh Army concurred in his appointment, and he was notified to report as quickly as possible to The Hague to relieve General Eddy.[46] On 3 February, General Williams informed General Eddy that General Hendrix would arrive at The Hague late that afternoon.[47]

b. Staff Officers. When General Hendrix was designated as commanding general of AMRO, the decision was made to appoint Col. D. C. Tredennick, G-3 of General Eddy's original AMRO staff, as the Chief of Staff,

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[43]Cable SC-11765, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab II.

[44]Cable (Unnumbered) (SMC In 518 Feb), AMRO (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab III.

[45]Telecon, Lt Gen M. S. Eddy, CINCUSAREUR, at The Hague, with Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 1615 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A-1).

[46]Interv, Mr. J. R. Moenk, USAREUR Hist Div, with Capt J. A. Rasmussen, Admin Asst to USAREUR COFS, 18 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[47]Telecon, Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, with Lt Gen M. S. Eddy, CINCUSAREUR, at The Hague, 1120 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A-1).

AMRO. On the morning of 3 February, the same day that AMRO headquarters was officially established, General Williams directed the USAREUR staff divisions to plan to set up a comprehensive staff for the headquarters at The Hague. USAREUR G-3 Division was charged with responsibility for assembling and moving the personnel selected by the respective staff divisions. The AMRO headquarters was to have the following personnel: (a) one G-3 officer; (b) one G-4 officer; (c) one transportation officer; (d) one public information officer; (e) one medical staff officer; (f) one adjutant general officer with authority for issuing orders; (g) one quartermaster officer; (h) one ordnance maintenance officer; (i) two engineer officers; and (j) one signal officer. In addition the USAREUR Judge Advocate was directed to send an officer to the Netherlands to check on claims procedures and other matters and the Chief, Historical Division, USAREUR, was directed by the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations to provide an historical officer for the AMRO staff. Each staff section, was reminded that it was responsible for furnishing the necessary clerical personnel for its elements of the AMRO staff (Chart 4).[48]

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[48]Instructions of the USAREUR COFS to the USAREUR Staff Officers, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab III (Tab F).

CHAPTER II

Field Operations

14. U.S. Forces Participating

The U.S. military forces actually participating in relief activities in the Netherlands during the period of the emergency included members of all three services.

a. Army Units. Army units represented completely or partially included the 39th Engineer Construction Group, 7972d Labor Supervision Center, 8540th Engineer Amphibious Truck Company (LSU), 8542d Engineer Amphibious Truck Company (LSU), 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company, 5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, Seventh Army Provisional Air Detachment, 8th Transportation Traffic Regulating Group, 540th Quartermaster Subsistence Supply Company, 436th Quartermaster Bath Company, 531st Quartermaster Petroleum Supply Company, 557th Quartermaster Aerial Supply Company, 42d Ordnance Medium Automotive Maintenance Company, 35th Transportation Army Aircraft Maintenance Company, 17th Signal Battalion (Operations), 317th Signal Construction Battalion, 39th Signal Support Battalion, 497th Signal Photo Company, 53d Army Postal Unit, and the 41st Finance Disbursing Section. Additional supporting elements and detachments included personnel from the 334th Engineer Dump Truck Company, 1402d Engineer Combat Battalion, 5th Engineer Combat Battalion, 406th Engineer Construction Battalion, 109th Engineer Combat Battalion, 17th Armored Engineer Battalion, 552d Engineer Ponton Bridge Company, 547th Engineer Combat Battalion, 332d Engineer Topographic Company, 317th Engineer Combat Battalion, 293d Engineer Construction Battalion, 77th Engineer Construction Battalion, 4th Engineer Combat Battalion, 1st Engineer Combat Battalion, 311th Engineer Construction Group, 519th Transportation Car Company, and the 7738th European Exchange System (EES) Group.

Table 1--Location of AMRO Units in the Netherlands

The Hague

Headquarters, American Military Relief Organization

Breda

39th Engineer Construction Group
795th Engineer Dump Truck Company
1279th Engineer Combat Battalion
17th Signal Operations Battalion
497th Signal Photo Company
8th Transportation Traffic Regulation Group
317th Signal Construction Battalion
5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital
436th Quartermaster Bath Company

Steenbergen

39th Signal Support Battalion
8540th Engineer Amphibious Truck Company (LSU)
8542d Engineer Amphibious Truck Company (LSU)
7972d Labor Supervision Center

Dintelsas

Rhine River Patrol Detachment

Gilze-Rijen

42d Ordnance Medium Automotive Maintenance Company
35th Transportation Army Aircraft Maintenance Company
540th Quartermaster Subsistence Supply Company
531st Quartermaster Petroleum Supply Company
53d Army Postal Unit
39th Troop Carrier Squadron
40th Troop Carrier Squadron
41st Troop Carrier Squadron
12th Air Rescue Group
9th Air Rescue Group
68th Air Rescue Squadron
69th Air Rescue Squadron

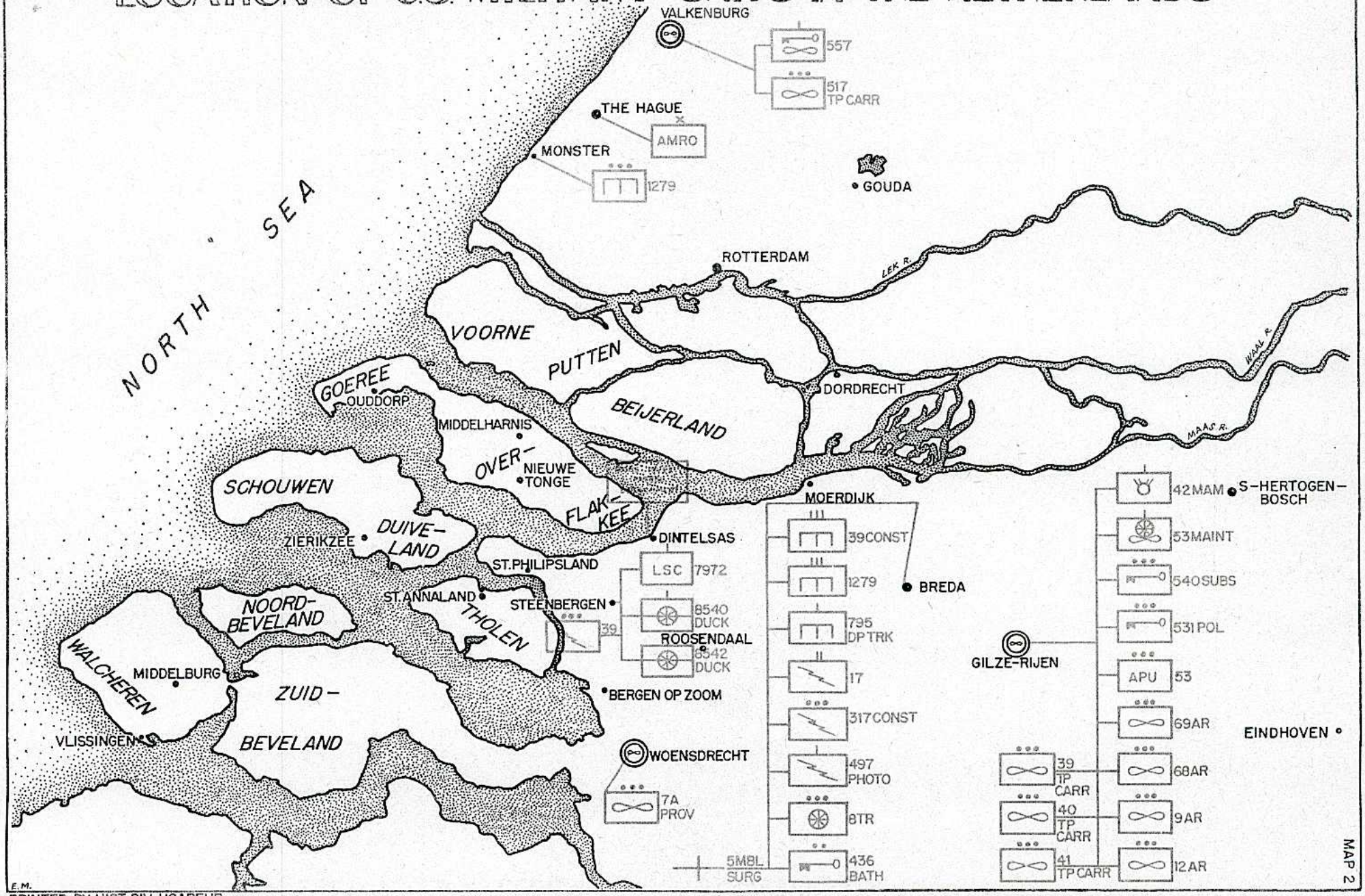
Valkenburg

557th Quartermaster Aerial Supply Company
517th Troop Carrier Wing

Woensdrecht

Seventh Army Provisional Air Detachment

LOCATION OF U.S. MILITARY UNITS IN THE NETHERLANDS



MAP 2

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b. Navy Units. The U.S. Navy was represented by a detachment from the Rhine River Patrol consisting of one LCU and one LCR later joined by two patrol boats, and was under the command of Lt. Cdr. T. M. Griffin.

c. Air Force Units. U.S. Air Force units represented in the Netherlands relief forces included the 39th Troop Carrier Squadron, 40th Troop Carrier Squadron, 41st Troop Carrier Squadron, 12th Air Rescue Group, 9th Air Rescue Group, 69th Air Rescue Squadron, 68th Air Rescue Squadron, and the 517th Troop Carrier Wing. A signal detachment consisting of one warrant officer and ten enlisted men from Allied Air Forces, Central Europe (AAFCE), manned a telephone switchboard in Sevenbergen, the Netherlands.[1] The location of the various units is shown in Map 2 and Table 1.

d. Total Strength. The personnel strength of AMRO increased from an initial strength of 12 officers and enlisted men on 2 February to a peak strength of 2,211 on 12 February.[2] Staff and operational units were the first arrivals on 3 and 4 February with support units arriving on 4, 5 and 6 February. Table 2 constitutes a summary of the daily strength reports.

Section I: Rescue and Evacuation, 2 - 7 February

15. Air Rescue and Supply

a. Initial Relief Activities. The first relief activities undertaken by the U.S. military forces in the Netherlands were those of air rescue and emergency drop missions. Supervision over the first air activity was established by U.S. Air Force (USAF) officers from the MAAG Netherlands mission temporarily assigned to Headquarters, AMRO, who arranged for the use of airports and coordinated aerial activities with the Royal Netherlands Air Force. A USAF officer, at first Lt. Col. R. W. Holmes, from MAAG Netherlands, and later Lt. Col. R. L. Rizon, of the 12th Air Rescue Group, was assigned to Gilze-Rijen airport as air coordinator of all U.S. aircraft. Three Netherlands fields were used: Gilze-Rijen for all types of aircraft, Valkenburg for heavy aircraft

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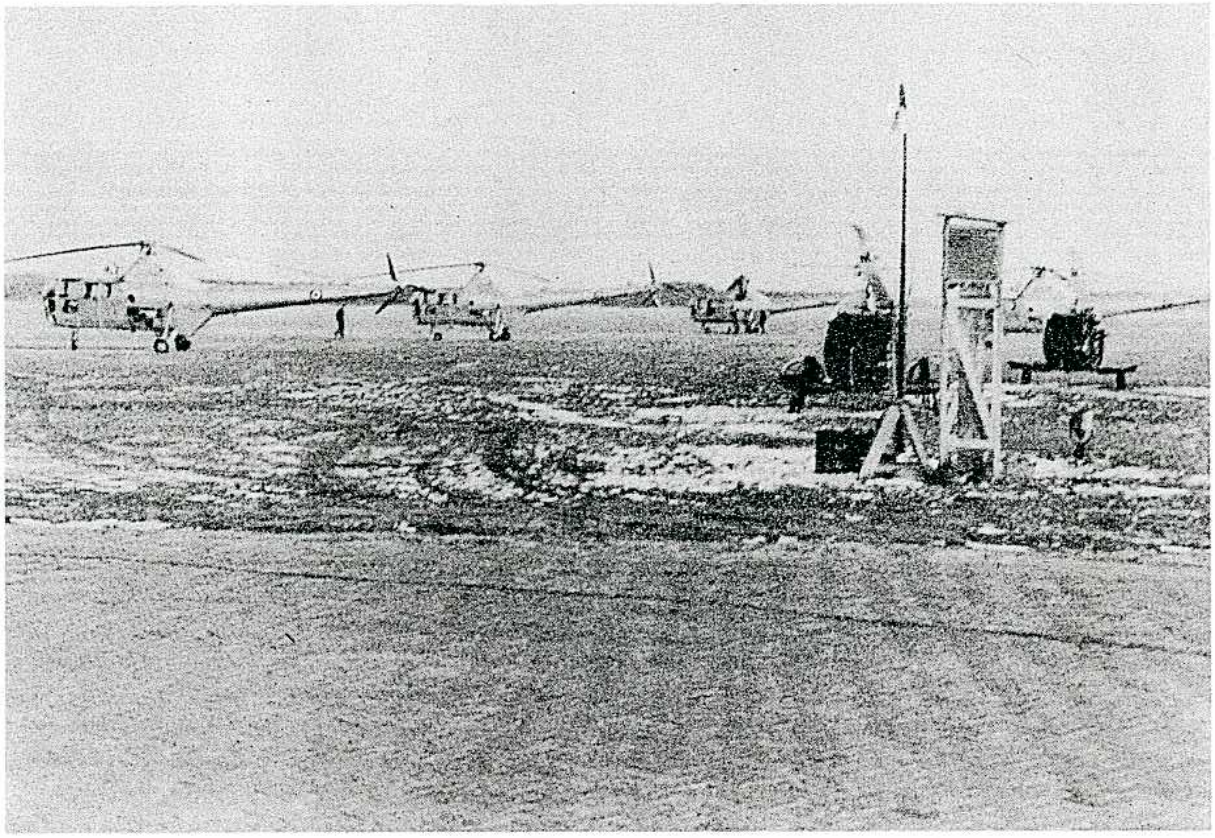
[1]Informal Rept, WOJG R.W. Pust, AAFCE, to Maj W. H. Lamb, AMRO Air Ln Off, 15 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

[2]AMRO G-1 Sum Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

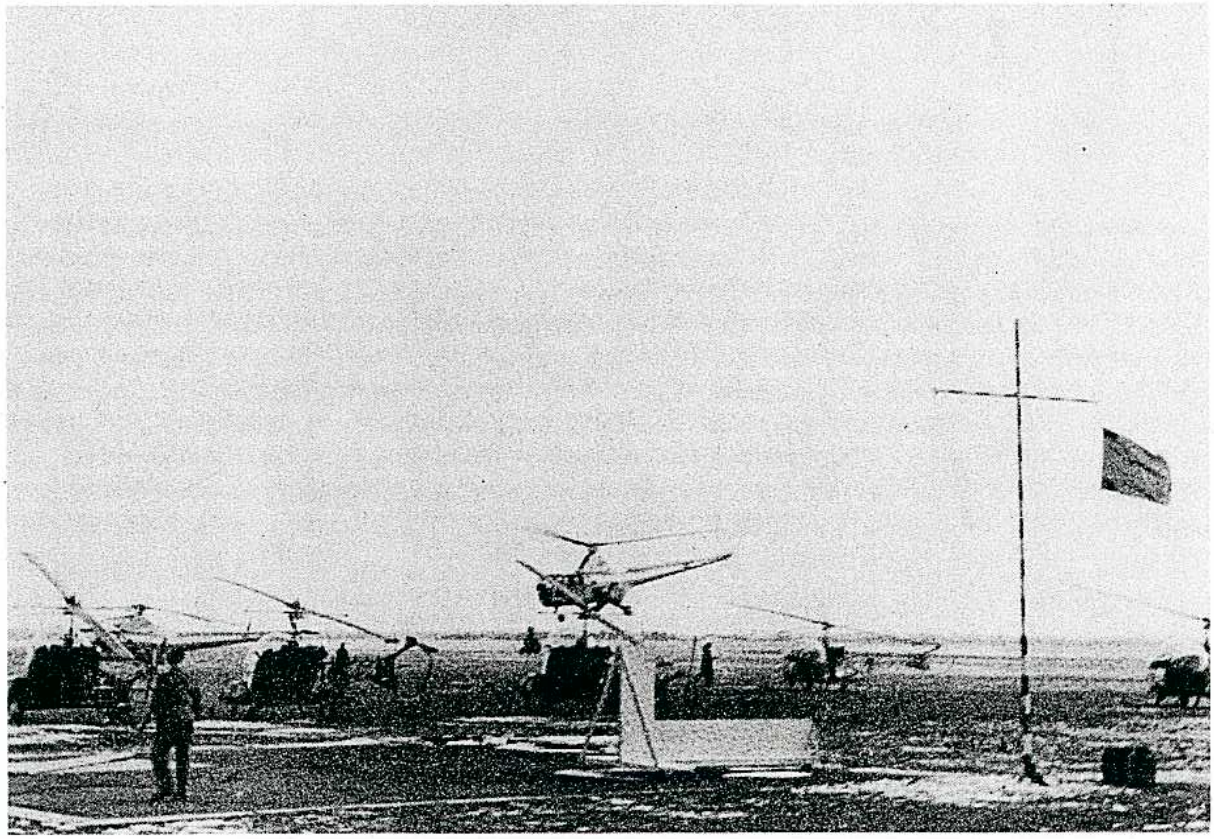
Table 2--Strength Report

	U.S. Army									Air			Navy			
	Off		EM		DA	German				Off		EM				
Date	AMRO	Units	AMRO	Units	Civ	LS	Off	LS	EM	Civ	AMRO	Units	Units	Off	EM	German	Total
2	11		1									8	7				27
3	12	81	2	980		12	301					47	69	1	31		1536
4	19	114	12	1497	1	12	301	51		2		48	69	1	31		2153
5	20	113	15	1497	1	12	301	51		2		48	69	1	31		2161
6	19	125	15	1487	1	12	301	51		2		57	58	1	31		2160
7	18	126	15	1529	1	12	301	51		2		48	69	1	31		2204
8	21	126	17	1529	1	12	301	53		2		48	69	1	31		2211
9	22	130	17	1495	1	12	301	53		1		31	57	2	44		2166
10	21	129	19	1496	1	12	301	53		1		20	44	2	44		2143
11	21	117	19	1459	1	12	301	58		1		20	44	2	40		2099
12	21	108	19	1417	1	12	286	58		1		9	7	2	44		1985
13	21	108	18	1403	1	12	286	58		1		9	7	2	44		1970
14	21	107	18	1395	1	12	286	58		1		9	7	2	44		1961
15	20	107	17	1420	1	12	285	58		1		9	7	2	44		1983
16	20	107	17	1420	1	12	285	58		1		9	7	2	37	1	1977
17	19	107	17	1420	1	12	285	58		1		9	7	0	0	0	1937

Source: AMRO G-1 Sum Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.



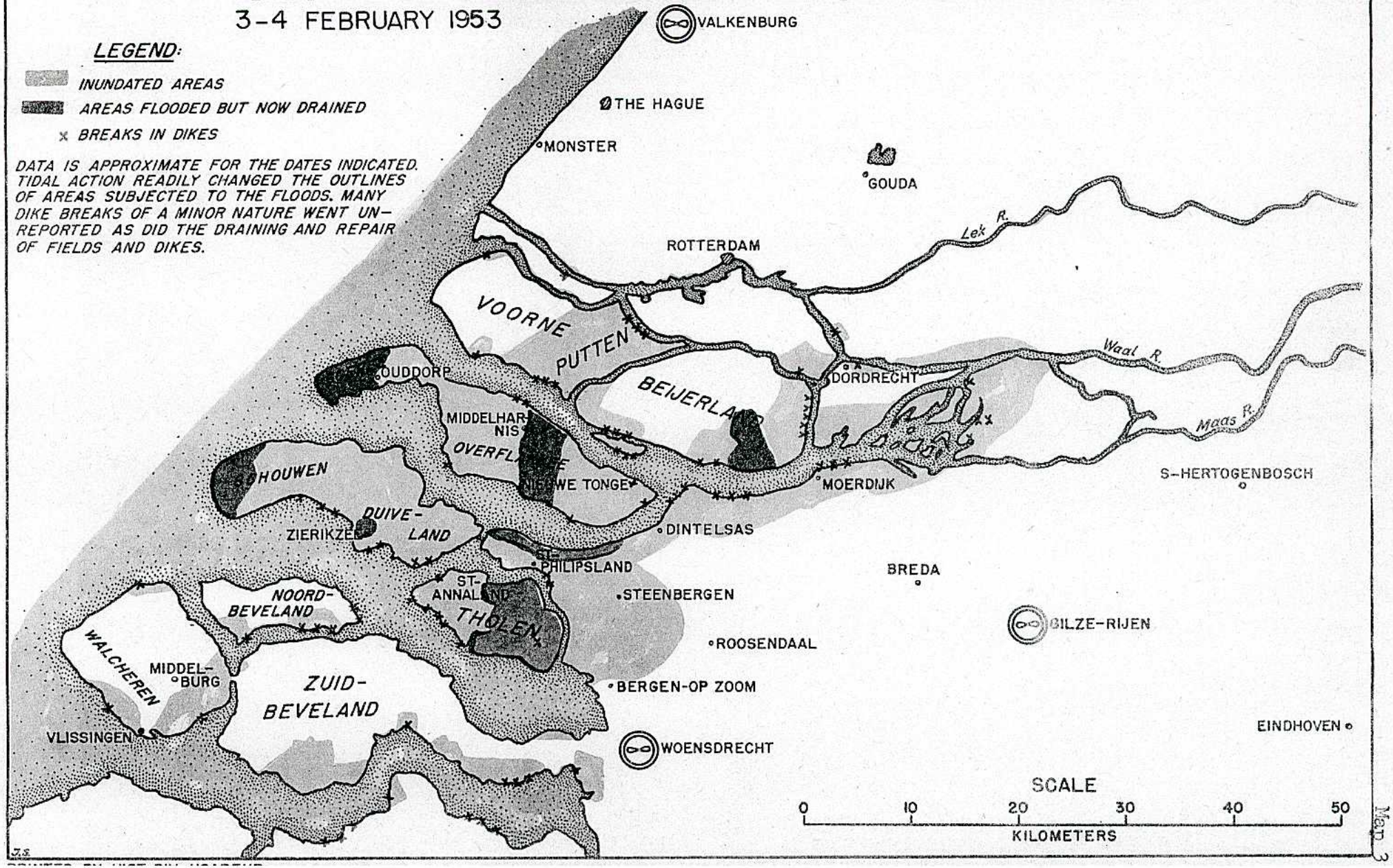
H 19 Helicopters at the Woensdrecht Airport.



H 13 Helicopters at their Woensdrecht Operational Base.

NETHERLANDS FLOOD SITUATION MAP

3-4 FEBRUARY 1953



Map 3

and as a base for drop missions, and Woensdrecht for helicopter and liaison planes. The two MAAG officers were relieved upon the arrival of Lt. Col. R. M. Murray and Maj. W. H. Lamb, who established the Air Section, Headquarters, AMRO, which became responsible for coordinating all U.S. air matters and for processing and securing additional aircraft as the Netherlands Air Force made its requirements known.[3]

b. Operations, 2 - 3 February. An advance detachment of the 557th Quartermaster Aerial Supply Company of two officers and ten enlisted men, whose earliest arrival to assist in dropping emergency aerial supplies had been promised by General Eddy, arrived during the night of 2 February at Valkenburg and immediately began to perform its duties of preparing packages for dropping and delivery by air. On 2 February five SA-16 aircraft flew into the Netherlands for duty.[4] Maj. V. L. Poynter, of the Seventh Army Flight Detachment, who was to direct the operations of the Seventh Army helicopters at Woensdrecht, flew from Stuttgart to Gilze-Rijen in an L-20 on the same day and immediately arranged with the Netherlands air authorities for the reception of the first contingent of helicopters which arrived at 1515 on 3 February. Within a half hour of their arrival the helicopter pilots undertook their first rescue missions to Overflakkee Island and in the remaining short period of daylight rescued 125 persons--all emergency evacuations (Map 3).[5] The helicopter detachment, augmented in the late afternoon by the arrival of eight additional H-13's, played the major role in air activities on 4 February. From dangerous and isolated positions on Overflakkee Island 475 persons were rescued. These were persons who could be evacuated in no other way and account for the many instances in which the helicopters are credited for dramatic tree and housetop rescues. The sixteen helicopters flew 158 sorties and amassed a total flying time of 47 hours. Helicopters were also used to guide DUKW's to stranded persons who could be rescued by water craft. Other aircraft active on 4 February included one C-47, two H-19's, five SA-16's, nine L-19's, and four C-119's. The C-119's made ten sorties, flew a total of 15 hours, and made aerial deliveries of 92,500 sandbags and three tons of baled hay.[6] The spectacular operation of the helicopters on rescue and emergency missions to outlying and isolated areas endeared them to the Dutch public and both the helicopter and the DUKW became the mechanical heroes of the relief activity. The SA-16's were credited with the emergency evacuation of eighteen persons

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[3](1) AMRO Air Sit Rept, 4 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (2) Memo, Maj C. M. Nunnely, MAAG Neth, and Maj W. S. Stewart, Jr, MAAG Neth, to Col Richard A. Abbey, C/MAAG Neth Air Sec, 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[4]AMRO Air Sit Repts, 4 - 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[5]Intervs, Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, with Maj V. L. Poynter, USAREUR Provisional Air Det, 9 and 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[6](1) Ibid. (2) AMRO Air Sec Daily Act Rept, 4 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

on 3 February, but it was soon determined that their extensive use in the debris-flecked waters of the flooded areas was impractical because of the continuous threat of damage to their hulls. In the days immediately following, the SA-16's were relieved of the mission of rescuing personnel by water surface landings and were used on liaison missions. The SA-16's were finally withdrawn from active operation as the need for aerial support decreased.[7]

c. Operations, 5 February. There was a steady build-up of air operation until 5 February when the peak of emergency rescue and relief effort was reached. Air activity on 5 February, which was heavy throughout the day, constituted a continuation of similar activities from the day before. From Woensdrecht, located at the edge of the flooded areas, the helicopters from U.S. military forces, which now numbered nineteen (three H-19's and sixteen H-13's), flew air evacuation, cargo, and liaison missions. Emergency air evacuations were estimated to total 263 persons from the towns of Nieuwe-Tonge and Sommesdijk on Overflakkee Island, with the helicopters flying from daylight to dark. By establishing a supplementary gasoline dump on Overflakkee, Major Poynter was able to keep his aircraft on operational missions for longer than normal periods of time. On 5 February the sixteen H-13's made a total of 156 sorties and flew a total of 68 hours; the three H-19's made 37 sorties and were in the air for 11 hours and 15 minutes.[8] A C-47 made four sorties and dropped 20,000 sandbags and 11,000 pounds of food, and a C-119 in four sorties dropped 20,000 sandbags and 12,000 pounds of food. Three carrier flights daily in L-20 liaison planes, from Valkenburg to Gilze-Rijen and return were established with vehicular transportation from each field to The Hague and to Breda. Experience during the first few days showed that the presence of too many liaison-type aircraft created a problem of control. Their number after 5 February was decreased to meet reduced operational requirements. As of 5 February a total of fifty-two U.S. aircraft were participating in the relief mission, including eighteen L-19's, thirteen H-13's, three H-19's, ten C-119's, two C-47's, three SA-16's, and three L-20's (Map 4).[9]

d. Operations, 6 February. On 6 February, U.S. aircraft again were engaged on relief missions in accordance with their types and capabilities. Nine C-119's flew 13 sorties (flying time 24.20 hours) from Valkenburg to deliver 40,000 sandbags, 1,000 pounds of rubber boots, and 22,000 pounds of shovels. The 557th Quartermaster Aerial Supply Company assisted in seven aerial drops and an emergency drop mission of 8,000 pounds of food, clothing, and medical supplies. Aerial drop missions of inflated life rafts were discontinued as the urgency of this requirement

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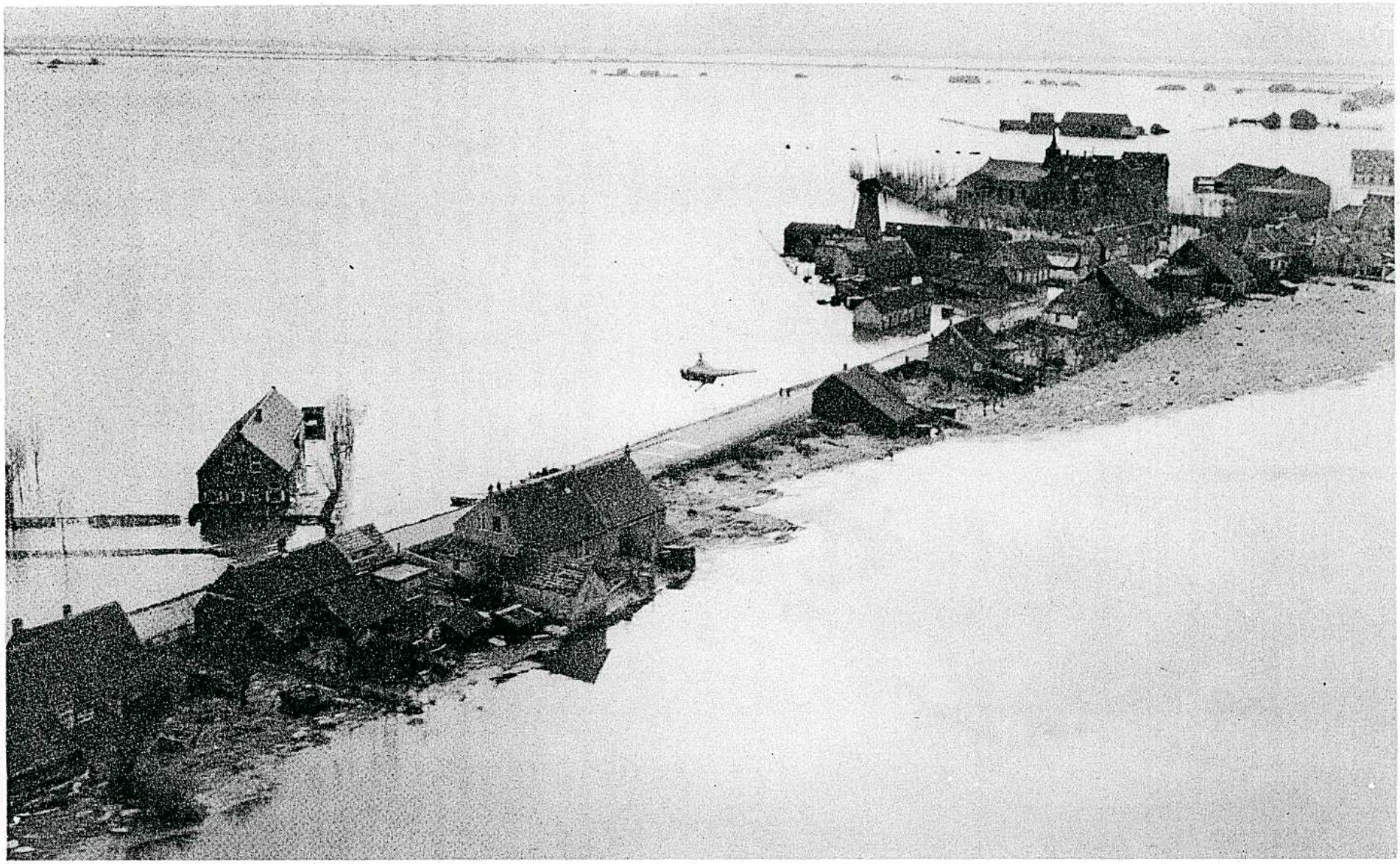
[7]AMRO Air Sit Repts, 5 - 7 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

[8]AMRO Air Sit Rept, 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[9]AMRO Air Sit Rept, 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

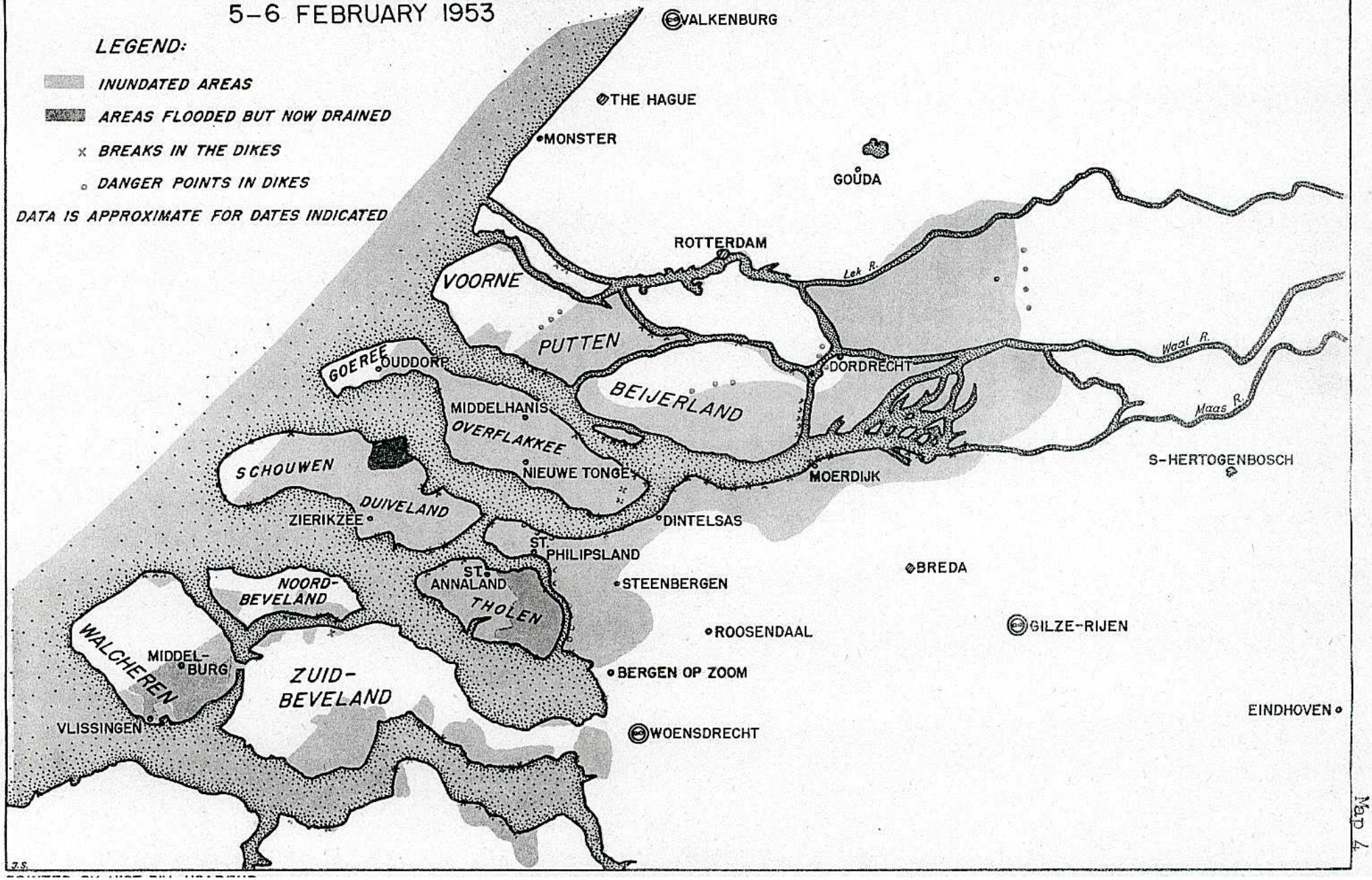
Netherlands Troops loading food supplies on a US helicopter at Woensdrecht airfield for an emergency mission.



US Army helicopter taking off after bringing supplies to an isolated village.

NETHERLANDS FLOOD SITUATION MAP

5-6 FEBRUARY 1953



Map 4

ceased and after three planes sustained minor damages while dropping them. Seven L-19's and L-20's flew 19½ hours on reconnaissance and personnel transportation missions. Fourteen H-13's from the Seventh Army Flight Detachment flew 112 sorties for a total of 64 hours on resupply missions delivering medical supplies. The three H-19's from the air rescue squadron flew 15 sorties and 32 hours on the same missions. Other aircraft in action included five SA-16's and one C-47. By this date it was reliably estimated that 853 persons had been rescued from isolated and dangerous areas by aircraft, the vast majority of them by helicopter.[10] During this period of sustained activity, constantly endangered by hazardous flying and operational conditions, a minimum of accidents was sustained. Two H-13's were wrecked but salvaged, one of them being transported on a DUKW over ten miles of open water; no major injury was sustained by airforce personnel at any time during the operation. On 6 February, 39 U.S. aircraft of all types flew 132 hours 35 minutes on 188 sorties with missions which included support and aerial delivery, emergency interception, reconnaissance and personnel transportation, and resupply. No aerial rescue of personnel was accomplished; eight helicopters conducted an extensive aerial survey of the critical areas and reported that no known needs existed for air evacuation of endangered persons. The three H-19's were used to transport heavy loads of equipment and aircraft supplies and to evacuate the sick and injured. For several successive days (5, 6, and 7 February), Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and his advisors were flown over the flooded areas on reconnaissance and planning missions.

e. Operations, 7 February. Forty-four aircraft of all types flew a total of 117 hours on 134 sorties on 7 February. The bulk of hours (43) and sorties (79) was amassed by the H-13's engaged on photo reconnaissance and delivery of medical and food supplies. The nine C-119's made aerial drops of 119,000 pounds of sandbags, 2,500 pounds of water, and 5,000 pounds of boots on 17 sorties and 28 hours in the air. A cargo of 34,000 pounds of sandbags, shovels, and wheelbarrows was picked up in Copenhagen and flown to Valkenburg. There were no air evacuations of persons.[11]

16. Ground Units - General

Spurred by the urgency of the request for assistance, USAREUR units moved by convoys and individual units from stations in Germany along the Stuttgart-Frankfurt-Duesseldorf autobahn. Crossing the mountains in northwestern Germany, drivers encountered many changes of weather, including fog, rain, snow, and freezing temperatures. Steep grades were made treacherous by snow and ice. In spite of the bad weather the convoys

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[10] AMRO Air Sit Rept, 6 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.
[11] AMRO Air Sit Rept, 7 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

moved to their destination without incident or major delay. It was the experience of all units passing through Roermond, established by the Netherlands authorities as the border crossing point for all U.S. forces, that they encountered the minimum of delay and were passed across the German-Netherlands border without delay. In Germany, from Duesseldorf to the border, British military police and German traffic patrols gave expert guidance and directions. In the Netherlands, maximum cooperation of the police was experienced as American drivers struggled to pronounce unfamiliar Dutch place names. U.S. military ground units quickly found employment in the areas assigned to them by Maj. Gen. J. G. Warringa, Third Military District, Royal Netherlands Army, through Col. E. W. Niles, Commanding Officer, 39th Engineer Construction Group, at his operations headquarters at Breda. These units engaged in rescue and relief action immediately upon arrival at their reporting stations.

17. DUKW Activities

a. Operations, 3 - 4 February. The first unit to arrive in the flood-stricken area was a labor service unit (LSU), the 8542d Engineer Amphibious Truck Company which arrived at Breda at 1430 on 3 February. It was closely followed by the 8540th Amphibious Truck Company (LSU) and the 7972d Labor Supervision Center, which was to direct the activities of the two DUKW companies.[12] After a brief conference with the Netherlands officials it was decided to move the DUKW companies immediately to a temporary location in Roosendaal, to send ten of the amphibious vehicles on a reconnaissance mission to Steenbergen and, to prepare plans for full use of the DUKW's on the following day. On 4 February the two DUKW companies, under the direction of Lt. Col. J. S. Lynn, Commanding Officer, 7972d Labor Supervision Center, were dispatched on evacuation and reconnaissance missions to Schouwen and Overflakkee Islands. The first evacuation from the vicinity of Osterland, in which 27 refugees were brought back in one DUKW and eight in a second with one litter patient, clearly demonstrated that the amphibious vehicles could be used successfully on the mission of relief. Prior to this experimental use, the Netherlands military officials had been doubtful if DUKW's could operate in the inundated areas where the depth of the water from place to place changed rapidly and where many obstructions lay hidden just below the surface of the muddy waters. By the end of the first day of DUKW operations, sufficient information had been obtained to prepare plans for the use of the amphibious craft on the other islands, and on the following days the DUKW's were used in many places throughout the disaster area. The center of their operations remained at Steenbergen. On the first day of full operation, 4 February, DUKW's rescued fifty persons.[13]

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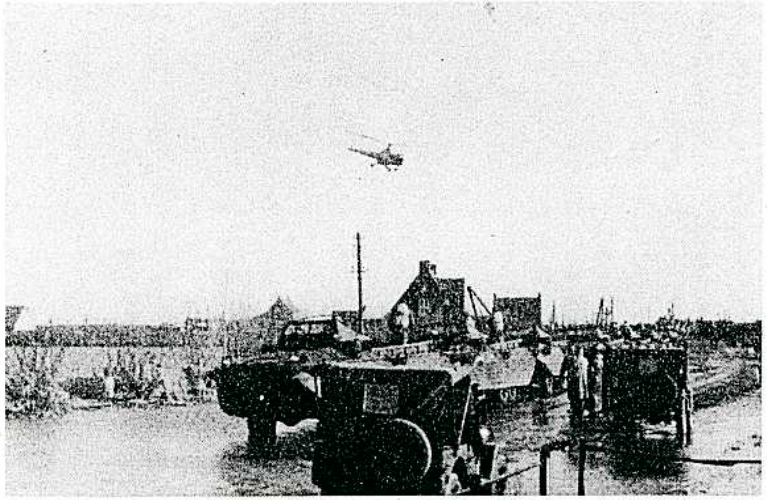
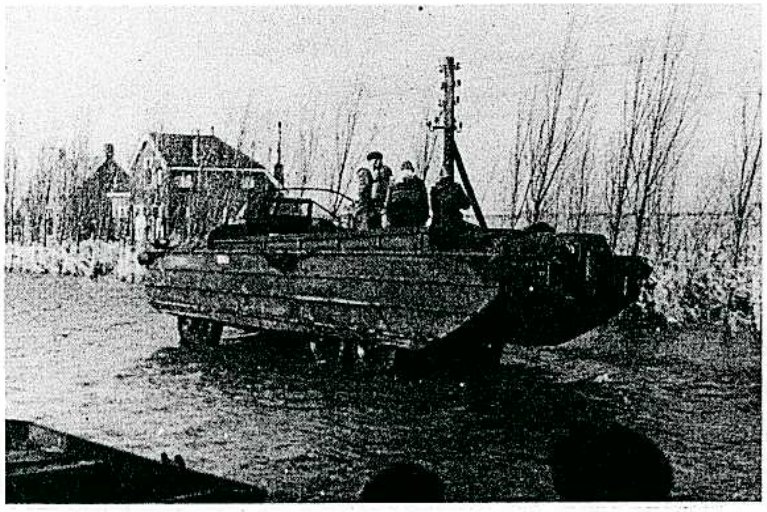
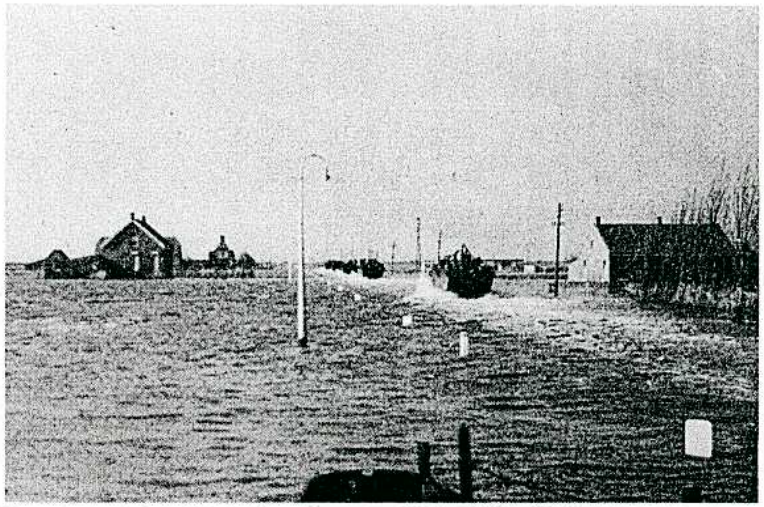
[12] Unit Arrival Times at Breda, Compiled by Capt M. H. Hooper, USAREUR Hist Div. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

[13] 7972 LSC Daily Jl, 3 - 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.







DUKW Activity near Command Post of 7972 LSC at Zijpe, Overflakkee Island.

Refugees from Bruinisse (Overflakkee Island), preparing to disembark from US DUKW.

A US Army DUKW from the 8540th Amphibious Truck Company carrying refugees and Netherlands soldiers moves along a submerged dike road on Overflakkee Island.

b. Operations, 5 - February. On 5 February an entire company of DUKW's was engaged in evacuating persons and equipment from towns and cities on Overflakkee, including the towns of Nieuwe-Tonge and Melissant. On Schouwen-Duiveland a platoon operated in the vicinity of Hank, and another platoon evacuated persons from Zierikzee. A reserve platoon worked on the mainland.[14] All carried out a variety of tasks which included reconnaissance, evacuation, and transport of personnel, equipment, and supplies. In the first period of emergency evacuation DUKW crew members found many flood victims suffering from exhaustion and exposure. In addition to the natural confusion attendant upon the loss of homes, shock, and exposure, considerable indecision was encountered as to the necessity and advisability of abandoning home and property. In some instances, community officials engaged in prolonged and vehement discussions concerning the probable rise or fall of the flood waters.

c. Communications Problems. Direction and control over the DUKW's which, although working in pairs, were scattered over a great range and could not net with the radio sets of the helicopters, created a serious communication problem. Similarly, the detachment of the 39th Signal Support Battalion, which had arrived in Steenbergen on the afternoon of 4 February, found that its ample communications facilities for field operations would not net with the DUKW's. The problem, however, was overcome by placing radio carrying jeeps in selected DUKW's and bringing their radios into the labor supervision radio command net.[15]

d. Later Operations. For the DUKW's, emergency rescues practically ceased after 6 February and their activities for the remainder of the emergency phase and later assumed a new pattern in which they were more concerned with patrol of dikes, reconnaissance, transportation of dike workers, the evacuation of supplies and equipment of all sorts before it might be damaged by submersion in salt water, and in the release and evacuation of live and dead animals.

e. Summary of DUKW Operations. The following summary of the accomplishments of the two DUKW companies during the emergency rescue and evacuation period gives an accurate picture of the variety of tasks which they performed:[16]

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[14] AMRO G-3 Sit Rept, 1200 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[15] (1) AMRO Sig Sec Sum of Act Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (2) Interv, Capt M. H. Hooper, USAREUR Hist Div, with Lt D. C. Buckhout, 39th Sig Sup Bn, 14 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[16] 39th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 2330 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

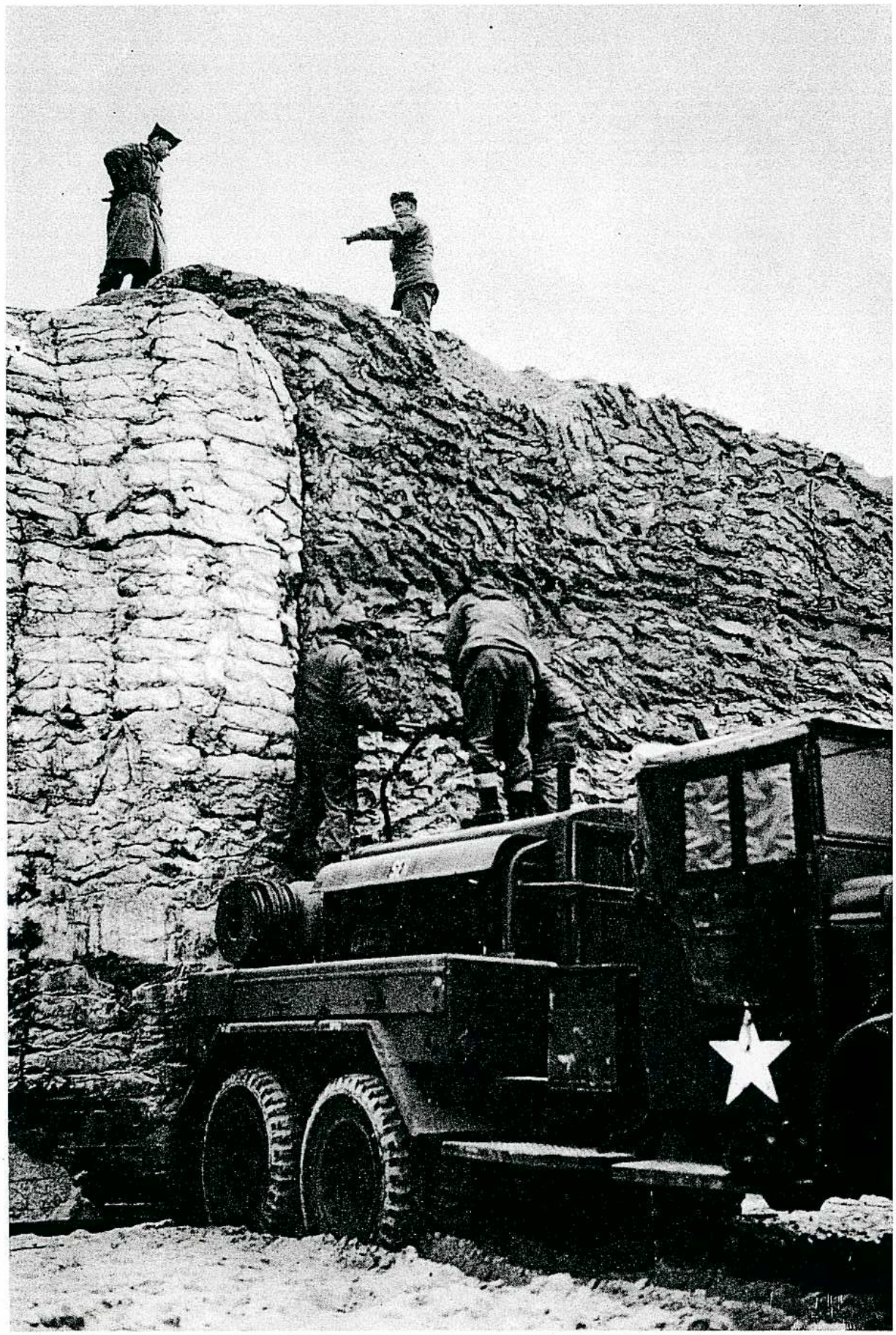
Persons evacuated	666
Cattle evacuated	497
Dead cattle transported	64
Dike workers transported	2,676
General supplies transported	12 tons
Eggs transported	2,000 dozen
Filled sandbags transported	500
Empty sandbags transported	12,700

18. Engineer Activities

Other USAREUR units, following closely behind the DUKW companies, moved into the Breda headquarters of the 39th Engineer Construction Group and began immediately to perform tasks assigned to them by the Netherlands authorities through Colonel Niles. Before daylight on the morning of 4 February the incoming elements included the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company plus a platoon of the 334th Engineer Dump Truck Company, and the 42d Ordnance Medium Automotive Maintenance (MAM) Company. The truck companies were carrying 300,000 sandbags and approximately 10,000 shovels. The 1279th Engineers had 30 water purification units which were to be operated by personnel drawn from various U.S. Army engineer units stationed in Germany.[17] The work of the other engineer elements of the 39th Engineer Construction Group, although less spectacular than the initial rescue work conducted by the DUKW's and the helicopters, was nonetheless essential. Engineer troops were chiefly engaged in the strengthening and repair of dikes; maintenance of road communications; the transportation of sandbags, workers, and equipment; and the establishment of water purification points. An assignment given to B Company of the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, which was continued during most of the period of the operation, was the restoration and maintenance of the main road from Bergen-Op-Zoom and Middelburg on Walcheren Island. Rubble was hauled into the low spots and the roadbed finally surfaced with primary materials. Most of the road construction was completed within forty-eight hours and thereafter a reduced force maintained the road for several days. Company A of the same battalion was assigned to build a dike along the road extending south of Moerdijk. On this project two parallel rows of sandbags were built to a height of four feet and the space between filled with clay. In a 5-day period approximately 1,500 yards of sandbags and 400 yards of clay were laid. Units of the 1279th Engineers were supported by the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company in the road and dike building assignments. All units worked on a 24-hour basis during the emergency periods of the assignments. Another continuing task undertaken by the engineers throughout the period

[17] AMRO Engr Sit Rept, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

Members of the 1279th Engineer Combat Bn strengthen the dike near Moerdijk with sandbags.



Men of the 1279th Engineer Combat Bn preparing to demolish World War II bunker. Water swirling around the bunkers at high tide caused excessive erosion of sea walls.

Trucks of the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company unloading filled sandbags on board Rhine River Patrol craft LCU 1174 near Dintelsas.

of their stay in the Netherlands was the destruction of bunkers and gun emplacements which had been erected by the Germans at Monster, near The Hague, during World War II as part of the coastal defenses. Wind whipped waters swirled around these concrete barriers and set up eddies and currents which cut away the softer banks of the dikes and sea walls which protected this area from the sea. Using Dutch explosives, a detachment of the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion worked a number of days breaking the heavy reinforced concrete slabs into smaller pieces which could be carried away. Approximately eighteen water purification points (the maximum in use at any one time) were erected at locations requested by the Netherlands authorities or were in support of U.S. units. Many calls were received for the establishment of water points, but most of the requests were to change salt water into a potable supply and U.S. equipment was unable to accomplish this. Also, since the local population was not accustomed to drinking chlorinated water, limited use was made of the thirty water purification units. Excess equipment was later returned to Germany. Sources for clay, sand, rubble, and other dike and road repair material were located at widely scattered areas and necessitated long trips for the dump truck companies. When the urgency of the task required it, all available personnel from the headquarters of the operating units filled sandbags.[18]

19. Other Units and Activities

a. Navy Participation. An LCU and LCR, later reinforced by two patrol boats, dispatched by U.S. Naval Forces, Germany, arrived on Tuesday after departing from their base at Schierstein, Germany. Arriving at Dordrecht at noon, 3 February, they were placed at the disposal of the Netherlands naval authorities by Colonel Niles and stationed at Dintelsas. General type missions performed by the naval vessels included the transfer of sandbags and sand, transportation of personnel, and reconnaissance. Since shallow water on the slopes of the dikes prevented the landing craft from getting close to shore, DUKW's were used to on-load and off-load cargoes and passengers.[19]

b. Signal. Elements of four Signal Corps units performed communications support for AMRO and to a limited amount for the Netherlands Government. The signal units were attached to the 39th Engineer Construction Group for operations. Lt. Col. William A. Higgins served as Signal Officer at The Hague. Facilities installed and maintained included four very high frequency (VHF) systems connecting Steenbergen, Vught, Gilze-Rijen, and The Hague with Breda. Switchboards were installed and operated at Breda and Gilze-Rijen. Radio communications facilities were established

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[18](1) AMRO G-3 Sit Repts, 5 - 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.
(2) 1279th Engr C Bn Sum of Act, 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[19]US Rhine River Patrol Task Element Rept, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

and operated at Breda, The Hague, and Woensdrecht Air Base (Diagram 1). The Netherlands Air Force operated The Hague terminal of The Hague-Heidelberg radio teletype circuit. The limited organic communication of the DUKW companies was augmented by establishing radio nets throughout the operational area of the DUKW's with technical assistance and advice when needed. Approximately twenty vehicular mounted radio sets were employed in support of the DUKW's. Commercial telephone and teletypewriter service was employed between Breda and Heidelberg and between The Hague and Heidelberg; and one telephone circuit between Breda and The Hague. The teletypewriter facilities at Breda and The Hague were manned by Signal Corps personnel. Photographic coverage of the expedition was made by three teams of the 497th Signal Photo Service Company for historical and record purposes. A total of 823 still pictures and 15,430 feet of motion picture film was exposed.[20]

c. Transportation. The Transportation Section, Headquarters, AMRO, supervised the 8th Transportation Traffic Regulation Group detachment located at Gilze-Rijen through which all requests for rail and highway movements were processed, and instituted and supervised the air shuttle from Valkenburg to Gilze-Rijen and the sedan and bus transportation at each terminal and at The Hague. The Transportation Section processed all requests for surface and air transportation for movement of personnel and supplies to and from the U.S. Zone of Germany and the Netherlands. All requests for transportation were met and shipments arrived as scheduled; rail and truck transportation operated daily and no supplies were damaged or lost enroute. Convoy clearances for the return of units to Germany were procured as well as provision made for return by rail of supplies and equipment returned or to be returned to U.S. military forces by the Netherlands Government.[21]

d. Medical. Medical support for units and personnel was alerted early in the planning stages for the Netherlands relief operation. Not knowing the extent of possible requests for medical service a number of units were alerted. However, after the Netherlands authorities indicated that no medical aid would be required the mission of medical units became one of support for U.S. units only. The 5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital arrived at Breda on 4 February at 0600 and was operational at 1030. The mess facilities of the hospital were used to feed various personnel at the 39th Engineer Construction Group headquarters. The health of U.S. personnel remained excellent throughout the entire relief operation and injuries were very few and generally of a minor nature. Although alerted to the possibilities of epidemics following in the wake of the flood, no challenge arose to test the facilities of the medical units.[22]

20AMRO Sig Sum of Act, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

21(1) AMRO Trans Sum Act Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.
(2) 8th TTRG Opn Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

225th MASH Act Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

AMRO COMMUNICATIONS NET

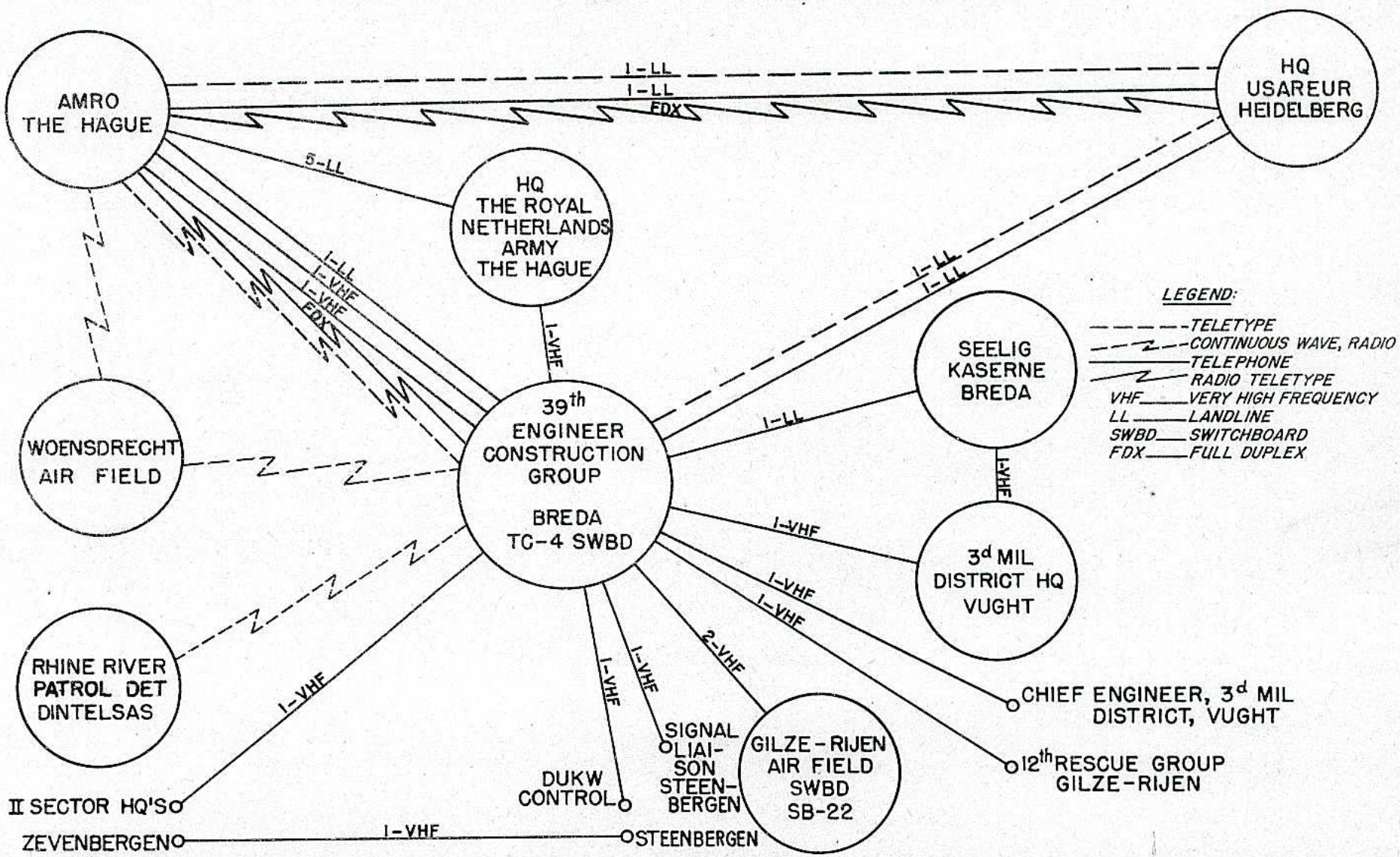

DIAGRAM 1

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e. Ordnance. The 42d Ordnance MAM Company located at Breda furnished ordnance support and vehicle evacuation facilities for all U.S. units engaged in relief activities in the Netherlands. Contact teams visited all units to give assistance and advice as to where support could be obtained when required. A great deal of maintenance was accomplished by ordnance teams going to the units rather than following the usual procedure of units bringing vehicles to the ordnance establishment. The major maintenance problem was with DUKW's which required careful attention because of the conditions of operation; propellors, brakes and brake linings, grease seals, corrosions, and hull damages constituted the major problems. Emergency wrecker service was established along the main evacuation routes. Maintenance on all vehicles returning to Germany was instituted on 8 February. A total of 420 jobs was completed by the ordnance unit in the period 5 - 14 February.[23]

f. Quartermaster. The quartermaster effort in support of the U.S. military forces in the Netherlands consisted of direction, supervision, and coordination by the Quartermaster Section, AMRO headquarters; provision of POL supplies to 726 vehicles, including an average daily issue of 5,985 gallons of gasoline; supervision over issue to and return of supplies from the Netherlands military forces; and the issuance of rations to U.S. troops. Issues of perishables were made, consisting of bread, fruit, milk, and eggs procured locally, and beef, ham, and eggs airlifted from Germany, as well as B and C rations.[24]

g. Miscellaneous Units.

(1) Finance Disbursing Section. A Class "B" Agent Finance Office of the 41st Finance Disbursing Section was located at Breda. The office began operations at 0900, 5 February. A total of $19,000 in U.S. military payment certificates (MPC's) were converted into 72,010 guilders. The unit made military partial payments, cashed Government checks, and prepared and processed vouchers.[25]

(2) Army Postal Unit. The 53d Army Postal Unit Detachment which arrived at Breda at 1300, 6 February, provided postal service for the U.S. military forces engaged in flood relief operations through APO 82. During the 10-day period of operation 22 pouches of mail were dispatched, 25 pouches received, 24 money orders for $1,099.87 sold, and 7 money orders totaling $340.00 cashed.[26]

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[23](1) AMRO Ord Sum of Act, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (2) 42d Ord MAM Co Rept to 39th Engr Constr Gp, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[24]AMRO QM Sum of Act Rept, 3 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[25]41st Fin Disb Sec Opn Rept, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[26]53d APU Det Opn Rept. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

(3) Bath Company Section. A detachment of the 436th Quartermaster Bath Company arrived on 7 February and was operational at 1800. From two locations, Chassee Kaserne and Steenbergen, the unit operated for a total of 46½ hours and their facilities were used by 1,297 persons.[27]

(4) Post Exchange. Post exchange (PX) facilities were provided by a detachment of the 7738th EES Group and all areas were visited at least once during the operation. Frequent visits of mobile PX's and snack bars were made in the operational areas.[28]

Section II: The Leveling-Off Period, 8 - 12 February

20. General Situation

By 7 February, as has been seen, it was apparent to the participants that, barring any new and unforeseen disaster, the first phase of relief activities by the U.S. military forces was completed. General Hendrix reported on 8 February that the general situation had greatly improved in the last twenty-four hours. Favorable weather had intervened and the fear that weakened dikes would be breached and a new evacuation problem created had begun to lessen. Voorne and Putten Islands were considered safe, if no further complications developed. On Schouwen-Duiveland necessary evacuation was completed. Many areas of the island were drained and drying. On Goeree-Overflakee the evacuation of districts around Middleharnis, Oude-Tonge, and Nieuwe-Tonge was nearly completed; in several regions the inhabitants were remaining. The situation on Walcheren and Tholen Islands was satisfactory. On Zuid Beveland a threatened break in the dike had been prevented by hard and heavy work. The areas near Bergen-Op-Zoom and St. Philipsland were considered safe and the dike situation stable (Map 5).[29]

21. Air Activity

Air activity after 7 February declined rapidly as air rescue and drop requirements were drastically reduced. Adverse weather conditions

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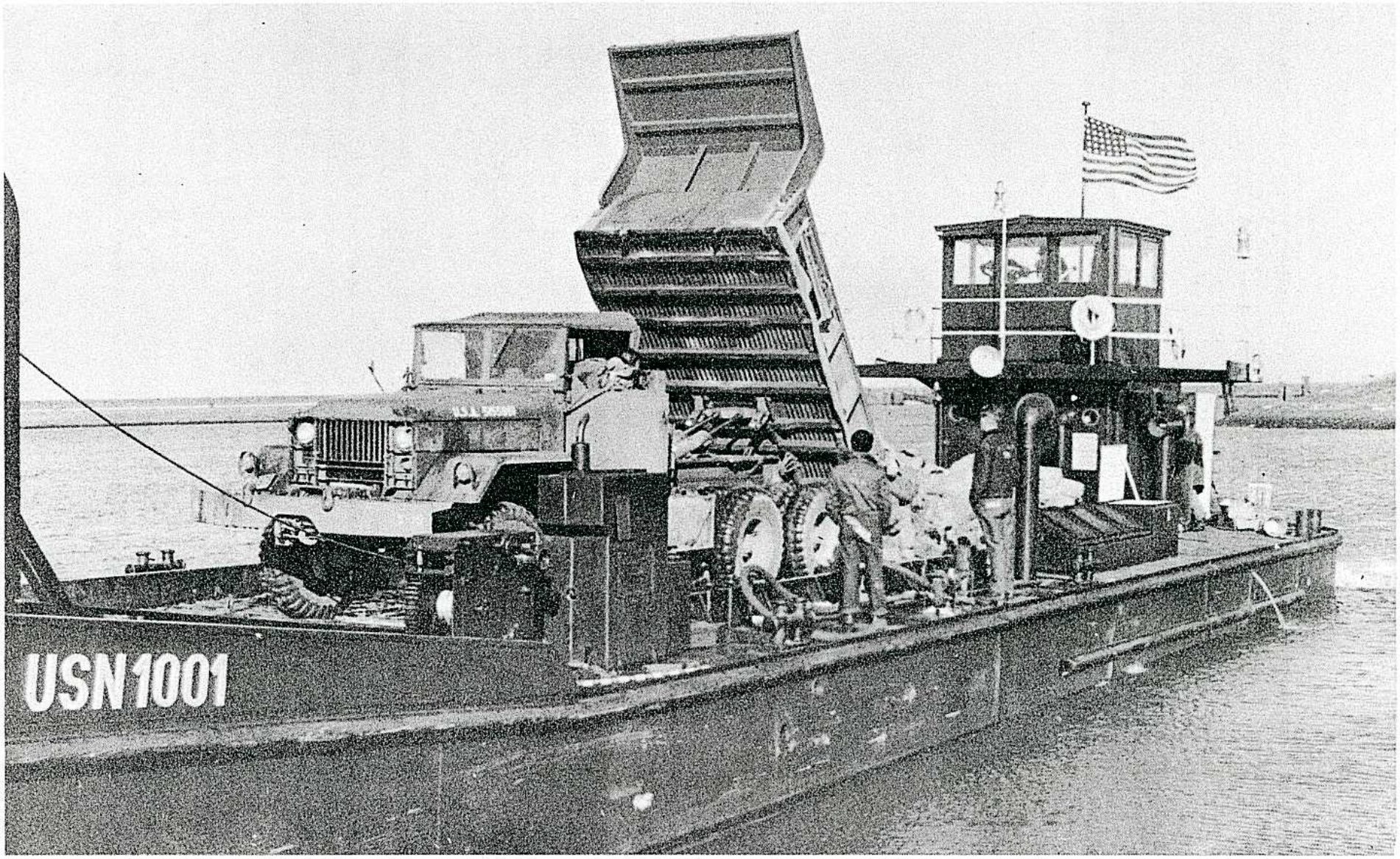
[27] 743d QM Bath Co Opn Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[28] AMRO Sum of G-1 Act, 18 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[29] Netherlands Review of Geographical Situation as of 1800 9 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.



Dump truck of the 334th Combat Engineer Bn loads filled sandbags destined for Dintelsas on a US Navy Rhine River Patrol craft.

and low visibility hampered or prevented flying except for relatively short intervals during much of the period 8 - 12 February. On 8 February, 27 aircraft of all types were operational (6 C-119's, 2 SA-16's, 1 C-47, 3 L-20's, 12 H-13's, and 3 H-19's) for a total of 60 hours' flying time. The C-119's made 12 sorties, dropping 97,000 pounds of sandbags, 500 pounds of water, 3,000 pounds of tarpaulins, 7,000 pounds of truck engines, and 1,200 pounds of drills and air hammers. The H-13's made 37 sorties carrying personnel and airlifting supplies. Although a C-119 made a low level drop of 5,000 pounds of sandbags and 2,000 pounds of shovels on the following day, 9 February, the chief activity was that of helicopters continuing a comprehensive aerial survey on Overflakkee Island. Air activity was even less on 10 February, when 23 aircraft engaged in aerial reconnaissance and courier missions took part in 40 sorties for 46 hours' flying time. Release of aircraft from the mission was secured from the Netherlands authorities and the strength of aircraft of all types was reduced to 17 (1 SA-16, 2 H-19's, 10 H-13's, 3 L-20's, and 1 L-19). On 11 and 12 February, air activity was further reduced by adverse weather conditions and the lack of operational requirements. Plans, however, were made to meet any emergencies that might be created by the anticipated high tide stages of 16 February.[30]

22. Ground Forces

a. Types of Main Effort. For U.S. units operating on the ground the second stage of operations consisted of repair of roads and dikes, resupply and evacuation of livestock, supply of food, and cleanup. Main efforts were concentrated on dike repair, strengthening of danger points in critical areas, improvement of communications, and transport of food, equipment, and workers.

b. Reconnaissance. The flood waters which had poured into the lowlands were impounded in an irregular pattern by the myriad ridges of dikes. After the initial breaks in the sea walls, it became apparent that possible breaks in secondary lines were of increasing importance. Constant aerial, vehicular, and DUKW reconnaissance became a daily routine during the leveling-off phase of operations.

c. Dike Repair. On Sunday morning, 8 February, Netherlands liaison officers working with the 7972d Labor Supervision Center headquarters reported that additional breaks in the dikes on Schouwen Island had been discovered. DUKW's on the island constantly patrolled the area and ferried many stranded inhabitants to higher ground. At the same time a previously reported break in a dike near Klundert was a matter of concern, and personnel of the 39th Group were sent on reconnaissance of the area. The 150-foot break was found to have been repaired to approximately

[30] AMRO Air Sec Sit Repts, 7 - 12 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

five feet above normal sea level. While the break did not present immediate danger, it was anticipated that high tides might cause a second break in the weakened levees. Two platoons of Company B, 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, were assigned to work on the reconstruction of approximately 700 yards of the dike on 9 February. The placing of sandbags in two parallel rows, forming a dike shell to be filled with clay, was completed late 11 February. Progress in the clay fill operation was much slower. Company A of the same battalion which had been detailed to build and repair the dike and road in the vicinity of Moerdijk was making good progress. However by 9 February it became apparent that additional equipment would be needed if the job were to be completed prior to the expected high spring tide a week later. Upon recommendation of the 39th Group, the Third Military District obtained additional bulldozers for the project. Motorized equipment speeded up the work to such an extent that by the afternoon of 11 February the unit was calling for more rapid delivery of sandbags.[31]

d. Loading Procedure. As the situation became more and more a matter of routine during the second phase, time permitted evaluation of operating procedures on major projects. One of several outstanding examples was an operation in which the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company hauled sandbags to the Dintelsas area. Here the ground forces worked with U.S. naval landing craft in a several step operation involving the hand loading and unloading from truck to DUKW to Navy LCU's. The operation was using a great amount of labor and more importantly, causing a loss of valuable time. As a result of a survey it was recommended to the Third Military District that the sandbag loaded trucks be driven directly onto the navy vessels. The plan was concurred in and put into operation on 10 February.[32]

e. DUKW Operations. During the second phase of operations, the two DUKW companies continued their mission of evacuating personnel, livestock, and farm equipment, and the transporting of civilian Dutch workers to and from the areas of distress. On 8 February a request from Lt. Cdr. T. M. Griffin of the navy contingent at Dintelsas quickly brought three of the amphibious vehicles to assist in the sandbag ferrying project. Late in the day three additional craft were sent to assist in the movement of the much needed dike building material.[33] After the long hours of operation and hard driving necessitated during the life saving phase, DUKW commanders were plagued with mechanical difficulties incident to the conditions under which they were operating. Disposition reports submitted by the 7972d Labor Supervision Center present an accurate picture of the situation as it existed each day. Lt. Col. J. S. Lynn's terse report to the 39th Group

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[31](1) 39th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 8 - 12 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (2) AMRO G-3 Sit Repts, 8 - 12 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[32]39th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 9 - 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[33]39th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

on 8 February at 2330 stated: "On Schouwen Island are 22 DUKW's. Five stuck in the mud. Two hauling general supplies. Fifteen are evacuating live and dead cattle. Seven are standing by in Steenbergen. On Overflakkee four stuck in mud. At Dintelsas six hauling sandbags for Navy. At Baarland eight transferring rations. Two deadlined. Two returning helicopter to Woensdrecht. Eight in maintenance."

f. DUKW Operating Problems. DUKW's, Colonel Lynn reported, should be operated in pairs so as to assist each other in case one became stuck, they should stay on the roads as much as possible, and should have Dutch liaison personnel aboard who were intimately acquainted with the area. It may easily be surmised that many valuable lessons were learned concerning the capabilities of DUKW's operating in flooded areas such as were encountered in the Netherlands. A DUKW crew member might encounter in quick succession shallow water where they would be truck drivers and deep water where they would be sailors. Operation on open water where the long sweep of the wind built up dangerous waves and where tidal currents were strong was hazardous. To stray off the top of the dike road was to risk miring in the deep mud of the shallow water or suddenly become water borne and caught in a strong current. To become stuck in the mud and to wait several hours in order to extricate themselves at high tide was not an unusual occurrence. Some of the DUKW crews had the experience of spending several days in the open, flooded fields with their amphibious vehicle glued tightly to the muck which tenaciously gripped hull and running gear. Two pumps were carried by each truck to handle any pumping emergency. Maintenance, a problem at any time, was increased by exposure to salt water, by damages resulting from striking submerged obstacles, and by the long period of continuous operation.[34]

g. Summary of DUKW Operations. In spite of operational and "stuck in the mud" difficulties, the following summary of work accomplishments by the two DUKW companies as of 2400, 12 February gives evidence of their varied activities and achievements:[35]

Personnel evacuated	739
Diseased personnel evacuated	38
Live cattle evacuated	495
Dead cattle evacuated	431
Civilian workers transported	10,311
Live horses evacuated	103
Dead horses evacuated	9
Live pigs evacuated	18
Dead pigs evacuated	62

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[34]Interv, Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, with Lt Col J. S. Lynn, CO 7972 LSC, 9 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[35]539th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 12 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

Items of farm equipment retrieved	118
Helicopters retrieved	2
Vehicles evacuated	28
Eggs saved, dozen	2,000
Grain saved, tons	53
Supplies into area, tons	117
Empty sandbags transported	12,000
Loaded sandbags transported	13,370
Dike materials transported, tons	98
School books evacuated, tons	1

Section III: Standby Operations, 13 - 17 February

23. General Situation

During the third phase of operations, 13 - 17 February, all units continued activities previously described until 15 February, when plans for the expected emergency of 16 February were completed and approved. All units then went on an alert basis prepared to perform designated missions. Preparations were also made for the return to home stations. The disaster situation had improved so greatly that the Netherlands Government was returning control to local governments and directed that a return to normal administration be accomplished as quickly as conditions permitted. In most of the areas, electrical and telephone communications had been restored, most roads were open, emergency generator plants had been installed in many locations, and large scale pumping of flood water from the inundated polders had begun.[36]

24. Emergency Plans

AMRO on 14 February announced plans for meeting emergency conditions for the period 15 - 16 February. Supply action was to be carried out in conformance with previous orders and additional supplies were earmarked for airlift to the Netherlands from Germany. The 39th Engineer Construction Group was instructed to prepare detailed plans for the employment of all units under its control as directed by the Netherlands Third Military District. Support units, which included the 5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, 42d Ordnance MAM, Quartermaster Class I and III support points, 17th Signal Operations Battalion, and other support units

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36(1) AMRO G-3 Sit Repts, 11 - 15 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.
(2) Netherlands Review of Geographical Situation, 15 - 18 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

The 5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital and trucks of the 334th Combat Engineer Bn loaded with sandbags on stand-by alert at the Chassee Kaserne, Breda, Hqs of the 39th Engineer Construction Group.

and detachments, were directed to continue normal support and prepare plans for emergency action if required and upon direction of the Commanding Officer, 39th Engineer Construction Group. Air support for the emergency would include the maintenance of 10 helicopters, 2 L-20's, 1 L-19, and one SA-16 on operational standby in the disaster area; and 6 C-119's on 4 hour alert status at Rhine-Main Airport. Air support or additional aircraft rescue, and emergency supply action, were to be furnished only on request of the authorized Netherlands air authorities, the Third Military District, or Headquarters, AMRO. Naval craft were ordered to stand by for emergency operations as directed by the Netherlands naval forces.[37]

25. Engineer Activities

The 39th Engineer Construction Group received a verbal warning order on 12 February from the Third Military District concerning the expected high spring tides. Extremely high tides were forecast for the period 15 - 17 February and because of the weakened condition of the dike system, it was predicted that further inundation could reasonably be expected. Adding to the possible danger situation, was a long distance weather forecast of high winds rising during the period.[38] In compliance with the request for assistance during the high tide period, the 39th Engineer Construction Group formulated previously considered plans, which resulted in the publication of alert orders placing subordinate units in an alert status at noon, 15 February.[39] Prior to the issue of the order, extensive reconnaissance had been made of the area. Disposition of forces was made in accordance with recommendations of the Third Military District. On the afternoon of 14 February, the communication sections of the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion established a radio warning net in the American area of responsibility. ANGRC-9's were established at Fijnaart, Zevenbergen and Made. ANPRC-10's, which could net with ANPRC-10 patrols operating on a critical dike north of Zevenbergen and east of Lage-Zwaluwe, were also stationed at Zevenbergen and Made. The battalion also scheduled a radio warning patrol on critical areas of the Rotterdam road.[40] All available trucks were loaded with sandbags and stationed in the Chassee Kaserne area. These vehicles, ready to move within a few minutes notice, included 17 2½-ton trucks from the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, 13 5-ton trucks from the 334th Engineer Dump Truck Platoon and 41 5-ton dump vehicles from the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company.[41]

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[37]AMRO Air Sec Memo, 14 Feb 53, sub: Air Capabilities in Event of New Disaster 15 - 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[38]Interv, Capt M. H. Hooper, USAREUR Hist Div, with Capt J. W. Graham, 39th Engr Constr Gp Opns Off, 15 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[39]39th Engr Constr Gp FO No. 1, with Change No. 1, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

[40]39th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 14 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[41]39th Engr Constr Gp FO 1, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

26. DUKW Dispositions

The 31 DUKW's of the 8540 Engineer Amphibious Truck Company (LSU) were disposed as follows: Middelburg-2, Wissekerke-8, Goes-7, Krabbendijke-4, Tholen-4, and 6 in reserve at Steenbergen. To facilitate rapid movement to an area of distress, 4 were placed aboard the Navy LCU at Dintelsas. Vehicles of the 8542d Engineer Amphibious Truck Company (LSU) were on stand-by and in reserve as follows: Steenbergen-11, Zevenbergen-8, Zierikzee-8, Brouwershaven-2, Zonnemaire-1 and one at Noordgouwe.[42] During the alert period constant communication was maintained between the labor service units and local Netherlands commanders.

27. Passing of the Emergency

A weather forecast at 0730, 15 February, which indicated weak to moderate winds for the ensuing twenty-four hours, gave hope that the predicted emergency would not occur. By evening, it was apparent that high tides would do no further damage unless accompanied by high winds. The forecast for the peak tide, expected to occur at 1800, 16 February, for upper stretches of the delta area, indicated that it would be several centimeters under the original estimate and in the absence of high winds would present no new crisis. By the evening of 15 February it was apparent that the anticipated emergency would not occur, and U.S. units made preparations for departure to their home stations.[43]

Section IV: Close-Out and Final Summary

28. Phase-Out and Return

a. Preparations for Phase-Out. Upon the passing of the anticipated crisis without incident, the phasing out of AMRO took place as rapidly as it had begun. Under previously prepared plans, the assembly of units, maintenance of equipment, and preparation for the return to home stations had largely been accomplished prior to 17 February,[44] and the proposed departure period of 19 and 20 February was moved forward to 17 and 18

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[42] 39th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 15 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[43] 39th Engr Constr Gp Daily Jl, 15 - 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[44] Memo, CG AMRO to Lt Gen Buurman Van Vreeden, RNethA, 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

February, to begin at 0600 on 17 February.[45] Final conferences and agreements between Netherlands and United States military officials had determined the units, personnel, equipment, and supplies which were to remain in the Netherlands.[46] The return of Air Force personnel and equipment was accomplished under Air Force control[47] and the return of navy personnel and craft was accomplished under the direction of the Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Germany (COMNAVGER).[48] The 39th Engineer Construction Group planned and directed the return of the operational units.

b. Return Movements. In accordance with AMRO Movement Order No. 1 of 12 February, the 39th Engineer Construction Group issued instructions for the return of U.S. units under its control to their home stations in Germany. The 39th's Operations Order No. 2, dated 16 February, directed that vehicular convoys be formed in four serials with the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion and the 334th Engineer Dump Truck Platoon departing in the first serial at 0200, 18 February. Leading elements of the second serial, including the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company and 39th Signal Support Battalion departed Breda at 0610 the same day. The third and fourth serials, completing the 500 vehicle convoys, departed at the same hours on 19 February. They consisted mainly of the 7972d Labor Supervision Center headquarters, 17th Signal Operations Battalion, 317th Signal Construction Battalion, 5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, 42d Ordnance MAM Company, 531st Quartermaster Petroleum Company and the 39th Engineer Construction Group. The convoy's early departure hours permitted maximum daylight driving conditions. Radio communication between each serial and the Commanding Officer, 39th Group, was maintained by personnel of the 17th Signal Battalion. Medical and vehicular support during the return trip was provided serial commanders by personnel of the 5th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital and 42d Ordnance MAM Company. A refueling point was established on the autobahn five miles south of Duesseldorf. The convoy route followed on the return trip was through Vught, Eindhoven, crossing the border at Roermond, entering the German autobahn at Duesseldorf, and continuing south to the various home stations. The command post at Breda was closed with the departure of the last vehicle at 0830 on 19 February.

29. Summary of Activities

Relief activities performed to 17 February, inclusive, were as follows:[49]

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[45]Memo, AMRO COFS to AMRO Staff Divs, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. [46](1) Ltr, CG AMRO to CG NTB, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (2) AMRO Memo, 16 Feb 53, sub: Return of Property. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[47]Memo, AMRO COFS to AMRO Air Staff Off, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. [48]Memo, AMRO COFS to Rhine River Patrol Task Element, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[49]AMRO G-3 Sit Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

Army

8540th and 8542d Amphibious Truck Companies (DUKW's)

Persons evacuated	758
Bodies evacuated	40
Cattle evacuated	529
Cattle, dead, evacuated	658
Horses evacuated	107
Horses, dead, evacuated	24
Pigs, evacuated	19
Pigs, dead, evacuated	82
Goats evacuated	1
Eggs saved, dozen	2,000
Civilian workers transported	15,830
Items of farm machinery transported	214
Helicopters rescued	3
Vehicles recovered	50
Supplies, general, transported, tons	218
Sandbags, empty, transported	28,000
Sandbags, filled, transported	20,970
Dike materials transported, tons	123
Household goods recovered, tons	17
Telephone cable laid, miles	4.6
Flooded roads marked by stakes, miles	22

1279th Engineer Combat Battalion

Mission	Location	Quantities
Demolition	Monster	8 pillboxes
Road repair	Stationsbuurt	475 cu. yds. rubble
	Zuid Beveland	175 cu. yds. sand
		2,000 sandbags
Dike construction	Moerdijk	100,000 sandbags
		1,500 cu. yds. clay
Dike construction	Klundert	50,000 sandbags
		700 cu. yds. clay

Approximately 2,000,000 gallons of water were produced.

795th Engineer Dump Truck Company

The 795th hauled a total of 95,250 sandbags in 300 loads to various locations.

334th Engineer Dump Truck Company (1 Platoon)

The platoon was attached to the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company until 11 February. Quantities hauled are included in the above summary. On 11 February, the platoon was attached to the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion and during the period 11 - 14 February hauled 37,000 sandbags and 620 cubic yards of clay.

Air Force

Aircraft flew a total of 1,352 sorties and airlifted 550.9 tons. Airdrops of more than 200 tons included such items as sandbags, life rafts, food, and water. Of 914 persons evacuated, helicopters accounted for 893 persons. H-13 helicopters evacuated and rescued 755 persons (included in above figures) and carried 180 persons, with a daily average of 10 aircraft operational. Mission hours flown by H-13 helicopters included: reconnaissance--191; supply--60; evacuation and rescue--116; photographing--8; liaison--33; VIP--46; testflights--23; and operational--92.[50]

Navy

During the operations period 4 - 17 February, the naval detachment, consisting of LCR 1001, LCU 1174, PR 24, and PR 26, moved 1,800 tons of sandbags to dike breaks, evacuated small amounts of furniture and farm equipment, and freed one grounded Netherlands vessel. Three Netherlands Army Engineer units and their equipment were transported by the landing craft. The PR 24 and PR 26, besides performing reconnaissance and liaison tasks, carried medical and Red Cross supplies.[51]

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[50](1) AMRO G-3 Sit Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (2) Seventh Army Prov Air Det Opn Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[51]AMRO G-3 Sit Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

CHAPTER III

Phase-Out of AMRO

30. Determination of Netherlands Requirements

By 7 February the initial phase of relief operations in the Netherlands, chiefly involving rescue operations, was practically completed. However, AMRO reported to USAREUR that evacuation activities were still in progress. Although the termination of rescue operations would essentially complete the mission of AMRO and would permit the gradual withdrawal of the American troops from the Netherlands area, it was necessary first to obtain an over-all picture of immediate requirements from the Netherlands Government in order to determine the course of action for AMRO and USAREUR. In order to develop a statement of the over-all requirements to be provided by the military, the Netherlands Minister of the Interior, who was in charge of all disaster and reconstruction matters, requested information from the civilian heads of each of the three Netherlands' provinces concerned as well as from the Minister for Roads, Dikes, and Bridges. He requested that this information be delivered to the Ministry of Defense before noon on 7 February so that a consolidated request for military assistance could be presented to General Van Vreeden on the same day, and General Van Vreeden could then present to AMRO his recommendations for assistance from U.S. military sources, based on a thorough study of the over-all military requirements. Upon receiving these requirements, General Hendrix would be in a position to make his recommendations to USAREUR for future operations of AMRO in the Netherlands.[1] The formulation of these requirements, however, was delayed by the difficulties experienced by the Minister of the Interior in obtaining sufficient information on which to base his over-all

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[1]Cable-071100Z (SMC In 1516 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 7 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Incoming Cables), Tab VII.

recommendations. On 9 February General Van Vreeden's office informed General Hendrix that the requirements would be finalized on 11 February and that a conference between General Hendrix and General Van Vreeden could be held on the afternoon of 12 February for the purpose of presenting the Netherlands' requirements for U.S. military assistance.[2]

31. Formulation of Phase-out Plans

The delay in finalizing over-all requirements for disaster relief work resulted in a corresponding delay in formulating final planning for the termination of AMRO operations in the Netherlands. On 8 February, US EUCOM requested authority from the Department of the Army to begin the phase-out of U.S. military activities in the Netherlands as soon as the exigencies of the situation warranted, and recommended that the final decision on the ultimate extent of U.S. military assistance be delayed until after receiving a detailed request from the Netherlands.[3] At the same time AMRO headquarters began to formulate plans for the phase-out of operations after 16 February. This was the date when the season's highest tides were expected and it was anticipated that additional disasters might result. General Hendrix stated that if conditions were favorable on 16 February, the phase-out of AMRO operations would begin on the morning of 17 February, and that AMRO would begin planning on that basis.[4]

a. AMRO Recommendations. On 10 February General Hendrix presented a memorandum to General Van Vreeden, embodying the following recommendations for the future operations of AMRO: (a) that current operations be continued, directed by Netherlands authorities; (b) that all U.S. military relief effort be phased out by 0600, 17 February; (c) that 17 - 18 February be utilized for assembly of units, maintenance of equipment, and preparations for return to home stations; and (d) that units depart for home stations on 19 and 20 February.[5]

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[2](1) Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, to Brig Gen R. Hendrix, CG AMRO, 1015 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab VIII (Tab A). (2) Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, to Col D. C. Tredennick, COFS AMRO, 1730 9 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab IX (Tab J).

[3]Cable-081814Z (SMC In 1699 Feb), US EUCOM to COFSA, 8 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VIII.

[4]Cable-181200Z (SMC In 1673 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 8 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VIII.

[5]Cable-100945Z (SMC In 1989 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab X.

b. Approval by the Netherlands Military Authorities. At the time that this memorandum was presented to General Van Vreeden, the evacuation of personnel from the disaster area had been completed and it was anticipated that the Netherlands military authorities would raise no serious objections. On the afternoon of 12 February, General Hendrix and General Van Vreeden conferred at the headquarters of the Netherlands Territorial Forces. The Netherlands military authorities indicated their approval of the AMRO recommendations for the phasing out of American activities and at the same time stated their requirements for continued U.S. military support after 17 February.[6]

c. Acceptance of Phase-out Plans. Before the AMRO plans for the phase-out of U.S. military activities in the Netherlands could be implemented, approval also had to be obtained from higher headquarters. On 10 February USAREUR approved the phase-out plans and stated that all units previously alerted had been released from alert status as of 0800 on the previous day.[7] On 13 February USAREUR announced its approval of the AMRO phase-out plans which had been presented to the Netherlands military authorities, subject to weather conditions on 16 February which might create a new emergency necessitating the continuation of U.S. military aid.[8] US EUCOM in turn notified the Department of the Army on 14 February that it intended to phase out all activity in the Netherlands, with certain exceptions, beginning on 17 February, unless a major emergency involving the saving of life developed on 16 February. By that date, barring unforeseen contingencies on 16 February, the AMRO mission would have been completed.[9] On 17 February, the day that AMRO activities were scheduled to cease, approval of the Department of the Army was received by US EUCOM.[10]

d. Final Plan for Termination of Operations. Following the approval by USAREUR of its phase-out proposals, AMRO transmitted to USAREUR its final plan for the termination of operations. This plan provided for the cessation of AMRO activity as of 0600 on 17 February, at which time the final AMRO situation report would be submitted to USAREUR. If a new emergency arose on 16 February appropriate instructions would be issued by AMRO headquarters. Specific instructions were given for the preparation

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[6]Cable-131200Z (SMC In 2981 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIII.

[7]Cable SC-12204, CINCUSAREUR to AMRO, 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab IX.

[8]Cable SC-12381, CINCUSAREUR to AMRO, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab XII.

[9]Cable-141302Z (SMC In 3347 Feb), US CINCEUR to COFSA for ACOFS G-4, 14 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIV.

[10]Cable DA-93167, COFSA from ACOFS G-4 to US CINCEUR, 17 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII.

of reports by Army, Navy and Air Force units upon their return to their home stations and for transmitting copies of these reports to CINCUSAREUR. The plan also fixed the responsibilities of individual staff members after their return to USAREUR and designated the USAREUR staff divisions responsible for coordination of assigned responsibilities. Finally, the plan provided that staff members of AMRO headquarters would continue their normal staff functions until 1800 on 18 February. No detailed instructions were given for the phase-out of AMRO headquarters or for the return of AMRO staff members to their home stations.[11]

32. Preparations for the 16 February Crisis

Since the dikes which had been severely weakened by the storm of 31 January - 1 February could not possibly withstand a renewed onslaught of combined high winds and extremely high tides, the Netherlands authorities prepared plans for coping with a possible critical situation. On 11 February the Netherlands Army authorities requested AMRO to arrange for the possible airlifting of certain specified supplies in the event of new disasters on 16 February. They requested that six C-119's be held on alert status at Rhine-Main Air Base to provide simultaneous airlift of USAREUR supplies and equipment immediately upon call on 16 February. In the event of a new emergency USAREUR was requested to provide the following supplies and equipment: (a) wire supplies for communications, (b) corrugated culverts, (c) 1,000 sets of oilskin clothing, (d) 500 immersion suits, and (e) 50 cargo containers and 50 parachutes for paradrop activities.[12] USAREUR was able to provide all of the requested items or acceptable substitutes, with the exception of the immersion suits, which were Air Force items of issue and therefore not available to USAREUR. The requested materials were earmarked for immediate shipment to the nearest airfield if called for on 16 February.[13] On 12 February USAREUR was requested to make immediate shipment to the Netherlands of an additional 300,000 sandbags and 1,000 feet of 24-inch corrugated culvert. These items, which were located in the Rhine General Depot, were shipped out by 0600 on 13 February and arrived at the Vught railhead in the Netherlands at 0730 on 14 February in ample time for transportation to the critical areas by 16 February.[14]

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[11]Cable-131200Z (SMC In 2981 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIII.

[12]Cable-110915Z (SMC In 2309 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 11 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XI.

[13]Cable SC-12421, CINCUSAREUR to AMRO, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab XII.

[14](1) Cable SC-12384, CINCUSAREUR to AMRO, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab XII. (2) Cable-131130Z (SMC In 2931 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIII.

Carcasses of drowned animals being assembled for destruction in order to prevent pollution.

33. Request for Retention of Certain Units

During the conference on 12 February, between General Hendrix and General Van Vreeden, the following requirements for U.S. military assistance after 17 February were presented by General Van Vreeden: (a) one DUKW company consisting of thirty-three DUKW's; (b) ten water purification units; and (c) two H-19 and two H-13 helicopters. The Netherlands authorities planned to employ the DUKW's to evacuate dead livestock. The water purification units were desired for stand-by purposes, to be available for use where needed, and the helicopters were wanted for quick air transportation. The Netherlands military authorities desired the retention of the designated units and equipment until 15 March. These requirements, however, although they would augment the Netherlands military forces in restoration, rehabilitation, sanitation, and transportation activities, were beyond the stated mission of AMRO and would therefore necessitate a new statement of mission by the Commander in Chief, USAREUR, unless they were required by renewed floods on 16 February.[15]

a. Concurrence of US EUCOM. General Eddy, in response to a request by US EUCOM for a recommendation, urged that the request of the Netherlands for the retention of certain units and equipment after the formal phase-out of AMRO be accepted.[16] Although US EUCOM was of the opinion that the retention of all of the requested equipment was not necessary and desired that all U.S. units be returned to their home stations as soon as possible, it did not believe that the Netherlands request should be rejected entirely. US EUCOM developed a compromise concurrence providing for the retention by the Netherlands of fifteen DUKW's and ten water purification units, to be operated by Netherlands personnel. The period for the retention of these units was shortened to 1 March at which time the situation was to be reevaluated.[17]

b. Final Arrangements. An impasse was created by the US EUCOM provision that the equipment to be retained be operated by Netherlands personnel. Because the equipment in question was of considerable value and belonged to USAREUR, General Eddy contended that U.S. personnel should be assigned to operate it. This view was in conflict with the earlier decision of General T. T. Handy, Deputy Commander, US EUCOM, that no U.S.

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[15]Cable-131006Z (SMC In 2906 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR for ACOFS G-3, 13 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIII.

[16]Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Brig Gen H. P. Storke, US EUCOM, 1600 13 Feb 53. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XII (Tab L).

[17]Cable-141302Z (SMC In 3347 Feb), US CINCEUR to COFSA for ACOFS G-4, 14 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIV.

personnel would be left behind in the Netherlands. It was estimated by USAREUR that it would be necessary to leave behind approximately one hundred men to operate, maintain, and administer this equipment.[18] The question was discussed with General Handy who directed that a skeleton force of not more than twenty-five U.S. personnel be left behind to supervise maintenance and operation of the vehicles. No German personnel were to remain with the DUKW's and the equipment was not to be operated by U.S. personnel during the period of its retention by the Netherlands.[19] On the basis of these decisions, USAREUR made arrangements with AMRO for the training of Netherlands personnel to operate both DUKW's and water purification units, enabling AMRO to leave behind a skeleton force of thirteen persons and to transfer the requested equipment to the Netherlands Army on memorandum receipt. These arrangements were approved by US EUCOM and put into operation by AMRO on 17 February with the concurrence of the Netherlands military authorities. The thirteen persons designated for this duty were as follows: 1 officer, in charge; 2 DUKW drivers; 2 mechanics; 5 truck drivers; and 3 water purification unit operators.[20]

34. Supplies Returned by The Netherlands

When the feared high tides of 16 February failed to materialize the Netherlands was able to begin the return of equipment and supplies which had been employed in relief operations. Moreover, the additional equipment which had been shipped to the Netherlands in anticipation of the 16 February crisis was untouched and could be returned immediately. Accordingly, on 17 February the Netherlands military authorities stated that they were returning to U.S. military control 300,000 sandbags and 1,000 feet of corrugated culvert which had been shipped by USAREUR depots on 13 February, as well as approximately 9,200 shovels, of the total of 11,089 which had been supplied.[21] USAREUR G-4 Division directed that these items, and others which might be returned later, be reconditioned

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[18]Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Brig Gen H. P. Storke, US EUCOM, 1045 16 Feb 53. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XIII (Tab L).

[19]Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Brig Gen H. P. Storke, US EUCOM, 1130 16 Feb 53. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XIII (Tab N).

[20](1) Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Brig Gen H. P. Storke, US EUCOM, 1735 16 Feb 53. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XIII (Tab P). (2) Cable-171600Z (SMC In 3760 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII.

[21]Cable-171200Z (SMC In 3789 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR for G-3, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII.

and returned to stock with the proper documentation.[22]

35. Phase-out of AMRO

On the afternoon of 16 February AMRO was informed by the Netherlands military authorities that there was no further requirement for U.S. military assistance with the exception of the DUKW's and water purification units which had been previously requested. AMRO was now in a position to carry out its phase-out plans.[23] AMRO officially ceased functioning operationally as of 0600, 17 February, and the various units were called in from their temporary locations in preparation for the move to their home stations in Germany. Since all units had been on a stand-by alert over the week end of 14 - 16 February, it was determined that the first units could begin their move from the Netherlands as of 0200 on 18 February rather than on 19 February as had been planned.[24]

a. Departure of Units. The 518 vehicles departing from the Netherlands were grouped in two convoys of two serials each, leaving on 18 and 19 February. The first serial of each day's convoy was composed of six march units and the second of five. A total of 269 vehicles were scheduled to move on 18 February, and approximately 249 vehicles on 19 February. Fifteen DUKW's and five 2½-ton trucks with water purification units were left in the Netherlands. The first march unit of the first serial of the first convoy left Breda at 0200 on 18 February, and the last march unit of the second serial of the second convoy had cleared Breda by 0830 on 19 February. Provisions were made for an overnight stop at McNair Barracks, Hoechst, Germany, particularly for the units with the greatest distance to travel.[25]

b. Return of Naval Craft. The Naval Section of AMRO requested permission for the departure of U.S. naval craft immediately after the cessation of AMRO operations, since no additional time was required for the assembly of units or for the performance of necessary maintenance before departure. On the morning of 16 February, Lt. Cdr. T. C. Griffin,

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[22]IRS, USAREUR ACOFS G-4 to all USAREUR staff divs, 17 Feb 53, sub: Return of Units and Equipment from the Netherlands. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR G-4 Div 729.3, Vol. I (1953), Item 6 atchd.

[23]Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, with Col D. C. Tredennick, AMRO COFS, 1715 16 Feb 53. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Neth Relief Log), Tab XII (Tab Q).

[24]Cable-171630Z (SMC In 3744 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII.

[25](1) Cable-171615Z (SMC In 3797 Feb), AMRO to 8th TTRG (Rheinau), 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII. (2) Cable SC-12620, CINCUSAREUR to Seventh Army (Vaihingen), 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab XIV.

Commander of the Naval detachment at AMRO, was authorized to commence movement of U.S. naval craft to their home stations in Germany as of 0600 on 17 February, immediately after the cessation of operational activities by AMRO.[26]

c. Termination of Air Activity. The Air Section of AMRO was composed of both the USAREUR Provisional Air Division and of USAFE units, and was under the control of AMRO and of the Netherlands Air Control authorities. At 1600, 16 February, the Air Section of AMRO was informed by the Netherlands Air Control authorities that all air operations would cease as of 0500, 17 February. All helicopter pilots were invited by the Queen of the Netherlands to attend a reception in their honor at 0900, 17 February, at the Royal Palace in The Hague.[27] USAFE aircraft were released at 0600, 17 February. Some planes returned to their home stations immediately. One SA-16, at the request of the Queen of the Netherlands, flew to Amsterdam to ferry Netherlands reserve personnel to the Royal Palace. One H-19 helicopter of the 68th Air Rescue Squadron was scheduled to return to its home station on 19 February, while one H-19 of the 69th Air Rescue Squadron was forced to await the completion of maintenance before it was able to return home.[28] Personnel of the USAREUR Provisional Air Division prepared to depart to their home stations in Germany at 1000 on 17 February after attending the Royal reception.[29]

d. Close-out of AMRO Headquarters. General Hendrix directed the close-out of AMRO headquarters itself at 1000, 20 February. The staff officers then remaining were scheduled to depart from Juliana Kaserne at that time and proceed to Valkenburg Air Field where they would be met by the official plane of the Netherlands MAAG for departure to their home stations and return to normal duty assignments.[30]

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[26]Cable-161200Z (SMC In 3463 Feb), AMRO (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR for ACOFS G-3, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVI.

[27]Cable LRR-69 ARS-U-48 (SMC In 3788 Feb), 69th Air Rescue Sqdn (Wiesbaden) to 9th Air Rescue Gp (Bushey Park, England), 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII.

[28]Cable RR-69-ARS-U-50 (SMC In 4363 Feb), 69th Air Rescue Sqdn (Wiesbaden) to 9th Air Rescue Gp (Bushey Park, England), 19 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIX.

[29]Neth Disaster Chronology, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Ref Lib.

[30](1) Cable-171630Z (SMC In 3744 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII. (2) Telecon, Brig Gen R. G. Gard, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, to Col D. C. Tredennick, AMRO COFS, 1715 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XIII (Tab O).

CHAPTER IV

Funding and Accounting Support

36. Funding of the Relief Work by the U.S. Armed Forces

The financing of expenses and expenditures incurred in the relief operations in the Netherlands offered a major problem and was one of the first topics discussed between USAREUR and US EUCOM authorities when the initial request for aid was received by USAREUR on 1 February. On 3 February both US EUCOM and USAREUR cabled the Department of the Army for instructions with regard to financing the relief operations. US EUCOM notified the Department of the Army that no funds were available in US EUCOM specifically earmarked for expenses to be incurred in such a relief effort, but added that circumstances fully warranted prompt action in this case without the necessity of waiting for special authorization. US EUCOM accordingly requested that the Department of the Army grant authority for the component commands of US EUCOM to call upon their respective military departments for the necessary funding.[1] On the same day USAREUR cabled the Department of the Army a request for appropriate fund citation and limiting figures, if any, for expenditures to be incurred by USAREUR as the agent of US EUCOM for relief efforts in the Netherlands. USAREUR required funds for per diem, Class I and III supplies, and both air and ground transportation for the alerted units. Financing was a USAREUR responsibility since CINCUSAREUR had been designated commander of the US EUCOM relief efforts in the Netherlands disaster and had been authorized to call upon the component commands of US EUCOM for all aid required for the successful completion of the mission.[2]

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[1]Cable-031400Z (SMC In 433 Feb), US CINCEUR to COFSA, 3 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Incoming Cables), Tab III.

[2]Cable SX-1805, CINCUSAREUR to COFSA for COA, 3 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab II.

37. Department of the Army Decision on Funding

The initial instructions on funding procedure from the Department of the Army merely granted authority to US EUCOM and USAREUR to obligate Army Maintenance and Operations funds in an amount not to exceed $2,000,000 for expenses in connection with the relief efforts in the Netherlands, pending receipt by the Department of the Army of USAREUR's cost estimate of the operation.[3] On 5 February more detailed instructions were received from the Department of the Army, forwarded with the concurrence of the Department of Defense. These instructions authorized the component commanders of US EUCOM to furnish the required support from available funds or supplies, within limits to be established by US EUCOM for each military command, the maximum over-all ceiling being set, as previously, at $2,000,000. Component commanders were authorized to request funds from their respective military departments within the ceiling established by US EUCOM for funds and supplies for their individual command. Specific instructions for accounting procedures to be followed by the component commands were as follows: (1) USAREUR--accounting for Army support would be handled as required by Section III, "Funding and Accounting," AR 500-60, "Emergency Employment of Army Resources--Disaster Relief," dated 1 October 1952, the costs to be charged to Project 910 under allocation ACCW established by USAREUR; (2) USAFE--separate records were to be kept by USAFE in order to insure that expenses did not exceed the ceiling established by US EUCOM and for reporting purposes as required by the Department of the Air Force; (3) CINCNELM--issues were to be charged to accounts subhead .95 and to applicable appropriations for the issue of the same items for Navy use.[4]

38. Use of Funds for Direct Relief Purposes

a. Funding Instructions. CINCUSAREUR requested a decision as to whether or not the authority to obligate funds could be extended to cover the expenditure of funds for direct relief purposes.[5] Both the initial instructions and the detailed instructions on funding procedures received from the Department of the Army specifically forbade the use of appropriated military funds for direct relief purposes, thus answering this question for USAREUR. The detailed instructions also added a prohibition on the use of supplies for direct relief purposes. The Department of the Army, however, stated that it would advise USAREUR

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[3]Cable DA-930564 (SMC In 893 Feb), COFSA from COA to US CINCEUR and CINCUSAREUR, 4 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab IV.

[4]Cable DA-930629 (SMC In 1249 Feb), COFSA from COA to US CINCEUR, 5 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab V.

[5]Cable SX-1805, CINCUSAREUR to COFSA for COA, 3 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab II.

as soon as possible with regard to the availability of funds for direct relief purposes.[6] The promised information was dispatched to the various component commands of US EUCOM by the Department of the Army on 14 February. The Mutual Security Agency (MSA) had notified the MSA Mission in The Hague on 11 February that it was authorizing the release of guilder counterpart funds if requested by the Netherlands Government for relief and construction activity. Both the Department of Defense and the Department of the Army considered that such counterpart funds would be sufficient to cover any necessary direct relief. The Department of Defense reiterated that it had no appropriated funds available for direct relief purposes and that accordingly no appropriated funds could be used by the U.S. Armed Forces participating in relief operations in the Netherlands.[7]

b. Definition of "Direct" and "Indirect" Relief. It became apparent to US EUCOM, however, that its component commanders were using varying definitions of "direct" and "indirect" relief in connection with their activities in the Netherlands disaster relief operations. In order to insure strict compliance with the Department of the Army prohibition on the use of funds, supplies, and equipment for direct relief purposes, US EUCOM defined "indirect" relief as the provision of services and supplies and the utilization of equipment while rendering emergency assistance to the Netherlands Government through its authorized agencies and "direct" relief as the provision of funds, supplies, or equipment directly to private individuals or organizations. US EUCOM pointed out that these definitions authorized commanders to provide labor, supplies, and equipment and to utilize available funds for local purchases, transportation, per diem, and incidental expenses in connection therewith, in assisting a recognized agency of the Netherlands Government during the period of the disaster. On the other hand, commanders were enjoined from furnishing appropriated funds to the Netherlands Government, and from furnishing appropriated funds or supplies and equipment to private individuals or organizations. This interpretation, however, was not intended to deny the rendering of emergency assistance to any individual or individuals in dire need, but was merely intended to insure that relief aid was administered through authorized channels. US EUCOM directed that where the exigencies of the service required the furnishing of direct relief by any of its component commanders, invoices covering the amount of such assistance be forwarded to the MSA Mission at The

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[6](1) Cable DA-930564 (SMC In 893 Feb), COFS from COA to US CINCEUR and CINCUSAREUR, 4 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab IV. (2) Cable DA-930629, COFSA from COA to US CINCEUR, 5 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab V.

[7]Cable DA-931447 (SMC In 3367 Feb), COFSA from COA to CINCUSAREUR, CINCUSAFE, CINCNELM, and COMNAVGER, 14 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIV.

Hague for reimbursement in accordance with the coordinated State-Defense policy.[8]

39. Accounting Procedures

The Department of the Army directed that accounting for Army support by USAREUR be handled as required by Section III, AR 500-60. This regulation was predicated upon the availability of the American Red Cross as the agency in charge of relief operations in an emergency. For accounting purposes USAREUR substituted the American Military Relief Organization for the American Red Cross in its interpretation of AR 500-60 and followed the accounting procedures prescribed by that regulation.[9] Under the accounting system set up by USAREUR, supplies, equipment, etc., needed for disaster relief operations in the Netherlands were shipped to AMRO and charged to Project 910 by USAREUR fiscal officers. AMRO accountable officers were at first directed to maintain temporary accounts for such property and to obtain the proper receipts from the designated Netherlands officials for all property turned over to their government. As this system did not work well in practice, AMRO instead maintained informal jacket files for accounting purposes. At the close of the operations all unused property and all unexpendable property issued for relief purposes and not further required was returned to AMRO and the jacket files credited for all such returns. These items were then shipped to the proper depots where the rehabilitation costs were figured for each separate item. The depots then forwarded the shipping documents to the fiscal officers who removed the end-item cost from the account but entered the rehabilitation cost for final settlement.[10]

a. Issuing of Administrative Orders. Full instructions for USAREUR and AMRO accounting procedures were contained in the administrative orders issued by both headquarters for the guidance of their personnel. USAREUR Administrative Order No. 1 for Netherlands Disaster Relief, issued on 5 February 1953, contained in Annex No. 2 instructions for accountability for shipments to AMRO and for the logistical support of the Netherlands Government in the disaster relief effort. AMRO administrative Order No. 1, issued on the following day, was intended to be used in conjunction with USAREUR Administrative Order No. 1. Annex A of the AMRO order contained instructions for accounting procedures

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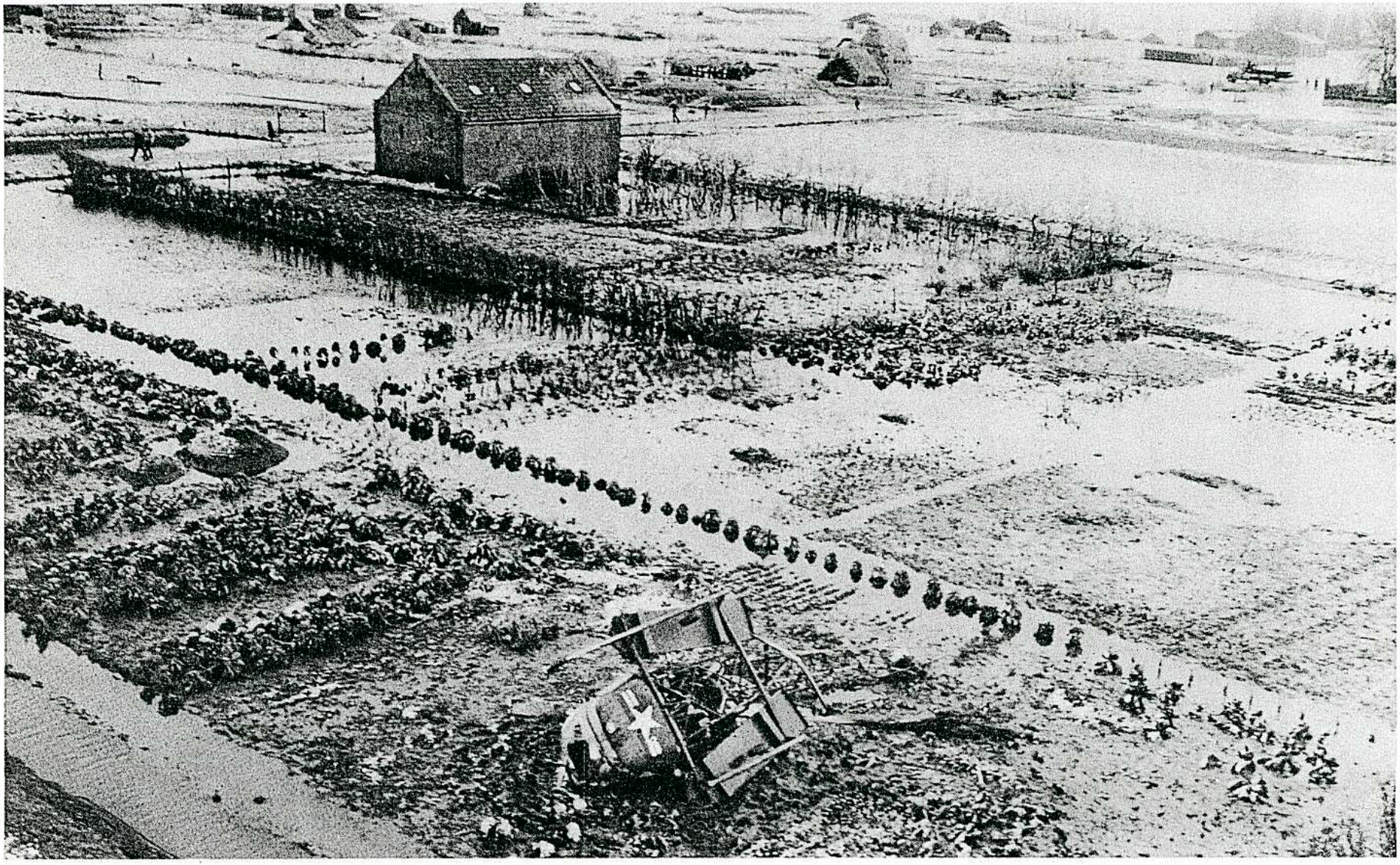
[8]Cable-201720Z (SMC In 4749 Feb), US CINCEUR to CINCUSAREUR, CINCUSAFE, CINCNELM, and COMNAVGER, 20 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XX.

[9]Cable DA-930629 (SMC In 1249 Feb), COFSA from COA to US CINCEUR, 5 Feb 53. SECRET. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab V.

[10]Interv, Mr. J. R. Moenk, USAREUR Hist Div, with Lt Col S. J. Heliker, C/USAREUR Compt Div Acct Procedures Br, 5 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED.



One of two helicopters from Seventh Army wrecked during the Netherlands relief operations. High winds blew the helicopter off a dike.

applicable to the support rendered to the Royal Netherlands Army, including provision for the return of nonexpendable supplies by the Netherlands when no longer needed for relief purposes. Annex A also made provision for the slavage of all quartermaster air drop supplies and their rehabilitation for further use, thus insuring a sizeable reduction in the final over-all cost of the relief operations. USAREUR Administrative Order No. 1 was changed on 18 February when a new Annex No. 2 was issued, providing for the use of the informal jacket files for accounting purposes by the fiscal officer of AMRO.[11]

b. Final Accounting by USAREUR Units. In order to simplify the final accounting procedures, USAREUR directed that all U.S. Army units assigned to AMRO clear all property issued to them through AMRO for relief purposes prior to their return to home stations. This procedure enabled AMRO to account for all supplies in the hands of USAREUR units before the actual phase-out of AMRO. USAREUR also directed that all property issued to AMRO accounts on memorandum receipt be recovered prior to the departure of the units for their home stations. In addition to AMRO accounts, other USAREUR accounts were kept for property issued to the participating units before their departure from Germany, or issued directly through USAREUR technical service supply channels. All participating units were, therefore, directed to turn in all property received directly from other USAREUR sources for relief purposes immediately upon their return to their home stations.[12]

40. USAREUR Cost Estimates

Department of the Army instructions to US EUCOM and USAREUR specified that a cost estimate of the operations be developed by those two commands in accordance with the applicable provisions of AR 500-60. As has been noted, the over-all ceiling on expenditures for all three services was put at $2,000,000, with the limitation for each individual service to be established by US EUCOM.[13] Since most of the supplies for the relief operation had been dispatched during the first five days

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[11](1) USAREUR Admin Order No. 1 for Netherlands Disaster Relief, 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Neth Relief Log), Tab V (Tab P). (2) AMRO Admin Order No. 1, 6 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab VII (Tab H).

[12]Cable SC-12524, CINCUSAREUR to AMRO, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab XIII.

[13](1) Cable DA-930564 (SMC In 893 Feb), COFSA to US CINCEUR and CINCUSAREUR, 4 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab IV. (2) Cable DA-930629 (SMC In 1249 Feb), COFSA to US CINCEUR, 5 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab V.

of February, USAREUR was able by 6 February to secure from its technical services figures on which to base an estimate of the ultimate cost of the supplies required for the entire operation.

a. Quartermaster and Engineer Estimates. By far the greater proportion of supplies furnished by USAREUR had come from the Quartermaster and Engineer Divisions because of the ability of those two technical services to fill the peculiar needs of the situation in the Netherlands. The larger share of this amount was furnished by the Quartermaster Division, which furnished supplies valued at $68,040.00 to the Netherlands during the period 1 - 6 February, as shown in the following table:[14]

Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
Total Value				$68,040.00
"C" Rations	Each	3,000	$ 2.15	6,450.00
Tablet, water purification, Chlorine, 50 per bottle	Bottle	30,000	.07	2,100.00
Powder, water purification, tube, 100 tubes per box	Box	500	1.97	985.00
Bag, aviators	Each	50	5.28	264.00
Container, A-21	Each	312	53.00	16,536.00
Container, A-5	Each	66	39.25	2,590.50
Neb, A-10	Each	13	38.20	496.60
Pad, Shock	Each	50	4.80	240.00
Sling, A-7A	Each	123	39.25	4,827.75
Parachute, G-1A	Each	393	71.05	27,922.65
Parachute, G-13	Each	50	112.55	5,627.50

The items most in demand for the relief efforts of the Netherlands agencies, however, were furnished by the USAREUR Engineer Division. As announced by the Netherlands engineers at the conference of U.S. and Netherlands officials on 2 February, the greatest need in the engineering field was for materials for emergency dike repairs and supplies and equipment for water purification in the flooded areas. Shipments of engineer supplies to the Netherlands during the period 1 - 6 February were as follows:[15]

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[14]Memo, Lt Col M. L. Tribe, Asst C/USAREUR QM Div Sup Br, to Col L. W. Bernard, C/USAREUR G-4 Div Svc Br, 6 Feb 53, sub: Supplies Shipped to Netherlands for Disaster Relief. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR G-4 729.3, Vol. I (1953), Item 6 atchd.

[15]Memo, Col L. W. Bernard, C/USAREUR G-4 Div Svcs Br, to Col L. F. Wells, USAREUR Dep ACOFS G-4, 6 Feb 53, sub: Disaster Relief Furnished the Netherlands. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR G-4 Div 729.3, Vol I (1953), Item 6 atchd.

Item	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
Total Value				$61,365.28
Shovel	Each	11,089	$1.70	18,851.30
Sandbags	Each	300,000	.14	42,000.00
Water Purification Expendables				
Calcium Hypochloride	5 lb	12	1.19	14.28
Alum	100 lb	30	6.10	183.00
Carbon Act.	50 lb	3	8.50	25.50
Filters, Aid	50 lb	40	2.80	11.20
Soda Ash	10 lb	200	1.40	280.00

b. Preliminary USAREUR Estimate of 10 February. USAREUR was able to transmit to US EUCOM on 10 February a preliminary cost estimate of the relief operations in the Netherlands, based on the cost of the first nine days of operations. During the period 1 - 9 February, $516,600 was obligated by USAREUR, USAFE, and U.S. Naval Forces, Germany; the three services furnishing units for operation under AMRO. This total obligation was broken down as shown in the following table:

Item	Cost
Total	$516,600
Army	$247,500
Evacuation service (DUKW's & helicopters)	40,500
U.S. Army supply to Netherlands Army	125,000
Rail transportation	12,000
Destroyed equipment	70,000
Air Force	$259,100
Evacuation service	9,100
Freight lift	228,000
Supply to Netherlands military	22,000
Navy	$ 10,000
Evacuation service	10,000

By 10 February AMRO headquarters had already contemplated commencing the phase-out of the operations as of 0600, 17 February, barring unforeseen circumstances, and had decided that all units partaking in the operations, with the exception of a small detachment, would depart the Netherlands prior to 21 February. USAREUR accordingly estimated that the $2,000,000 limitation imposed by the Department of the Army would be adequate for the entire mission.[16]

c. Final Cost Estimate by AMRO, 3 March. A final cost estimate of the opeations was drawn up by the Comptroller Section, AMRO, after the close-out of operations on 17 February and after credits had been made to the accounts for materials returned by the Netherlands Government and by the U.S. units participating in the operations. The final cost estimate for the equipment and services furnished to the Netherlands Government during the period 1 - 17 February is shown in the following table:[17]

Total Cost	$956,736.00
Army	$484,036.00
Quartermaster Corps	92,034.00
Engineer Corps	207,000.00
Helicopter Detachment, Seventh Army	54,275.00
Signal Corps	1,000.00
Ordnance Corps	2,000.00
Destroyed equipment	100,000.00
Transportation Corps	7,727.00
Per Diem to TDY personnel	20,000.00
Air Force	$117,700.00
Freight lift and evacuation	112,700.00
Per Diem to TDY personnel	5,000.00

[16]Cable SX-1978, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 10 Feb 53. SECRET. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Outgoing Cables), Tab IX.

[17]Memo, sgd Maj R. L. Knight, AMRO Compt, 3 Mar 53, sub: Estimated Cost for Equipment and Services to Netherlands Government During Period 2 - 17 February 1953. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XVI.

Navy	$ 25,000.00
Freight lift and evacuation	25,000.00
Property Left in The Netherlands[18]	$330,000.00
Engineer equipment	330,000.00

41. Final Cost Accounting

The figure presented by the AMRO Comptroller for the cost of equipment and services furnished to the Netherlands Government during the relief operations did not represent the final cost of the operation. AR 500-60 required that all nonexpendable supplies and all salvageable supplies be returned to U.S. Army control and credit charges made for all such equipment returned. The costs for rehabilitating salvageable material were entered as charges in the accounts of the operations but the end-item charge itself was removed by means of a credit charge. In some cases, figures presented by the AMRO Comptroller do not coincide with the final figures on support cost presented by participating services. In such cases provision was made for an audit by the 7756th USAREUR Audit Agency, to arrive at the accepted figure. Until such an audit is made of the AMRO accounts, and until all material, supplies, and equipment is returned by the Netherlands Government, no final cost figure can be made for the operation itself. AR 500-60, however, provides for the submission of a fiscal report within 60 days of the termination of relief support.[19]

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[18] Note: This equipment was left on MR in the Netherlands for a specified period of time, to be returned as a credit when the need for the equipment no longer existed; a charge, however, was to be made against the account for rehabilitation of the subject equipment.

[19] (1) Interv, Mr. J. R. Moenk, USAREUR Hist Div, with Lt Col J. H. Davin, C/USAREUR Fin Div Fiscal Br, 5 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED. (2) Interv, Mr. J. R. Moenk, USAREUR Hist Div, with Maj R. L. Knight, AMRO Compt, 6 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

CHAPTER V

Administrative and Logistical Support

Section I: U.S. Army, Europe

42. G-3 Activities

USAREUR G-3 assumed a position of importance early in the preparatory operations for relief in the Netherlands disaster. Col. D. C. Tredennick, Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, who was present at the first staff meeting called by General Williams for 2130 on 1 February, was charged with responsibility for selecting and preparing troop units for movement to the Netherlands upon call. G-3 was also directed to obtain information with regard to the availability of light planes and helicopters in the command and to alert as many as necessary for possible movement to the disaster area. Colonel Tredennick was selected as the G-3 representative on General Eddy's reconnaissance team and remained with General Eddy's staff at The Hague, assuming the position of AMRO Chief of Staff after Brig. Gen. R. G. Gard, USAREUR Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, returned to Heidelberg.[1]

a. Personnel Movements and Alerts. At the USAREUR staff meeting held on the morning of 3 February, G-3 was charged by the Chief of Staff with responsibility for screening all personnel requests from AMRO in order to avoid the dispatch of unnecessary personnel to the Netherlands. This function included the actual screening of requests for units from AMRO, selection of the specific USAREUR units to meet the desired needs, alerting the selected units for movement, and finally effecting the movement of each selected unit upon call by AMRO. G-3 was directed to inform AMRO of

[1]Memo for rcd, sgd Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab J)

the strength of each unit dispatched to the Netherlands, the estimated time of arrival at the border crossing point, and the estimated time of arrival at the unit's destination.[2] All alerting of additional units as required by the urgency of the situation, changes in the alert status, and the removal of units from alert status remained the responsibility of the USAREUR G-3 until the final removal of all units from alert status by USAREUR on 9 February.[3]

b. Status Reports. On 3 February, General Williams directed G-3 to prepare summaries of USAREUR activities in the Netherlands relief operations twice daily, at 0800 and 1600, for forwarding to US CINCEUR as action addressee and to AMRO, Seventh Army, USAREUR COMZ, CINCUSAFE, COMNAVGER, and HICOG for information. The body of the report was to be in four parts as follows: (1) units moving--strength, estimated time of departure (ETD), time of arrival at border crossing point, and estimated time of arrival (ETA); (2) units having received movement orders--strength and ETD; (3) units alerted for movement--strength and ETD; and (4) supplies sent and other activities. The units appearing in the summary reports were to be listed by service component (Army, Navy, or Air), and descriptions were to include the nature and type of equipment being moved by the units. Summary reports were to be unclassified insofar as possible. The summary reports were to include references to all separate movement messages previously sent, in order to prevent confusion on the part of the recipients of the reports.[4] On 6 February USAREUR G-3 informed the recipients of the summary reports that beginning with the following day, 7 February, the reports would be submitted on a one-a-day basis at 0800 each day.[5] On 11 February, it was decided that since there had been no changes to report for the past two days, the summary reports of actions would be discontinued unless changes in the situation in the Netherlands warranted further reports.[6] Reports were not resumed.

43. G-4 Activities

The major operation of USAREUR in the relief efforts was the logistical support of AMRO and of the Netherlands military through the agency of AMRO. At the same time that G-3 was directed to screen all requests for personnel units from AMRO, G-4 was directed to screen all requests for rail movements

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[2]Memo, USAREUR Off of DCOFS Opns, 3 Feb 53, sub: Instructions of the COFS to USAREUR Staff Officers, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab III (Tab F-1).

[3]Interv, Mr. J. R. Moenk, USAREUR Hist Div, with Col G. L. Pace, C/USAREUR G-3 Opns Br, 12 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[4]C/N 1, USAREUR SGS to USAREUR G-3, 3 Feb 53, sub: Daily USAREUR Relief Summary Reports. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief file (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab L-1).

[5]Cable SC-11963, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 6 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab V.

[6]Cable SC-12270, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 11 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab X.

of supplies and equipment both from AMRO and from the USAREUR technical services. Col. D. F. Slaughter, Deputy Chief, Supply Branch, USAREUR G-4, was designated by Brig. Gen. F. A. Henning, Assistant Chief of Staff G-4, USAREUR, as the G-4 representative on the AMRO staff at The Hague, with directions to screen all supply requests from that headquarters and to make an attempt to centralize the channels of transmission. At the USAREUR staff meeting on 3 February, General Henning announced that G-4 was setting up a daily train beginning on D-day plus 3 to handle ration supply for the U.S. units in the Netherlands. This train would be destined for the air field at Gilze-Rijen where a quartermaster ration breakdown point would be located. In addition, G-4 announced that every effort would be made to procure material locally in the Netherlands. The chief activity of G-4 in this operation was the normal coordination of the activities of the USAREUR technical services involved in the support activities.[7]

44. The Technical Services

Because of the nature of the situation in the Netherlands there were urgent requirements for support by at least four of the USAREUR technical services. Early communiques from the Netherlands and the conferences with the Netherlands officials indicated the existence of requirements for supplies, equipment, and operations which would have to be met by the Engineer, Quartermaster, and Signal Divisions. The fourth USAREUR technical service, the Transportation Division, entered the picture because of the requirement for transporting the required supplies and equipment from depots in Germany to the scene of operations in the Netherlands, a requirement complicated by the crossing of an international border. In addition, the Engineer Division was selected to furnish the units for operational activities in the disaster relief, while the Quartermaster Division would, of necessity, have to furnish subsistence and POL support for the units operating under AMRO.

a. Quartermaster. One of the earliest requirements in the disaster relief operations was for materials for aerial drop to stranded victims of the flood. Personnel trained in the packing of supplies for aerial drop were also needed. The first materials requested from USAREUR were parachutes, lashings and containers for the aerial drop activities, and Quartermaster Division supply personnel to supervise the air drops. The USAREUR Quartermaster Division dispatched a detachment of its 557th Quartermaster Aerial Supply Company to pack the requested cargo parachutes and A-21 assault containers for aerial delivery of Class I supplies, and to provide ejection crews for the four USAFE C-119 cargo planes used in this

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[7]Memo, USAREUR Off of DCOFS Opns, 3 Feb 53, sub: Instructions of the COFS to USAREUR Staff Officers. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab III (Tab F-1).

operation.[8] POL support was provided by stationing a detachment of the 520th Quartermaster Petroleum Supply Company at Duesseldorf, Germany, to service vehicles on the road to the Netherlands, and a detachment of the 531st Quartermaster Petroleum Supply Company with the 39th Engineer Construction Group headquarters at Breda.[9] In accordance with General Eddy's order that all U.S. troops in the Netherlands be fed from Germany and that the Netherlands not be asked to furnish any food during the emergency period, the USAREUR Quartermaster Division made provision for the shipment of rations to the Netherlands and dispatched a detachment of the 540th Quartermaster Subsistence Company to establish a ration breakdown point at Breda for the troops operating in the field.[10] As noted in Chapter IV, the USAREUR Quartermaster Division shipped a total of $92,034.00 worth of supplies to the Netherlands during the period 2 - 17 February, during which AMRO was in actual operation.[11]

b. Engineer Division. Because of the peculiar needs of the situation, the USAREUR Engineer Division was called upon to provide supplies and equipment for use by the Netherlands Government, and supplies, equipment, and units for the U.S. operational activities in the Netherlands. The Chief, Engineer Division, was directed to provide the 39th Engineer Construction Group headquarters to function as the field operating headquarters in the Netherlands and the 795th Engineer Dump Truck Company to transport supplies and materials in the stricken area.[12] The first shipment of supplies to the Netherlands from USAREUR contained the following items from engineer depot stock: 300,000 sandbags; 10,000 shovels; 6 3,000-gallon canvas water tanks; and 35 water points.[13] In all the USAREUR

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[8](1) Cable PRO-986 (SMC In 140 Feb), QM Pur Off (The Hague) to CINCUSAREUR, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab II. (2) Memo for rcd, USAREUR Asst DCOFS Opns, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab C-1).

[9](1) Cable 1386 (SMC In 525 Feb), Seventh Army to 531st QM POL Supply Co, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab III. (2) Cable 5484 (SMC In 625 Feb), Seventh Army to CINCUSAREUR, 3 Feb 53. RESTRICTED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab III.

[10](1) Cable PRD-1074 (SMC In 397 Feb), Maj Gen W. H. Middleswart, USAREUR QM (The Hague), to CINCUSAREUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab III. (2) Cable SC-11806, CINCUSAREUR to AMRO, 4 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab III.

[11]Memo, sgd Maj L. R. Knight, AMRO Compt, 3 Mar 53, sub: Estimated Cost for Equipment and Services to Netherlands Government During Period 2 - 17 February 1953. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XVI.

[12](1) Cable SX-1763, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCUER, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab I. (2) SX-1791, CINCUSAREUR to 39th Engr Const Gp, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab I.

[13]Cable SC-11765, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 3 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab II.

Engineer Division furnished a total of $207,000 worth of engineer supplies and equipment to the Netherlands Government and left an additional $330,000 worth of equipment (DUKW's and water purification units) in the hands of the Netherlands military for use until 15 March 1953.[14]

c. Signal Division. The disruption of the Netherlands communications facilities as a result of the flood, necessitated the inclusion of communications teams among the units dispatched to the Netherlands. General Eddy designated the 17th Signal Operations Battalion to provide communications facilities for the units operating in the disaster area, and to provide communications between the headquarters at Breda and The Hague and between The Hague and Heidelberg.[15] The Chief, USAREUR Signal Division, augmented the 17th Signal Operations Battalion with a detachment of the 317th Signal Construction Battalion and the 20th Low Power Radio Team of the 39th Signal Support Battalion.[16] By noon of 4 February, the USAREUR Signal Division was able to report the establishment of the following signal communications from USAREUR to the Netherlands: (a) one Red Line telephone circuit, one teletype circuit, and one radio teletype circuit from Heidelberg to The Hague; (b) one teletype circuit from The Hague to Breda; (c) one continuous wave (CW) circuit from V Corps to The Hague; and (d) one teletype circuit from the Quartermaster Purchasing Center, Frankfurt, to the Quartermaster Purchasing Office in The Hague (Diagram 1).[17]

d. Transportation Division. The disaster relief operations in the Netherlands created transportation requirements which it became the responsibility of the USAREUR Transportation Division to meet. On 2 February the Transportation Division was directed to provide truck companies for hauling POL supplies in the Netherlands and between Mannheim and the Class III Supply Point at Duesseldorf. At the same time, the USAREUR G-4, requested the Transportation Division to establish a railhead at Vught, the Netherlands, on D-day plus 3 for administrative purposes only. Since all supplies, units, etc., had to cross the international border between the Netherlands and Germany, the 8th Transportation Traffic Regulating Group (TTRG) continued to require Transportation Corps clearances for all

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[14]Memo, sgd Maj L. R. Knight, AMRO Compt, 3 Mar 53, sub: Estimated Cost for Equipment and Services to the Netherlands Government During the Period 2 - 17 February 1953. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XVI.

[15]Cable SX-1788, CINCUSAREUR to 39th Engr Const Gp, 2 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab I.

[16](1) Cable 5489 (SMC In 819 Feb), Seventh Army to CINCUSAREUR, 4 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab IV. (2) Cable 071402Z (SMC In 1679 Feb), US CINCEUR to COFSA, 7 Feb 53. CONFIDENTIAL. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VII.

[17]USAREUR SGS DO Log, 2350 3 Feb 53. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab III.

48. Air Force Operations in the Netherlands

In relief operations in the Netherlands, USAFE aircraft engaged in air rescue, aerial drop, and aerial reconnaissance missions, as directed by the Netherlands air authorities and AMRO headquarters. In addition, supplies were delivered from USAFE stocks to meet requirements which could not be filled by USAREUR depots for items of USAFE issue necessary for emergency evacuation and relief of suffering during the early flood stages, such as rubber life rafts and exposure suits.[32] Air Force personnel participating in the relief operations in the Netherlands included one paratroop rescue team for possible use in rescue and evacuation work, one paratroop medical team, to provide emergency medical service in the critical areas, and one ground party radio unit to maintain radio communications between the air headquarters and the planes in actual operation.[33]

a. Types of Aircraft Employed. USAFE employed five different types of aircraft in the Netherlands, according to the requirements presented to the Air Force for the use of aircraft. Included in these operating aircraft were three H-19 helicopters and six SA-16 amphibious planes from the Air-Sea Rescue Service, which were employed in the evacuation of victims from the flooded areas. In addition USAFE had two C-47 planes for reconnaissance missions over the disaster area, and ten cargo planes, one C-82 and nine C-119's, for freight movement, from Germany to the Netherlands, from the airfields in the Netherlands to areas where the equipment was needed, and for air drop of emergency supplies to the flood victims.[34]

b. Summary of Operations. During the period of the Netherlands emergency, USAFE aircraft flew a total of 426 hours in performing 353 sorties. USAFE aircraft evacuated a total of 141 persons and air transported 1,134,100 pounds of supplies. Of the supplies airlifted, 660,000 pounds were delivered to the disaster area by operations which involved 598 separate air drops. The type of cargo airlifted by USAFE aircraft included emergency rations, water purification equipment, blankets, medical supplies, flotation equipment, and emergency clothing. In addition to the actual operation of the required aircraft in the disaster area, USAFE supplied the following items of peculiar Air Force issue for

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[32](1) Cable 042315Z (SMC In 932 Feb), AMRO to CINCUSAREUR, 4 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables) Tab IV. (2) Cable EOOTF-47794 (SMC In 3811 Feb), CINCUSAFE to US CINCEUR, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables) Tab XVII.

[33]Cable EOOTF-47053 (SMC In 1437), CINCUSAFE to CINCUSAREUR, US CINCEUR, COFSAF, and USLO AAFCE, 6 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab VI.

[34]Cable EOOTF-47287, CINCUSAFE to US CINCEUR, CINCUSAREUR, COFSAF, and USLO AAFCE, 10 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab X.

relief in the Netherlands: (a) thirty-six six-man life rafts; (b) three hundred one-man life rafts; and (c) thirty exposure or immersion suits. A detailed breakdown of USAFE performance by aircraft type is shown in the following chart:[35]

Type	Number	Hours Flown	Sorties	Evacuated	Tonnage
Total:	21	423:50	353	161	1,134,100
SA-16	6	107:45	48	21	6,000
H-19	3	83:55	131	140	7,900
C-47	2	36:20	14	0	17,000
C-82	1	8:45	5	0	2,000
C-119	9	187:05	155	0	1,101,200

Section III: U.S. Naval Forces, Germany (USNAVGER)

49. Requests for Naval Craft

On 1 February, Maj. Gen. R. K. Taylor, US EUCOM Chief of Staff, suggested to General Williams that naval assistance, possibly in the field of small power boats, be included in the requirements for disaster relief in the Netherlands. He suggested to General Williams that a Navy representative from U.S. Naval Forces, Germany, accompany General Eddy's reconnaissance party to the Netherlands on 2 February in order to finalize requirements for naval assistance.[36] RAdm. Howard E. Orem, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Germany, and Capt. W. C. Hughes, Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans and Operations, U.S. Naval Forces, Germany, accompanied General Eddy on the reconnaissance trip to the Netherlands and participated in the conferences with the Netherlands officials.[37] On the basis of initial requirements, Admiral Orem ordered two landing craft of the U.S. Navy Rhine River Patrol to proceed at once to the Netherlands, carrying with them special demolition

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[35]Cable EOOTF-47794, CINCUSAFE to US CINCEUR, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XVII.

[36]Memo for rcd, sgd Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 2 Feb 53, sub: Telephone call from Maj Gen R. K. Taylor, COFS US EUCOM, 2100, 1 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab J).

[37]Ibid.

and life saving equipment.[38] On 3 February Admiral Orem held a special conference with the Chief of the Netherlands Royal Navy, at which time it developed that the Netherlands Navy was in command of the situation and it was doubtful if any further aid from the U.S. Navy would be required.[39]

50. Naval Craft and Personnel Participating

The first naval craft from the Rhine River Patrol temporarily assigned to duty on the Netherlands Area were two landing craft, LCU 1174 and LCR 1001, under the command of Lt. Cdr. Terrence M. Griffin. These two craft arrived at Nijmegen on 4 February and were ordered to stand by in order to provide over-water transportation for rescue vehicles as needed.[40] On 6 February these vessels were augmented by the addition of two patrol boats of the Rhine River Patrol, PR 24 and PR 26. The four vessels were formed into Naval Task Unit 104.1.7 with Commander Griffin designated as commander. This Naval Task Unit was placed under the operational control of AMRO with the mission of carrying out the orders of that command in conducting relief work.[41] In addition to being commander of the Naval Task Unit in the Netherlands relief operations, Commander Griffin also served as the chief of the Navy Section of the AMRO staff, having succeeded to that position upon the departure of Admiral Orem and Captain Hughes on 4 February.[42]

51. Request for Transfer of Naval Craft to the Netherlands

On 18 February, the day after the departure of the Naval Task Unit from the Netherlands, Admiral Orem received a request from the Chief of Staff of the Royal Netherlands Navy, regarding the availability of LCT's and LCM's for use in dike repair in the flooded areas. The Netherlands Government had in mind a permanent transfer of the equipment in question and desired to know the provisions that would apply in the event such a transfer were possible.

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[38]Interv, Mr. J. R. Moenk, USAREUR Hist Div, with Capt W. C. Hughes, USNAVGER ACOFS Plans and Opns, 12 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[39]Memo for rcd, USAREUR Off of COFS, 3 Feb 53, sub: Telephone call from Maj Gen E. T. Williams, COFS USAREUR, to Lt Gen M. S. Eddy, CINCUSAREUR, in The Hague, 1120, 3 Feb. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief files (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab B-1).

[40]Cable SC-11845, CINCUSAREUR to US CINCEUR, 4 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab III.

[41](1) Cable 061509Z (SMC In 1324 Feb), COMNAVGER to CORRPAT, 6 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab VI. (2) Cable 061545Z (SMC In 1331 Feb), COMNAVGER to CORRPAT, 6 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Outgoing Cables), Tab VI.

[42]Interv, Mr. J. R. Moenk, USAREUR Hist Div, with Capt W. C. Hughes, USNAVGER ACOFS Plans and Opns, 12 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

a. USNAVGER Views. Admiral Orem informed the Commander in Chief, USAREUR, that U.S. Naval Forces, Germany, had no craft available for permanent transfer to the Royal Netherlands Navy. Notwithstanding the fact that the number of landing craft assigned to USNAVGER was currently below NATO standards, Admiral Orem announced that he could make two LCU's available for a limited period of time. In the event that General Eddy should desire USNAVGER to render further assistance to the Netherlands Government, Admiral Orem recommended that U.S. Navy crews remain on board any craft committed.[43]

b. US EUCOM Decision. On 19 February, RAdm. Roscoe Good, Assistant Chief of Staff, J-3, US EUCOM, called General Williams to settle the question of action to be taken on the cable from the Netherlands Navy. General Williams believed that Admiral Orem should answer the cable since it had been sent to him, but both Admiral Good and General Taylor were of the opinion that it should be answered by US EUCOM as the senior U.S. command in Europe. The Netherlands Navy was informed that action on their cable to Admiral Orem had been transferred to the jurisdiction of US EUCOM and that it had been determined by US EUCOM that no U.S. Navy craft of the types requested were available for permanent transfer. US EUCOM, however, designated Maj. Gen. A. H. Noble, Chief, MAAG Netherlands, to discuss the matter further with the Royal Netherlands Naval authorities and to explain in greater detail the inability of US EUCOM to effect the requested transfer because of previous NATO commitments.[44]

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[43]Cable 181656Z (SMC In 4102 Feb), COMNAVGER to CINCUSAREUR, 18 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief files (Incoming Cables), Tab XVIII.

[44](1) Cable 191010Z (SMC In 4300 Feb), US CINCEUR to Neth Chief of Naval Staff, The Hague, 19 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Incoming Cables), Tab XIX. (2) Memo for rcd, Off of USAREUR COFS, 19 Feb 53, sub: Telephone call from RAdm Roscoe Good, US EUCOM ACOFS J-3, to Maj Gen E. T. Williams, USAREUR COFS, 0915, 19 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (Neth Relief Log), Tab XIV.

CHAPTER VI

Evaluation

52. General

A definitive analysis of U.S. relief operations in the Netherlands flood disaster must necessarily be based on careful evaluation of all pertinent information. Although some reports of participating units are not available, sufficient information has been obtained to serve as a basis for a preliminary evaluation. To a certain extent, the preceding chapters have included analysis of operations, and this material is not repeated here. The authors of this report were in the favorable position of gathering materials during the period of the operations, both in the field and at USAREUR headquarters.

53. Organization and Mission

The mission assigned to AMRO, which was to assist the Netherlands Armed Forces in the evacuation of persons from the disaster area and to relieve suffering caused by the Netherlands flood, was effectively carried out under the direction of the Netherlands military authorities. Upon the receipt of the decision to extend assistance, no time was lost in the alerting of units that could be useful. Following the determination of Netherlands requirements, the designated units, personnel, and equipment were promptly dispatched from the three branches of the service which participated in the operation. The prompt establishment of AMRO headquarters was an effective means of organizing and directing U.S. military relief efforts in the Netherlands.

54. Coordination with the Netherlands

U.S. military relief activities were under the operational control of the Netherlands Armed Forces, which in turn were under the direction of the civilian agencies. No independent operations were planned or

initiated by U.S. forces.[1]

a. Lack of a Pre-Disaster Plan by Netherlands. The Netherlands military authorities did not have a disaster relief plan prepared; at least none was made available to U.S. military authorities. The plans for the employment of U.S. military forces were developed after the arrival of U.S. personnel and after determining the situation by reconnaissance.[2] It appears that some time was lost before an efficient plan was developed.

b. Relationships between U.S. Military Personnel and the Netherlands Population. The relationships between U.S. personnel and the people of the Netherlands were marked by the highest mutual regard. The citizens of the Netherlands, both in the disaster area and elsewhere, met the Americans with every gesture of courtesy and good will, every form of hospitality, and every expression of gratitude for the assistance which the Americans offered. Command and liaison levels of the Royal Netherlands Armed Forces extended every assistance. The support of U.S. military forces rendered by the Netherlands Government was adequate and satisfactory. Throughout the period of U.S. relief activities the personnel of AMRO headquarters were briefed daily in the Command Building of the Netherlands Territorial Command. A daily geographical and military review of flood relief activities was also furnished.[3]

c. Relationships of German Labor Service Personnel with the Netherlands Population. In view of the World War II experiences of the Netherlands, uncertainty existed as to the manner in which the German labor service personnel manning the DUKW's would be received. Initially the Germans were greeted with a cold reserve which, however, turned to one of ready and even enthusiastic reception when the Netherlanders observed the DUKW crews work unceasingly by night and day to alleviate suffering and save lives and property.[4]

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[1]Memo for rcd, USAREUR DCOFS Opns, 2 Feb 53, sub: Telephone Call from General Eddy at The Hague to General Williams, 2 February 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR SGS Neth Relief files (Neth Relief Log), Tab I (Tab A-1).

[2]Ltr, Brig Gen R. R. Hendrix, CG AMRO, to Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, 27 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

[3]These statements are based on the personal observations of members of the USAREUR Historical Division with AMRO and the responses to questions asked by them of representative U.S. participants and Netherlands civilian and military personnel.

[4](1) Interv, Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, with Lt Col J. S. Lynn, 7972d LSC, 9 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. (2) Interv, Capt E. K. Stewart and Capt M. A. Hooper, USAREUR Hist Div, with Maj G. A. Worth, 7972d LSC, 11 Mar 53.

55. Field Operations

a. Use of Equipment. A disaster relief plan is necessary to accomplish the immediate and effective employment of any assisting military forces. To effect coordination of assisting forces at the national level the provisions of the plan must be made known to all high level authorities.[5] To some extent field operations were hampered by incomplete dissemination of this essential information. Some equipment was not used, such as that brought by the 1279th Engineer Combat Battalion, and if used would have exceeded the requirements of the mission. Although some of the water points were not used, they were dispatched at the insistence of the Netherlands authorities. Their limitations in making salt water potable and the extent of their employment could not be predetermined either by the Netherlands or the U.S. authorities. Other work done by operating units, such as road and dike repair, although apparently of secondary importance was essential in support of the assigned mission. U.S. forces were used to the maximum degree throughout the operational period and were fully prepared for any operations made necessary by the anticipated crisis of 15 - 16 February.[6] Standby operations made necessary the postponement of the return of the units to their home stations until after 16 February.

b. DUKW Operations. Amphibious vehicles received an extended test during the relief operation, and their operating personnel received invaluable experience. Extensive maintenance made necessary by the long hours of operation and special conditions of salt water had to be performed. Underwater debris and obstruction caused considerable damage to propellers and hulls. Lack of grease seals necessitated pulling the wheels and repacking each night.[7] The DUKW's proved to be

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[5]Ltr, Brig Gen R. R. Hendrix, CG AMRO to Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, 27 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

[6](1) See Chapter 3, "Phase-Out of AMRO." (2) AMRO G-3 Sit Repts for period 7 - 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files. (3) Interv, Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, with Col E. W. Niles, CO 39th Engr Constr Gp, 9 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. (4) Interv, Capt M. W. Hooper, USAREUR Hist Div, with Col E. W. Niles, CO 39th Engr Constr Gp, 9 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

[7]Intervs, Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, with Lt Col John S. Lynn, CO 7972 LSC, 9 Feb 53, and with Lt Col Eric MacDonald, AMRO Trans Off, 11 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. (2) Interv, Capt M. A. Hooper, USAREUR Hist Div, with Maj George A. Worth, 7972 LSC, 11 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

adaptable to the unusual conditions in which they were employed and made an outstanding contribution to the relief operation.[8] The Netherlands authorities were impressed by their performance and requested the retention of 15 DUKW's until 15 March.

c. Helicopter Operations. The helicopters, which are credited with the bulk of the evacuation of persons from isolated and dangerous positions, along with the DUKW's and liaison aircraft made a superior rescue team when in communication with each other and operating under a coordinated direction.[9] Since rescue of persons is a primary use of helicopters in a flood relief mission, a number of specific recommendations to accomplish that purpose have been submitted by the officer in charge of the Seventh Army helicopters and included in his report.[10] These are primarily concerned with getting the helicopters to the scene of operations as early as possible.

d. USAFE Activities. The initial problem of air coordination was solved quickly by the establishment of an air coordinating officer and an air section in Headquarters, AMRO. Considering the large number of aircraft of several types operating from two small airfields (Gilze-Rijen and Valkenburg) the air activity constituted a great coordinated effort.[11]

e. Navy Activities. The U.S. naval contingent did not participate in direct relief or rescue activities. Their main efforts were reconnaissance, transportation of personnel and dike repair material, and stand-by operations for emergency use.[12]

56. Communications

Initially difficulties were experienced in maintaining communications with DUKW's. Eventually this and other problems were satisfactorily solved.[13]

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[8]Final Rept, 39th Engr Constr Gp to AMRO, 17 Feb 53. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files. Lt Col John S. Lynn, Commanding Officer, 7972 LSC, has submitted a final report but it is not available at this time.

[9]Ltr, Brig Gen R. R. Hendrix, CG AMRO, to Capt E. K. Stewart, USAREUR Hist Div, 27 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In USAREUR Hist Div Neth Relief files.

[10]Netherlands Flood After Action Report by Maj V. L. Poynter, Seventh Army, Flight Det, 3 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[11]AMRO Air Sec Sum Rept, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[12]U.S. Rhine River Patrol Special Task Unit Rept to AMRO, 16 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid.

[13](1) AMRO Sum of Sig Act, 17 Feb 53. UNCLASSIFIED. In ibid. (2) Interv, Capt E. K. Stewart and Capt M. A. Hooper, USAREUR Hist Div, with Lt Col Wm. A. Higgins, AMRO Sig Off, 9 Mar 53. UNCLASSIFIED.

Glossary

This glossary contains all abbreviations and foreign words used in this manuscript, except those found in SR 320-50-1, 28 October 1949, as amended.

Term	Definition
AAFCE	Allied Air Forces, Central Europe
AMEMB	American Embassy
AMRO	American Military Relief Organization
CINCNELM	Commander in Chief, United States Naval Forces Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean
CINCUSAFE	Commander in Chief, United States Air Forces in Europe
CINCUSAREUR	Commander in Chief, United States Army, Europe
COFSAF	Chief of Staff, United States Air Force
COMNAVGER	Commander, Naval Forces, Germany
CORRPAT	Commanding Officer, Rhine River Patrol
CW	continuous wave (radio term)
DO	duty officer
DUKW	amphibious truck, 2½ ton, cargo
EDTC	engineer dump truck company
EES	European Exchange System
FO	field order
HICOG	High Commissioner for Germany (U.S.)
Koninklijke Marechaussed	Royal Netherlands State Police