

DISTRESS IN JAVA AND THE N.E.I.

Mr. W. MacMahon Ball, the Australian Government Political Representative in Batavia, has made the following statements with respect to distress in Java and the N.E.I.:

The view that the food situation in Java is critical, with the prospect of widespread starvation by February 1946 is well documented.

There is considerable disorder in Java and even in Batavia there has been sporadic and violence resulting in the disruption of public utilities and a general disorganisation. The lack of efficient local administration has made even worse the situation with respect to supplies.

There have been sickening atrocities.

Dutch women and children, hitherto internees of the Japanese, have been beseeching him to enable them to gain asylum for some months in Australia. Their condition is pitiful. Theirs is a humanitarian appeal of the most urgent and genuine kind. Approximately 190,000 persons want temporary asylum somewhere. Australia should at least provide a temporary home for some of them.

Some British authorities have asked that Australia should receive at least 50,000 ex-internees in order to enable them to recuperate.

assisting

Apart from ~~existing~~ Europeans in Java, there is a strong case for providing shipping to move from Batavia to the outer Indies some 10,000 Ambonese who have incurred the hostility of the Javanese.

P59/28

Miss Landre - Is there a file on this subject.

Room For Only 6000 Refugees

CANBERRA. — Australia's acceptance of refugees from the Dutch East Indies would be limited by the accommodation available, the Prime Minister (Mr Chifley) said today.

Australia had agreed provisionally that accommodation could be found here for about 6000. It was impossible for the Government to undertake the construction of new camps to accommodate thousands of people needing recuperation, because all available materials were needed urgently for the construction of houses for Australians, Mr Chifley said.

The Government had had communications from its representative in Java (Mr Macmahon Ball), but as these were official documents, he could not make them public.

Shipping was one of the most urgent problems of the day. Australia would send all the food ships it could get to the East Indies.

Mr Chifley said he knew nothing of reported statements by the Indonesian Premier that the Commonwealth had offered, through Mr Macmahon Ball, to send five food ships to Java, with the cargoes to be distributed by Indonesian Nationalists.

It is understood that the Dutch will pay for any food sent by Australia for the relief of starving Europeans in the Indies.

P!
Melbourne "Herald"

29 NOV 1945

Australia agrees to take as many Dutch internees as possible. Depends on what is available.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

CABLEGRAM.

SECRET.

NVP/BE.

O. 30407/8.

DECYPHER TO:

Dated 3rd December, 1945.

MR. MACMAHON BALL,
BATAVIA.

28.

Repeated to Proud, Singapore No. 1.

For Plumb.

Your 23.

Reference quota of evacuees.

Federal Government has been considering whole question. Minister for Immigration has stated that Government had agreed in principle to the reception for limited period for recuperative purposes of as many Dutch men, women and children from Indies as Australia's capacity to accommodate them would allow.

The question is under discussion with the Dutch who appear doubtful about the numbers involved. The initiative now lies with the Dutch in the matter.

Hotel and boarding house accommodation is seriously over-taxed in Australia and only available accommodation will possibly be in army camps. This aspect is being examined.

War Cabinet.
External Affairs (re draft 3.12/45)
Immigration.
Defence.

4th December, 1945.

R/S
K



SECRET

THE SECRETARY:

Dutch Consular Officials.
Dutch Evacuees.

With reference to your attached minute, I think I remember Pennink having also made tactless and embarrassing remarks to the press in regard to -

- (a) the ESPERANCE BAY movement;
- (b) the Dutch troops on the STIRLING CASTLE;
- (c) the use of Australian camps for Dutch evacuees.

He is also responsible for furnishing provocative reports to his Minister on Indonesian incidents in Sydney.

2. I have said to Mr. Calwell that we would prefer not to debate with Pennink in the press, and that the matter would be better handled by summoning Mr. Montijn, the Dutch Counsellor and appropriately representing our misgivings to him. He agreed.

3. Mr. Calwell is also concerned about Mr. Wessels, the Dutch Vice Consul in Melbourne. As I told you yesterday, the latter has been booking up large scale hotel and boarding house accommodation for Dutch evacuees in various parts of eastern Australia and, it seems, in and around the capital cities and at resorts. Mr. Calwell feels that this will create adverse comment against the Government, especially since many of our own prisoners of war and their families are seeking this type of accommodation for recuperative and other purposes. He also points to our acute housing position. He asks that when speaking to Montijn we inform the latter -

- (a) that the Dutch action in booking up hotels and boarding houses is viewed with disfavour;
- (b) that actually such action can only react against the Dutch in this country if Australians find themselves thereby deprived of accommodation;
- (c) that Wessels and others should make no further bookings and should not take up reservations already made;
- (d) that the Commonwealth has agreed to take in Dutch evacuees to the limit of our accommodation capacity - a term which contemplated the use of existing camp sites.

4. I have already reported having seen the Dutch Minister and Wessels in Melbourne on 30th November. The Baron is fully seized of the need to use camp facilities but I doubt whether Wessels is. He made much of the difficulty of obtaining food and staff for the camps but his Minister pointed out that an emergency existed and that these difficulties had to be overcome. When asked what he had done so far, Wessels said he had booked and was continuing to book accommodation for the 2,000 evacuees already here.

5.

Pangloss - K

5. The Dutch Minister said that he would ascertain how many evacuees it was desired to send here. I said that if we could be of any assistance in approaching the military authorities on his behalf for camp sites he should let us know. He was grateful for the offer of assistance.

6. I suggest that Mr. Montijn be called in this afternoon, told of Mr. Calwell's anxiety and requests and asked to indicate (a) how many evacuees the Dutch propose to bring in, (b) how they propose to provide for them and (c) how we can be of further assistance.

5.12.45.

After WWII many Australian pilots are without jobs, and constantly asking the Dutch. However, the Australian Government announced on November 10 1945 that no pilots of the RAAF can fly to Java

Daily Telegraph

29 November 1945

Airmen Apply For Dutch Jobs

Hundreds of ex-R.A.A.F. pilots had applied to the Netherlands Consulate for flying duties with the Dutch forces, the Consul General (Mr. J. D. D. Pennink) said yesterday.

Mr. Pennink said that the applications had been refused because his Government did not need pilots.

Australian pilots seeking any type of flying job were continually calling at the Consulate offices, he said.

Permission Refused

They had apparently heard groundless rumors that the Netherlands Government needed flyers in Java.

"Even if my Government did need pilots, the Australian Government would not grant permission for the men to leave Australia," he added.

[The Federal Government announced on November 10 that no members of the R.A.A.F. would be allowed to go to Java to serve with the Dutch.]

Members of the Consulate staff said that the pilots seemed dissatisfied at the prospect of returning to civilian life.

All were men in their early twenties, who said they were little more than office boys when they enlisted.

They had heard that the Dutch were offering high wages for transport and fighter pilots, and would rather continue flying at high wages than return to lowly-paid civil jobs.

Melbourne Herald. 29.11.45.

Should Give Asylum To NEI Evacuees Says ANA Chief

Australia should have no objection to the entry into the Commonwealth of 50,000 Dutch nationals for whom refuge is sought, the chief president of the Australian Natives' Association (Mr V. Dimelow) said today.

He was commenting on a report that the Australian Government representative in the Netherlands East Indies (Mr W. Macmahon Ball) had asked the Commonwealth to accommodate up to 50,000 evacuees in Australia.

"Every decent thinking person must sympathise with men, women and children whose safety is endangered by circumstances over which they have no control," Mr Dimelow said.

COMMON HUMANITY

"In most civilised countries — particularly English-speaking countries — people have realised that, in the interests of common humanity, they owe to people in acute danger the right, at least, of temporary asylum. This policy rightly has been adopted by the Australian Government during the war."

The president of the National Council of Women (Mrs Karl Kumm) said that if the plan were approved by the Government her members would welcome the opportunity to help in the evacuation of Dutch nationals.

Mrs Kumm said that, because the capital cities were overcrowded, accommodation should be sought in large provincial towns where food would be more readily available and emergency buildings

could be erected. She suggested, in particular, fruitgrowing districts and other areas where people had large vegetable gardens.

The president of the Australian Women's National League (Lady Knox) said it was Australia's bounden duty to assist Dutch nationals who were in such dire distress.

IN FILTHY GAOLS

Most Dutch women and children would continue to rot in gaols and prison camps in Java if they were not brought to Australia, said a Dutch woman doctor who arrived here with 129 former internees in the motorship Kota-Gede.

She was Dr. Hilde Messing, who, with two other women doctors, cared for 1400 people in the Batavia gaol and, with seven other women doctors, for 14,000 people in Bandoeng camp during the war.

Dutch women and children were still in filthy gaols and camps, and craved milk, eggs and butter to nourish their thin, weak bodies, she declared.

Their precarious supply of medicine and food could be cut off at any moment. Australia was about the only place where they could become normal.

Today's arrivals will spend four months in Victorian guest-houses and private villas before returning to Java.

ACCOMMODATION

The Vice-Consul for the NEI in Melbourne (Mr P. Wessells) said that, at the moment, the only suggestion to house the evacuees was to put them in Army camps, for which no staff would be available.

In Sydney today, the Netherlands Consul-General (Mr J. V. D. Pennink) said the people had been in the hands of Japanese for 3½ years, and would certainly not welcome the prospects of being put into unused Army camps in Australia. Camps should be used only as a last resort.

On correspondence between the Red Cross, Aus Government and NEI Government about Australia aiding in relief in the NEI

COPY

HET NEDERLANDSCH-INDISCHE ROODE KRUIS
Netherlands Indies Red Cross Society.

Temple Court,
422 Collins Street,
Melbourne.

26th November, 1945.

RK.3/5703

My dear Dr. Newman Morris,

I wish to refer to your letter of 7th November addressed to my assistant, Mr. Malcher, in which you acquainted us with the views of the Prime Minister, The Honourable J.B. Chifley, in regard to the request made in my letter of 12th October for assistance by the Australian Red Cross Society to the Netherlands Indies Red Cross Society in the shipment of relief supplies to Java and other parts of the Netherlands Indies.

I have not failed to acquaint the head office of the Netherlands Indies Red Cross Society in Batavia with the views expressed by the Australian Prime Minister in his letter to you dated 6th November, No.A.55/1/2. The Netherlands Indies Red Cross Society, in turn, has discussed this matter with the Netherlands Indies Government at Batavia, and I have now been instructed by the Chairman of the Netherlands Indies Red Cross Society at Batavia to inform you that the arrangement for the transportation and distribution of these supplies, as suggested after the conference held in your office on 8th November, is unacceptable to the Netherlands Indies Government.

You will recall that in my letter of 12th October I requested the co-operation of your Society re transportation under your responsibility of such relief supplies as needed by the population in Java and other parts of the Netherlands Indies, leaving it to your Society's discretion which kind of goods should be shipped first, and which goods could then be made available to you from stocks of comforts parcels, foodstuffs and clothing of every description now held in Australia on behalf of the Netherlands Indies Government.

I added that we would be willing to place such relief supplies from our stocks at the disposal of the Australian Red Cross Society under a gentleman's agreement that such stocks would come temporarily under your control for the sole purpose of transporting them to Java in a manner to be mutually decided upon, under the condition that such stocks would be delivered to representatives of the Netherlands Indies Red Cross Society in a port or ports in the Netherlands Indies to be designated by us. Our Society would, of course, hold itself responsible to the Australian Red Cross Society for all costs involved in this matter.

After receipt of the letter from the Prime Minister of Australia, your Society has enlarged on my suggestion and has intimated that it would be willing to assist us under the following conditions:-

- (1) We will work together as a joint International Red Cross team to take whatever steps are necessary to relieve distress in N.E.I.

- (2) All the goods supplied shall be clearly marked as Red Cross goods, not for sale, but for free distribution without discrimination, to any human being in need, regardless of race, colour or creed.
- (3) These arrangements will extend to personal service in the distribution of the goods and Australian Red Cross will supply three (3) teams with special skills who will work under whatever authority is agreed upon by S.E.A.C.
- (4) Australian Red Cross is prepared to arrange for the chartering of the ships and will supply the relief teams, the Netherlands Indies Government to pay for the goods.

In reply to this, the Netherlands Indies Government has stated that, although it would welcome the co-operation between the Australian and the Netherlands Indies Red Cross Societies, it cannot agree to free distribution of the goods involved because, for the speedy return to normal economic conditions, it is necessary to supply goods in return for services or money to be earned with such services. It goes without saying that in specific needy cases the goods would be supplied without asking for payment, but this procedure should not become a general policy within the entire relief and rehabilitation programme for the Netherlands Indies but remain an exception to the general rule, that the availability of supplies and consumer goods should be an inducement for the speedy return to normal conditions.

In view also of the great number of Netherlands Indies personnel being available in Java and other centres for distribution of relief supplies, it was also deemed unnecessary that the Australian Red Cross should supply three teams for this purpose in the Netherlands Indies.

I am afraid that the difference of opinion which seems to exist on these important points precludes the possibility of the conclusion of an arrangement between the Australia and the Netherlands Indies Red Cross Societies for the bringing of relief supplies to the Netherlands Indies, but in case your Executive might consider that the abovementioned conditions as laid down in the conference held in your office on November 8 are not essential to your co-operation being given for the purpose stated in my letter of 12, I shall be glad to be at your disposal for any further consultations on this subject.

In the meantime, I would like to use this opportunity to thank you for the trouble you have taken in considering this matter as fully as you have done.

And remain,

Most sincerely yours,

(sgd.) J. van HOLST PELLEKAAN.

Representative in Australia for the
Netherlands Indies Red Cross Society.

Dr. J. Newman Morris,
Chairman, Australian Red Cross Society,
National Headquarters,
122 Flinders Street,
MELBOURNE. C.I.

Australian Government explaining that they would not displace Australians from hotels and boarding houses for the Dutch, and instead that they will be put into camps

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

THE SECRETARY:

Dutch Evacuees.

I asked Mr. Montijn, the Dutch Counsellor, to call this afternoon when I explained to him as tactfully as possible the Government's views and wishes on the booking of hotel and boarding house accommodation for their evacuees. He will pass these on to his Minister and to the appropriate Dutch officials. He accepted our approach in the right spirit and was altogether friendly.

I also spoke in a general way about Dutch recovered prisoners of war and internees. Mr. Montijn is still awaiting a figure from the N.E.I. Government authorities which he can submit to us to examine. I gave him tentatively some estimate of the camp capacity that has so far been notified to us by Social Services (roughly 14,000).

JCAK.
10.12.45.

Acty J. J. J. J.

John J. J. J.

Done
10/12

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

THE SECRETARY:

DUTCH EVACUEES.

Mr. Calwell dined with the Prime Minister last night. The P.M. has authorised the following request, which we will have to make, to the Dutch Legation :

- (i) Any accommodation space which they have booked up in advance at hotels and boarding-houses etc. to be immediately cancelled.
- (ii) no Australians are to be put out of hotels or boarding-houses for the Dutch.
- (iii) Any evacuees who enter Australia in future to go into camps.

I saw Mr. Montijn yesterday, but kept off the above since I suspected and subsequently confirmed that Social Services had in a number of respects been involved in the booking up of Hotel and boarding-house accommodation in the past. I shall see Mr. Montijn again today and make the appropriate request to him.

JCAK.
7.12.45.

The current state of Indonesia, especially Java, around 9/10th December 1945, especially in regards to Dutch residents

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. **SECRET.**

JW/JT
CABLEGRAM. I. 38110
LHQ NRS797
DATED 9th December, 1945.
RECEIVED 10th December, 1945.

DECRYPTER FROM -
K. C. PLUMB ESQ.,
BATAVIA.

IMMEDIATE.

28. Repeated to Proud, Singapore.

Your telegram 33.

RAPWI state that they have located approximately 180,000 APWI in Java but that the number may be further increased if and when Allied forces enter areas still under Indonesian control. About 110,000 of them are still living in internment camps, the remainder, less of course comparatively few from Java, have been accommodated outside the camps.

The present food rations sustain life but are insufficient to materially assist physical rehabilitation of former internees. The British occupation forces are providing British Army field rations to APWI in Batavia, Bandoeng, Buitenzorg and Semarang on the basis of one quarter of the normal ration to each person. This is supplemented by such foodstuffs as can be obtained from Japanese stocks and from local sources but such supplies are not constant. For example no fresh vegetables can be procured for Batavia APWI at present. In Sourabaya APWI are living solely on Japanese food stocks and on supplies obtained locally. The victualling problem there will increase now that large numbers of Indonesians and Chinese residents are returning to the city following its complete occupation by the British. They will make serious inroads into supplies.

There is a particular need for canned fruit juices, fruits, milk and vegetables, which are necessary to restore ex-internees, of whom 80 percent are women and children, to normal health.

Clothing for women and children suitable for this climate is required urgently. I understand the Dutch have large stocks of clothing and food accumulated in Australia which cannot be shipped to Java. There is sufficient clothing here for the men.

Medical supplies are stated by RAPWI to be adequate.

Christison is most anxious that he be relieved of responsibility for feeding former internees so that he may devote his resources to military purposes. Prior to the collapse of Japan the intention was that British forces would provide 30 days' rations for APWI after which the Dutch would assume responsibility but subsequent political developments negated that plan.

War Cabinet
Defence
External Affairs
Army

10/12/45

59/28

10 DEC 1945

National Archives of Australia NAA: A1838, 401/3/6/1/8

Number of Dutch accommodated in Australia – Camp Columbia, hotel, guests houses etc. This shows that as of 11th December 1945 Camp Columbia was housing the most Dutch

• TEL. MU 5926
ALL COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD BE
ADDRESSED TO THE DIRECTOR-
GENERAL, BOX 434, G.P.O., MELBOURNE
IN YOUR REPLY PLEASE QUOTE
1130/

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES.
KINNAR HOUSE, 114 KING STREET,
MELBOURNE.

DEPARTMENT OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
13 DEC 1945
11th December, 1945.
No.

The Secretary,
Department of External Affairs,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

Dutch Nationals at present in Australia.

In reply to telephoned enquiry by Mr. Kevin to
Mr. Coleman of this Department on 7th December, 1945, regarding
the number of Dutch nationals who are accommodated in Australia,
the following information supplied by the Vice Consul of the
Netherlands is forwarded:-

(a) Number accommodated in Army Camp sites -
Camp Columbia (Q'ld.) 400

(b) Number accommodated in hotels and guest houses,
W.A. - 450. S.A. 50. Vic. 700. N.S.W. 150.

(c) Total accommodated (a) and (b) above up to
17th November, 1945 - 1750.

F.H. Rowe
(F.H. Rowe)
Director-General

Kevin
Copy referred to Acting Secretary, Department of Immigration,
14.12.45.

National Archives of Australia
NAA A1838 401/3/6/1/8

About availability of space for Dutch nationals to stay in Australia – apparently 10,000 can be held in camps

THIS PAGE IS REPRODUCED FROM A BADLY FADED OR ILLEGIBLE SOURCE.
SCANNING THIS ITEM AT A HIGHER RESOLUTION WILL NOT IMPROVE ITS LEGIBILITY.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

CABLEGRAM.

SECRET.

MOST IMMEDIATE

ME/MP. 38613.
56133.
Dated 14th December, 1945.
Decypher from: 1218.
Received 16th December, 1945.

The Australian Government Representative,
SINGAPORE.

29. MOST IMMEDIATE.

Reference your telegram 35 December 12th repeated Club.

S.A.C.S.E.A. are pressing me regarding the number of Dutch refugees you are willing to accept in Australia.

Understand from Benot up to 10,000 can be accommodated in ex military camps. S.A.C.S.E.A. wish to know urgently if this is a firm figure and agree to by the Dutch as they wish to make use of immediate available shipping. Can you impress on the Dutch and Social Services the necessity for immediate decision.

Request immediate information regarding conditions under which they will be accepted and admission of Malaria patients.

War Cabinet.
Min. & Dept. Immigration.
External Affairs.
Social Services.
Defence.

15th December, 1945.

PI.

National Archives of Australia

NAA: A1838, 401/3/6/1/8

SACSEA is requiring that Australia take 50,000 Dutch people in. (SACSEA = Supreme Allied Command, South-East Asia)

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.
CABLEGRAM. **SECRET.**

NO 11 I. 38751
DECIPHER FROM: 8C170/P
Dated 15th December, 1945
1506
J.C.R. PROUD ESQ., Read. 16th December, 1945
AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE,
SINGAPORE.

MOST IMMEDIATE:
No. 31.

Further to my telegram 29. Numbers of
Rapwi to be evacuated to all Countries is being decided by
S.A.C.S.E.A. not the Dutch Authorities. The present
requirements approximately 50,000.

Under these circumstances they consider it
unnecessary to obtain any figures from the Dutch in Australia.
Can you advise immediately how many Australia could absorb.

We can see no objection here to Rapwi
running the camps on the basis of self help.

WAR CABINET
DEFENCE
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
IMMIGRATION
16th December, 1945

*Phoned Mr. Mordy. Impressed upon him the importance of getting
warfare from off. He was also called on and asked.
I said, "And it is assumed that camps would be
acceptable." He said not for long. He said that
must be hotels or boarding houses or camps with servants.
He said Europeans could not be expected to live
by other way.*
K16/12

National Archives of Australia NAA: A1838, 401/3/6/1/8

About the agreements to have Dutch evacuees recuperate in Australia. Aus Gov had agreed on 6,000 with accommodation permitting, while SACSEA needs countries to take around 50,000. This letter states that more than 10,00 would go beyond both Australia's accommodation and food capacity

DRAFT.

FOR CABINET:

EVACUEES FROM NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES.

On November 29th, following official and other reports of the acute distress prevailing among released internees and prisoners of war in Java, the Minister for Immigration and Information announced that the Commonwealth Government was agreeable in principle to the reception for a limited period for recuperative purposes of as many Dutch men, women, and children, from the N.E.I. as Australia's capacity to accommodate them would allow. He indicated that in view of the grave housing shortage here, camp areas would probably have to be used for the evacuees.

2. The Commonwealth Government had previously agreed to accept 6,000 Dutch evacuees, subject to accommodation being available and to the erection of special buildings not being involved. Up to 17th November last, the Netherlands authorities here had availed themselves of this offer to the following extent:-

- (a) Accommodated in Army camps
400 in Camp Columbia, Queensland (they have not availed themselves of Camp Casino and Camp Darley which have been available to them);
- (b) accommodated in hotels and boarding houses -
1,350, dispersed as follows: W.A. 450; S.A. 50; Victoria 700; N.S.W. 150.

3. On 16th December last, the Australian Political Representative with SACSEA at Singapore stated that the number to be evacuated from the N.E.I. is now being decided by Admiral Mountbatten and that the present requirement is to evacuate 50,000 who would be sent to various countries able and willing to accept them. Our representative asked to be informed immediately as to the number Australia could

55000. 11/11/41

4. Prior to this signal/ from our Representative, the Commonwealth offer, ~~as made~~ by Mr. Calwell, had been formally notified to the Netherlands Minister on 30th November, with the request that he submit a figure which could be examined in the light of the camp accommodation and other facilities available in Australia. Despite ~~the~~ repeated approaches, this figure has not been forthcoming, Dutch officials claiming that they are still awaiting advice from the Netherlands authorities in Java. ~~It is not unfair to say that the Dutch authorities both here and in the N.E.I. appeared to be less concerned than our own authorities about the distressing circumstances in which their own nationals find themselves.~~

5. The Australian Political Representative at Singapore considers that since the question of evacuation is now being handled by SACSEA, we need not wait upon the Dutch. Both Admiral Mountbatten and he are anxious for urgent advice, as it is desired to make use of immediately available shipping.

6. Enquiries indicate that sufficient camp accommodation could be immediately obtained ~~and~~ ⁱⁿ Western Australia, Queensland, Victoria, and New South Wales, to accommodate from ~~some~~ 10,000 to 12,000 evacuees. Enquiries of Food Control ~~list~~ ^{check} the ~~information~~ ^{reply} that the reception of 10,000 would not be beyond the capacity of our food supplies, although our surplus for export would of course be affected.

7. There are strong humanitarian reasons in favour of the Commonwealth doing whatever ^{is} possible to assist these Dutchmen, women, and children; ~~whose~~ ^{the} condition is reported by Mr. McMahon Ball, an eye-witness, to be pitiful. There are also reasons favouring reception which ~~derive~~ ^{are} from the fact that Australia is the nearest white country to the N.E.I. with suitable climate and facilities. Finally, there are reasons of policy which make it desirable for us to show a readiness to ~~assist in the recuperation of the evacuees.~~ ^{assist in the case of the evacuees.}

8. It is submitted for the approval of Cabinet that the Australian Political Representative at Singapore, who

already knows of our ^{agreement in principle} readiness to accept evacuees to the limit of our accommodation capacity, be informed ^{of} the following terms -

your 29 and 31. You should inform SACSEA that we can receive up to 10,000 Dutchmen, women, and children, subject to the following -

- (a) ^{Sent with formal assurance to Dutch} ~~the need for an understanding from the Dutch~~ ^{should be obtained by SACSEA} ~~SACSEA arrange with Dutch authorities to furnish~~ ^{authorities that they will assume all responsibility for the reception, care, and maintenance of the evacuees and for all costs; excluding ^{actual} camp sites which we ^{would} make available ~~free of charge~~}
- (b) ~~the need to exclude tubercular and v.d. cases~~ ^{must be included} as well as those requiring hospitalisation and those who are bedridden, infirm, blind, or unable to look after themselves. We have no available sanatoria even for our own people and hospital accommodation is severely ^{over} taxed ^{Medical staff} ~~difficult to find~~ ^{staff for camps}
- (c) medical examination before ~~departure~~ embarkation;
- (d) the term Dutch can ~~if~~ if necessary, be read as including Eurasians, but we are anxious ^{as far as possible} to keep the entries to whites;

~~Please impress upon SACSEA~~ ^{you must stress upon} ~~as well as on the Dutch~~ ^{authorities} authorities concerned in any movement ^{here}, that the all arrangements must necessarily be left to them. The movement will presumably be spaced, but will nevertheless be a large one involving them ^{in a good deal of hard work and preparation} ~~in a good deal of hard work and preparation~~. Merely to land these people ^{here} is now enough and this should be stressed.

The capacities of current camps in Australia – especially Cowra, Harvey and Mt Martha

TEL. MU 5926.
COMMUNICATIONS SHOULD BE
SENT TO THE DIRECTOR.
GENERAL "B" 434. G.P.O., MELBOURNE.
IN YOUR REPLY PLEASE QUOTE
No. 223/.....

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA.
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES,
KINNAR HOUSE, 114 KING STREET.
MELBOURNE,.....18th December,.....1945.

The Secretary,
Department of External Affairs,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

DEPARTMENT OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
19 DEC 1945
No.

EVACUEES FROM NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES.

With reference to your memorandum of 11th December,
and to the discussions Mr.Egan had with Mr.Kevin concerning
the abovementioned subject, I desire to confirm the information
given regarding camp facilities.

Location and type of accommodation available.

COWRA Prisoner-of-war camp is now available for disposal.
The camp has a hutted capacity of 4,000, with all
facilities, and is sewerred.

HARVEY Hutted camp with all facilities other than sewerage,
is also available for disposal. This camp has a
capacity of 1,000.

MT.MARTHA Tented camp with hutted facilities, has a capacity
for 4,500.

With additional minor accommodation, it is thought there would
be available camp capacity for about 10,000 persons. It is
not known what facilities in way of blankets, kitchen utensils,
etc. are available, but enquiry is being made into this aspect,
and further advice will be furnished as soon as possible.

With regard to hospital accommodation, it is thought
the Air Force hospitals at Wagga and Tocumwal would very likely
become available in the near future, although it has not been
possible to obtain a definite statement from the R.A.A.F. in
this regard. Both hospitals have 150 beds. There is also a
possibility that a 400 bed hospital at Townsville will become
vacant in the near future.

The following is an extract from a report prepared by
the Chief Liaison Officer of this Department relative to some
additional aspects of this question discussed over the telephone
by Colonel Coleman with Mr.Kevin, viz. -

"It was also requested that the following information
be supplied:-

(a) Number of Dutch nationals who have already arrived
in Australia?

(b) Number accommodated in Army Camps?

(c) Number accommodated in other than Army Camps?

On 7th December, I interviewed Mr.Wessels, Vice Consul
of the Netherlands and discussed the question referred to in

Copy sent Mr. Pte. 29/12 /paragraphs

MR KEVIN

National Archives of Australia NAA: A1838, 401/3/6/1/8

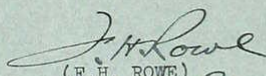
2.

paragraphs 4 and 5 above. Regarding paragraph 5 (a.b.c.) the following information is submitted -

- (a) 1750
- (b) 400 in Camp Columbia (Queensland)
- (c) Perth 450, Adelaide 50, Victoria 700, New South Wales 150

Mr. Wessels explained that as the Dutch nationals arriving in Australia were being accommodated with the object of recuperating them to health, after their sojourn in Japanese prison camps, and the fact of accommodating them in disused Army Camps would not be very beneficial to them, when it is considered that most of them have spent long periods in concentration camps, and that Army camps in the main were erected for temporary accommodation of troops and generally speaking are not suitable for mixed sexes and children, if the withdrawal of civilians from N.E.I. was part of an evacuation plan, then the use of Army Camps would be necessary. At the present time the Dutch authorities have established a reception staff in each State, who deal with reception, transport, medical attention and pay of all Dutch ex-internees on and after their arrival. I am advised that no difficulty is being experienced in the distribution of food or clothing coupons to the ex-internees. The Dutch authorities also have a number of Welfare Workers with their Red Cross sections. I am also informed that a complete medical staff, consisting of doctors, dentists, nurses and orderlies are expected to arrive in Australia shortly, but difficulty is being experienced in obtaining a suitable establishment in Victoria to form a hospital. At present the Dutch authorities are not in a position to say what numbers of nationals are expected to arrive in Australia, and are seeking that information from the Netherlands Indies."

In any discussions that have taken place up to the present between this Department and the Dutch authorities relative to the reception of Dutch nationals from Java, it has been made clear by the Dutch authorities that they have their own organisation for dealing with the reception, accommodation, transport, etc. of all Dutch ex-internees and nationals arriving in Australia for recuperation and that they attend to their own financial arrangements. It seems desirable that arrangements should be made on these lines in the event of any further nationals being sent to this country for rehabilitation.


(F.H. ROWE)
Director-General.

Information about the RAPWI being taken in – what the Dutch would have to pay for, what Australia would supply etc. (RAPWI = Recovery of Allie Prisoners of War and Internees)

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

CABLEGRAM.

SECRET.

MP.

I. 39457.
XP015.
Dated 24th December, 1945.
1946.
Rec'd 25th December, 1945.

Decypher from:
The Australian Government Representative,
SINGAPORE.

55. From Proud.

At a meeting called at S.A.C.S.E.A. today the Netherlands Representative, General Weyelma stated that he would accept in principle the Australian conditions for entry of R.A.P.W.I. on behalf of his Government, but asked for elucidation of the following points.

1. Would the Dutch have to staff all camps themselves? I informed the General that so far I knew he must take it that the Dutch would have to supply all staff for camps.

2. Would the Australian Government be able to supply transport for the R.A.P.W.I. in Australia to camps? I said I would request information on this subject and it was possible that certain army transport might be made available.

3. Would the Dutch authorities be able to purchase the necessary supplies for camps in Australia? Could such supplies be transported to camps by Australian authorities? I mentioned that I believed it was possible that certain Dutch relief supplies to Australia could be allocated for this purpose but I thought it would be understood they could purchase supplies on the Australian Mainland.

4. Would the R.A.P.W.I. be able to obtain employment in Australia or accept employment if it were offered to them? I said I would have to refer this matter to the Commonwealth Government.

5. I should be grateful if you could let me know as soon as possible the Commonwealth Government's final answers to these four points as it is possible that a ship will be made available to carry civilian R.A.P.W.I. to Australia in the next 14 days. I should also like clarification as to the location and the types of camps (see my telegram 44) and whether camps are hatted or tented.

6. The problem of medical examination before embarkation is a most difficult one as there is a shortage of medical officers in this theatre. However, it was agreed that it would be undertaken jointly by S.A.C.S.E.A. and such medical officers as the Dutch could provide. The question was raised whether individual medical certificates would have to be provided for each person and I stated I took it that this would be so.

War Cabinet.
Defence.
External Affairs.
Min. & Dept. Immigration.

26th December, 1945.

National Archives of Australia

NAA: A1838, 401/3/6/1/8

SACSEA finding more accommodation for Dutch in Australia than what is available in camps. With a plan on sending 6000 by the middle of January 1946 and 2000 a month after. The figures were raised by SACSEA to 22,000.

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.		SECRET.
CABLEGRAM.		
DEB:NO'N	I.39553	
DECIPHER FROM:	Dated 27th December, 1945	8C107
R.J.C. PROUD ESQ.,	Recd. 28th December, 1945	2140
AUST. GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE,		
SINGAPORE.	<u>IMMEDIATE.</u>	
<p>56. S.E.A.C. Liaison Staff have advised SACSEA that Holst Felekaan states they are moving to Australia as many Rapwi as can be accommodated other than in camps. Estimated 6000 by middle of January and 2000 a month thereafter. Target figures are 22,000 and civil accommodation only will be used. Approximately 25 per day are arriving by air and hospital ship TASMAN is proceeding to Java to lift 700.</p> <p>There is considerable confusion here as to whether --</p> <p>(A) The Australian Government is aware of this apparent independent Dutch action;</p> <p>(B) Whether the figure 10,000 is in addition to any number that may be moved by the Dutch independently;</p> <p>(C) If the Dutch can accommodate 22,000 in places other than camps, whether they also require camp accommodation for 10,000;</p> <p>Suggest you should contact Brigadier Bency and Holst Felekaan and after consultation advise me as suggested in paragraphs (A), (B) and (C).</p> <p>Further that until Policy is finally decided the Dutch authorities should be informed that all moves of Rapwi to Australia must be approved by the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>MIN. AND DEPT. OF E.A. MIN. AND DEPT. OF IMMIGRATION MIN. AND DEPT. OF SOCIAL SERVICES</p> <p>28th December, 1945</p>		

This undated letter confirms that Camp Columbia was being used as a go-between, where Dutch people from Indonesia were passing through before being housed in Australia for recuperation from war.

FOR THE SECRETARY.

DUTCH EVACUEES.

Mr. Peters has been in touch with Holst Pelikaan regarding Proud's telegram. Holst Pelikaan claims that Proud's statements are entirely without foundation. He says that up to the present he has been receiving on an average of twenty-five to thirty Dutch evacuees who are arriving here each day by air. He is accommodating them temporarily in Camp Columbia, Brisbane, and from there he is spreading them out in hotels, boarding houses, and a number of unused establishments, which he has taken over.

Mr. Peters appears to have known nothing of these arrivals or arrangements. We certainly knew nothing of them. When I asked Peters how the arrivals and arrangements were reconciled with Calwell's strong stand against the Dutch using other than Army camps, he said that Holst Pelikaan stated this morning that he had been in touch with Mr. Calwell and "had satisfied him" on what was being done. He had also written to Mr. Calwell. I asked Mr. Peters to get in touch with Mr. Calwell, and ascertain precisely what conversations he had had with the Dutch.

Holst Pelikaan told Mr. Peters that he has made no arrangements to bring in any large number of evacuees. He has done nothing whatsoever about camp accommodation.

I impressed upon Mr. Peters that the answers to Proud's telegram on this subject are primarily a matter for him and Social Services, and that we awaited his replies. The same remark applied to the British Government's enquiry, about shipping.

This letter outlines the different number of evacuees permitted by the Australian Government – and why people are saying different numbers.

FILE COPY

CK.RGR

31st December, 1945.

MEMORANDUM for:

The Acting Secretary,
Department of Immigration,
CANBERRA.

DUTCH EVACUEES.

You will observe from his telegram of December 27th, that the Australian Government Representative at Singapore is somewhat confused as to the number of evacuees the Commonwealth is willing to accept, one reason for his uncertainty being the movement of some twenty-five evacuees to Australia each day by Mr. van Holst Pelikaan. He refers to a reported Dutch target of 22,000 and to the accommodation of the evacuees in other than camp areas.

2. On December 19th, Mr. Proud was informed, at the instance of your Department, that the Minister for Immigration was agreeable to the temporary admission of up to 10,000 evacuees subject to (a) assumption of all responsibilities by the Dutch; (b) the exclusion of certain medical categories. He had already, on December 12th, been told that camp areas in Australia would have to be used for the evacuees and that the Netherlands authorities here had been asked to furnish a figure of evacuees which could be examined in the light of suitable camp areas available and other facilities.

3. Since the matter is under active and apparently urgent consideration by Admiral Mountbatten, you will no doubt wish to transmit through this Department a reply to Mr. Proud's queries of December 27th and a reply also to the queries contained in his telegram of 20th and 24th December. Copies of these telegrams have been referred to you and to the Department of Social Services with whom you are presumably in consultation.

4. You will also have seen two telegrams from the Dominions Office of December 19th, one of which enquires whether it would be in accordance with the wishes of the Commonwealth and New Zealand Governments if they supported, vis a vis the United States, a Netherlands Government request for the allocation of shipping space required for the move of 15,000 evacuees to Australia and New Zealand. It will no doubt be desired also to send through this Department a definitive reply to this enquiry.

5. You will readily appreciate our interest in the development of this matter which bears directly on the Commonwealth's political relations with the Netherlands Government and on our relations with the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia Command. Any further assistance which this Department can give in discussions with the Netherlands authorities or in implementing your decisions through the Australian Government Representative at Singapore will be offered most readily. *We do rely upon you, however, the importance of the Dutch authorities putting forward a firm plan so that all concerned will know the way.*

Secretary.

This letter confirms that 10,000 Dutch evacuees will be housed in Australia. With 3,000 already present (unknown date), and 1,000 arriving each month.

DRAFT CABLEGRAM TO AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVE, SINGAPORE.

Your telegrams 44, 55 and 56 - As there appears to be some confusion in regard to arrangements for movement of Dutch evacuees from Java to Australia for recuperation purposes, you are advised that the position is briefly as follows. Minister for Immigration agreed that Dutch authorities could introduce evacuees up to the limit which could be suitably accommodated. Stop. Owing limited extent suitable accommodation in sight, present target is up to 10,000 under conditions already known to you. This number includes 3,000 who have already arrived.

Mr. Van Holst Pellekaan, Netherlands Trade Commissioner, Melbourne, is in charge arrangements for reception, accommodation and care these evacuees. He states under present conditions can place approximately 1,000 a month, that evacuees are being brought to Australia by Dutch planes on average thirty daily, and that he has co-operation of Rapwi organisation at Batavia and Singapore in regard to personnel selected for despatch to Australia.

He is negotiating with Army, Air and Navy ^{here with accommodation to enable number to be increased} view endeavouring secure additional ~~monthly quota~~ from beginning next month. He knows nothing of estimated numbers referred to in first paragraph your telegram 56.

He states Hospital Ship "Tasman" now on way to Java has been allocated to carry evacuees to New Zealand, approximately 700 a month.

Regarding your telegram 55, you could suggest that Netherlands Representative, General Weysiman, should communicate with Van Holst Pellekaan who could advise ^{you him} fully of arrangements he has made this end. *QZ*

45/2/1647

KR

4th January, 1946.

The Secretary,
Department of External Affairs,
(External Communications),
CANBERRA, A.C.T.

I am directed to request that you will kindly
arrange for a cablegram to be sent to the secretary of state
for Dominion Affairs, London, in the following terms:-

" SECRET. (Repeat to Prime Minister, New Zealand, and
Australian Political Representative, Singapore.)

Your telegram No. 534 of 19th December, Netherlands
Indies evacuees - Dutch authorities in Australia who are
responsible for reception and accommodation of evacuees
are introducing from 600 to 800 persons a month by
Dutch planes which is limit their capacity by this means.
They have already introduced 3000 and present target
is 10000.

From end this month they state they will be able
provide accommodation for approximately 2000 monthly
and would greatly appreciate shipping enable approximately
1000 to be brought by sea if possible at end January and
thereafter 1000 each month for February, March and April.

Commonwealth government would support approach to
the United States government for allocation shipping
space to bring Dutch evacuees to Australia, provided
present shipping allocated for repatriation of Australian
service personnel is not interfered with."

(A.R. PETERS)
Acting secretary.

This Cipher message discusses the position of people in NEI as being in three categories. The most important for the Australian Government to help is those who cannot return to their homes for being Dutch etc.

A.A.F. C121 (large) (Revised June, 1944) L.H.Q. Pages 2308-10/45-5m.		AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES		SERIAL No. 32282
CIPHER MESSAGE				
THIS message will not be distributed outside British or U.S. Government Departments or Headquarters or retransmitted, even in cipher, without being paraphrased. (Messages marked O.T.P. need not be paraphrased)				
SACSEA		DATE—Time of Origin		
FROM		CABINET OFFICE		
		FOR ACTION		
TO		JSM WASHINGTON JCOSA MELBOURNE		
		FOR INFORMATION		
IMMEDIATE				
SEACOS 604. TOP SEC				
FOR COS FROM MOUNT BATTEN. IT IS NOT YET POSSIBLE TO PREDICT THE SITUATION WHICH WILL OBTAIN IN NEI AFTER COURSE Y HAS BEEN COMPLETED. IT MAY BE THAT CONDITIONS WILL BE SUFFICIENTLY TRANQUIL TO REDUCE REFUGEE PROBLEM VERY CONSIDERABLY. ON OTHER HAND IF COURSE Y DOES NOT ACHIEVE ITS OBJECTS THE POSITION MAY DETERIORATE RAPIDLY AND DISASTROUSLY AND VERY URGENT ACTION WILL BE REQUIRED TO SAVE LIVES OF MANY THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT I CONSIDER AT LEAST PRELIMINARY STEPS SHOULD BE TAKEN ALONG LINES INDICATED IN PARA 7 BELOW.				
2. THE DUTCH NATIONALS IN THIS THEATRE FALL UNDER THREE MAIN HEADINGS:				
(A) RAPLY RECOVERED FROM JAPS IN TERRITORIES OTHER THAN THEIR COUNTRY OF DOMICILE IN NEI AND WHO HAVE TO BE RETURNED ETC.				
(B) REFUGEES DEFINED AS PERSONS DRIVEN FROM AND PREVENTED FROM RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES AND OR COUNTRY OF DOMICILE BY CIRCUMSTANCES OVER WHICH THEY HAVE NO CONTROL. SEVERAL THESE PERSONS ARE MIXED DUTCH AND INDONESIAN DESCENT AND SOME ARE INDONESIAN.				
(C) IFU UNCAPTURED IN THEIR COUNTRY OF DOMICILE BUT WHOM WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO LEAVE IN HANDS OF UNFRIENDLY NATIVES. THE TOTAL OF PERSONS UNDER THESE HEADINGS VARY FREQUENTLY WITH FLUCTUATION IN SITUATION IN JAVA BUT AT MOMENT IS APPROXIMATELY 15 0000. THE FOREMOST PROBLEM CONCERNING REFUGEES IN (B) ABOVE IS TO MAINTAIN AND ACCOMMODATE THEM UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THEY CAN RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRY OF DOMICILE IN NEI. IT IS DESASTEROUS PLACE THEM IN SOME OTHER COUNTRY.				

National Archives of Australia NAA A1838, 401/3/6/1/8

ALTHOUGH IT IS CONSIDERED WRONG IN PRINCIPLE TO LOCATE LARGE NUMBERS OF EUROPEANS IN ORIENTAL TERRITORIES NOT EQUIPPED TO ABSORB THEM IT HAS BEEN NECESSARY TO ACCOMMODATE SUCH PERSONS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES IN SOUTH EAST ASIA COMMAND AS AN INTERIM MEASURE. THE GOVERNMENT CEYLON HAS AGREED TO ACCEPT 5000 BUT FOR SIX MONTHS ONLY. THERE ARE AT PRESENT 13000 IN SIAM AND IT IS PLANNED TO INCREASE THIS TO 17000. THE EFFECT ON SIAMISE ECONOMY OF RETENTION SUCH A NUMBER OF EUROPEANS IN SIAM FOR A CONSIDERABLE PERIOD MAY BE SERIOUS. THE REST 52000 NOW OUTSIDE JAVA ARE LOCATED MAINLY IN SINGAPORE (14000) AND SUMATRA (23000).

4. THE AUST GOVERNMENT HAS OFFERED TO ACCEPT 10000 IN CAMPS AND THE CONDITIONS OF ENTRY OF REFUGEES LAID DOWN BY AUST BASE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN EXAMINED HERE AND AGREED WITH DUTCH. IN ADDITION THERE HAS BEEN A STEADY TRICKLE FROM NETHERLANDS EAST INDIES INTO AUSTRALIA AND THE DUTCH STATE THEY HAVE MADE ARRANGEMENTS PRIVATELY FOR AND AN INDETERMINATE NUMBER UP TO 4500. THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT HAS ASKED THE TOTAL NUMBER WHICH CAN BE ACCEPTED IN THAT COUNTRY.

5. I CONSIDER THEREFORE ARRANGEMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE WHEREBY IN MOST FAVOURABLE CIRCUMSTANCES SOME 36500 REFUGEES CAN BE ACCOMMODATED ELSEWHERE THIS IS ONLY A SMALL BEGINNING TOWARDS SOLUTION WHOLE PROBLEM.

6. INFORMAL ENQUIRIES HAVE ALSO BEEN MADE BY DUTCH REGARDING ACCEPTANCE REFUGEES IN STH AFRICAL BUT NO REPLY HAS BEEN RECEIVED. FURTHER ENQUIRIES ARE ALSO BEING MADE AS TO ABILITY GOV AUST TO ACCEPT REFUGEES ADDITIONAL THOSE ENUMERATED IN PARA 4.

7. (CHIEF DUTCH RED CROSS OFFICIAL)* IN HIS SIGNAL 281045 NOV TO FOREIGN OFFICE URGED THAT USA AND BRITISH GOVS BE URGENTLY INVITED TO HELP LIX IN SOLVING DUTCH PROBLEM. I REQUEST THAT AGREEMENT BE OBTAINED OF USA GOV AND DUTCH GOVS AND POSSIBLE BRITISH COLONIAL GOVS WHO MIGHT BE ABLE ASSIST IN ACCEPTANCE DUTCH REFUGEES. FURTHER ONCE THE AGREEMENT IS OBTAINED I REQUEST PERMISSION THIS HQ TO MAKE PRELIMINARY DETAILED ARRANGEMENTS WITH GOVS CONCERNED WITH OBJECT PUTTING THEM IN FORCE SHOULD NECESSITY DEMAND.

8. ONLY WHEN THIS HAS BEEN DONE CAN I FORMULATE A PLAN FOR REMOVAL

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

TELEPRINTER MESSAGE

D.16 1638

TO SECRETARY DEPT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MELBOURNE
FROM SECRETARY DEPT OF THE ARMY MELBOURNE

REFERENCE YOUR 1338 OF 24TH DECEMBER.

IT IS DESIRED TO CONFIRM TELEPHONIC ADVICE TO MR HILL ON

28TH DECEMBER THAT PROVIDED THE SHIPPING AT PRESENT ALLOTTED IS
NOT INTERFERED WITH, THE EVACUATION OF DUTCH TO AUSTRALIA WILL
NOT AFFECT THE REPATRIATION OF AUSTRALIAN SERVICE PERSONNEL TO
AUSTRALIA.

MESSAGE ENDS 1639 7/1/46

RCD OK EX COMMS

DEPARTMENT OF
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Rec'd

7 JAN 1946

File No.

19th Jan 1946 – story from Bathurst of hotel rooms being booked out for Dutch evacuees, far before they arrive

"Daily Telegraph"

19 JAN 1946

COUNTRY HOTELS REAP HARVEST FROM DUTCH

BATHURST, Friday.—Bathurst publicans are getting a lot of easy money from the Dutch authorities handling the accommodation of expected refugees from Java.

Since November, Mr. Roy McSorley, proprietor of the Hotel Bathurst, has been receiving a cheque for £152 each week for 36 guests who haven't yet arrived.

The rooms are paid for by cheque for a week in advance, and have since been retained by payments from Sydney, sometimes covering a fortnight, but generally a week, in advance.

Mr. McSorley said today that 30 rooms at his hotel had been booked ahead to as far as June. When booked, the agents for refugees warned him they might arrive any time.

"My family has been in the hotel business for the last 50 years, and nothing like this has ever happened

to any of us. It's something you dream about."

Altogether more than £1500 has been paid to three leading Bathurst hotels in the last two months to keep a total of 35 rooms vacant for about 50 Dutch refugees, none of whom has put in an appearance.

Thirty rooms at the Hotel Bathurst and a couple of rooms each at the Royal Hotel and the Hotel Knickerbocker have been kept unoccupied since November.

A similar situation is believed to exist in a number of other towns in the West and on the Blue Mountains.

The rooms were booked in November by visiting Dutch authorities on behalf of Dutch nationals being evacuated to Australia from the Netherlands East Indies, before their repatriation to Holland.

*Mr Boal
has put in Dutch
evacuees
be
K*

A quick overview of a meeting of SACSEA concerning the Dutch evacuees (full minutes are in page 23 of this document on the NAA website) (ALFSEA = Allied Land Forces SE Asia)

P45/59/28.

4th February, 1946.

Memo. No. _____

The Secretary,
Department of Immigration,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

EVACUATION OF DUTCH R.A.P.W.I.

On 10th January the Australian Political Representative, SACSEA attended a meeting held at Headquarters, SACSEA to discuss the evacuation of Dutch R.A.P.W.I.

2. It was mentioned that in several instances the "mechanics" of evacuation had gone wrong. Mr. Proud pointed out that there would be considerable repercussions if the Dutch arriving in Australia included any who did not comply with the conditions specified by the Australian Government. He had been unable to obtain from ALFSEA or from the Dutch any information as to what medical examination was being carried out on those persons being evacuated by air to Australia through Dutch channels.

3. AFNEI have now been instructed by ALFSEA to ensure that these people are properly medically examined.

4. The Chairman stated that the total figure of Dutch to go to Australia on present plans was 10,000, and that they were at present proceeding in a steady flow, some 3,000 having arrived.

5. The Australian Political Representative remarked that, although General Weijerman had accepted in principle the conditions laid down by the Australian Government at the meeting held by the P&O on 24th December, 1945, no official confirmation of acceptance by the Dutch Government had been received. The Dutch representatives, subsequently, stated that they had asked for their Government's confirmation and two follow-up signals had been sent but no replies had been received. A further request stressing the urgency of the matter had been sent to Batavia.

6. Mr. Proud was asked if the Australian Government would accept medical certificates of Dutch doctors. He replied that the responsibility for this rested with the Command, and that if ALFSEA was prepared to accept these certificates, the Australian Government would also accept them. It was agreed that ALFSEA would make suitable arrangements with AFNEI and the Dutch to ensure that medical conditions were fulfilled.

7. The Chairman mentioned that a signal had been sent to the Chiefs of Staff asking them to approach other Governments with a view to finding homes for large numbers of Dutch now in SEAC should it become necessary at a later date to evacuate them. The signal, which had now been received from the War Office, allocated Dutch shipping for the evacuation of women and children from Java but mentioned no destination. It was said that the destination of these ships appeared to be Holland and that a lift of 12,000 personnel had been arranged. The Chairman said that the matter had been referred to London to ascertain what decision the Chiefs of Staff had, in fact, made but that, in the meantime, preparations for the movement to Holland should go ahead.

... /2

-2-

8. It was confirmed that all documentation and screening of personnel before movement was being carried out by the Dutch in conjunction with AFNEI and with the Australian Representative.

WED

WED

Secretary.

NETHERLANDS LIAISON OFFICER
NO. 2, R.A.P.W.I. CONTROL STAFF
RAFFLES QUAY, NO. 1
TEL. NOS. 7229 & 2454
SINGAPORE.

Nr. 1602/DP -- Singapore, 16th January 1946.

Bijlagen: None.
Enclosures

Onderwerp: Conditions by the Australian Government for
Subject: the acceptance of Dutch refugees.

The conditions as laid down by the Australian Government for the acceptance of Dutch refugees, and as specified below, have been agreed upon by the Government of the Netherlands Indies.

a. that the Dutch will assume all responsibility for the reception, care and maintenance of the evacuees and for all costs;

b. Tubercular and VD cases will be excluded as well as those required for hospitalization and those who are bed-ridden, infirm, blind or unable to look after themselves. (There are no available sanitoriums even for our own people and the hospital accomodation is severely over-taxed. Medical and other staffs for the camps will be extremely difficult, if not impossible to find.)

The long term objection is that in view of their condition, few of these cases once here will ever be able to leave.

c. that the people sent to Australia will be medical examined before embarkation.

for
Director of Justice of
Netherl. Ind. Govt.,
Dr. N.S. BLOM,
L. C. J. M. M. M. M.
L.T. COL.

Aan/To: HQ., Supreme
Allied Commander
South East Asia,
SINGAPORE.

A letter concerning the non-Dutch aliens entering Australia despite the Government demanding that only Dutch individuals are sent over. Mention of these non-Dutch aliens being held at Camp Columbia before being sent to accommodation.

Brisbane,
4th March, 1946.

The Deputy Director.

SUBJECT: NON-DUTCH ALIENS ARRIVING AT CAMP COLUMBIA, WACOL.

REFERENCE: G.1747/Z

I have to report with reference to the Non-Dutch Aliens arriving at Camp Columbia, Wacol from Netherlands East Indies.

2. The official of the N.I.W.O.E. have made repeated requests to their authorities in Batavia not to send other than Dutch Aliens to Australia and they state that the despatch of these evacuees is controlled by the R.A.P.W.I. which is an Allied organisation, who are responsible for the non-Dutch aliens being sent here.
3. The N.I.W.O.E. at Camp Columbia maintain these Aliens at the Camp for a limited period also make them a cash allowance of from £5 to £10 per person according to their financial circumstances and in addition the Dutch Authorities bear the expense of transport and maintenance en route to Australia. They claim that they should not be held responsible for the maintenance of these persons.
4. On 26/2/46 I interviewed a Mr. F. J. Shippers a member of the Rehabilitation Allied Prisoners of War and Internees organisation of Batavia, who is on an official visit to Camp Columbia and was informed that three chief officials of this organisation are British Officers and that this R.A.P.W.I. are responsible for sending other than Dutch Aliens to Australia.
5. It is significant that the majority of the non-Dutch evacuees are Jews and are all desirous of becoming permanent residents in Australia and no doubt have exploited every avenue of influence to get away from the N.E.I. and are not desirous of returning these owing to the racial trouble which exists there at present. Most of these persons have lived there for periods of up to 25 and 30 years and never made any attempt to become Dutch citizens. In fact it is suggested that some of them have made themselves out to be Dutch Nationals with a view to gaining a passage to this country.

From a R. Zulog (not sure who to) about the treatment of women and children by the Indonesian people after the end of the war – and her disappointment at Australia's lack of aid in the situation.

COPY TJC/MIL. P.M'S FILE No. Y.41/1/9.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF AUSTRALIA.

C/- Flying Doctor Service,
324 Queen Street,
BRISBANE.
14th March, 1946.

The Rt. Hon. J.B. Chifley, M.P.,
Prime Minister of Australia
CANBERRA.

Dear Sir,

I am enclosing an exact copy of a heart searching letter received by the President of the National Council of Women of Australia from a woman in Java. *re letter from Java*

It would not appear necessary for us to comment on the contents as they speak for themselves but we commend the letter to you for careful consideration.

Copy of the letter has also been sent to Dr. Evatt.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) HILDA BROTHERTON.
Hon. Australian Secretary.

ACKNOWLEDGED.

COPY - E.A.
S & S
IMMIGRA.

The Secretary,
Department of External Affairs.

Referred, by direction.

P *sent to Mr. Chifley 17/4/46* *W.K.*

9 APR 1948 *Strahan*
Secretary,
Prime Minister's Department.

National Archives of Australia NAA A1638 401/3/6/1/8

COPY

BANDEENG,
JAVA.

27th January, 1946.

Dear Madam,

One and a half years before the invasion of the Japanese in Java, Mrs. Walsh, the wife of the British Consul General in Batavia, invited me to have lunch with a group of men from the Australian Air Force.

That was the first time I came in contact with the Australian Fighting Forces. We had a most pleasant day, everybody was very pleased to have met each other and very sorry that the day was over and they had to leave.

From that day on I did nothing but organize party's of Dutch and English women to meet with private cars and buses, the groups of Australian or New Zealand men in Priok, who were passing through Batavia on their way to Malakka.

When more and more men came through Batavia, I started an Allied Canteen and the Dutch Army gave us our own bus, which was driven by other women and myself, with on all sides the flags of our Allied nations. The Canteen was every day crowded with soldiers, sailors and airmen. I personally have spoken with hundreds of men - several stayed for days in my house, and from the very beginning to the very end we all liked and respected them immensely. Sailors and soldiers alike; we found them kind, generous and very likeable. We know what good soldiers they were and felt deeply grateful for what they did and sorry for their wives and children to be left alone at home. We did what we could to make them feel at home with us and to show our gratitude. We even learned to sing "Waltzing Matilda" which we found not at all easy. In Soerabaya and Semarang they got the same enthusiastic reception. All Dutch people made the same resolution to see more of these pleasant Australian people and their country, after the war. We suddenly found out that we had friendly neighbours, close by, and that to know each other is to like each other, was very true.

I received countless letters from Malakka and from Australia where they said the same thing about us, and we believed them.

From Malakka they asked me for books and gramophones and records to help the men to get through the boring time war really is most of the time. I sent at least a thousand books, each book had a little picture in it, where a very grateful Dutchman with a friendly smile handed a book to an Australian soldier. I had group photo's made into postcards so that they could send them home by post as a pleasant surprise. One mother wrote me a very pathetic letter, she was ever so happy with that card showing her boy smiling and cheerful because he never came back.

I received hundreds of letters and I am very sorry that I can't show them any more, they were destroyed by the Japanese and I barely escaped being sent to prison on account of them.

In prison where I stayed the last ten months of the war, we had a terrible time. They beat us everyday, we got nearly mad from hunger. Several women had their hair shaved off in public and they were beaten by the native soldiers on the slightest occasion. In one camp they got two days without food and had to bury that same in the ground. They lived on water and a little sugar. We had no news and every day several women died and we had to stand by the gate and watch them going out of prison.

I don't know how many times I tried to console those who lost all hope to remember how near Australia was and that as soon as the war was over we could go to Australia and get rest and peace and good food and send our children there. I had received invitations from I don't know how many soldiers and sailors, who asked us to come to Australia after the war and see how grateful they could be.

They felt really too tired and weak to believe that fairy tale, but it was such a relief and such a pleasant secure feeling, that although our own people were far away, with nothing but enemy's around us, absolutely helpless and forgotten, there was at least Australia.

AND NOW !

Where are the men who liked us, and where are the men who remember us. Is this Australia? Where they keep the food we need so badly and encourage the Indonesians with their murdering of women and children. How many people died on account of this attitude of Australia. Why should a men's war be fought against women and children. That natives do that is one thing, but that our Australian friends do the same is quite another thing.

They tell us it is the Labour Party. Others say, that the dock workers refuse to load the ships. It must be impossible. A war is fought against men and with guns not with food and against women and children. And is there a war? Is it not over then? Why should all those prisoners of war, women, suffer still six months after the war if over. What have they done except endure impossible degradation, unspeakable humiliation, starvation, sickness and death. Is it for that, that the world calls us free, to have a war, when they felt so full of trust and friendship. It is such a stab in the back.

I appeal to any women of all women of Australia to clear this up. To do something for the women in Java. There are still hundreds in danger of their lives, treated worse than any enemy of ours ever did to us.

We could take our camps and prisons, we know our enemy and expected nothing better.

We can take this underground work of the Japanese. God will judge them and the Indonesians.

But we cannot take this attitude of Australia.

It is worse than anything that happened to us.

It is a deep psychological error from the people who are responsible.

I hope fervently that you may be able to do something for the women and children in Java who are still prisoners of war.

I remain dear Madam,

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) R. ZULOG.
ex-president Allied Canteen
ex-president V.A.C.
(women auto corps.).

