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SUBJECT: Report of accident on 26 June 1945 involving members of this Mission.

On the morning of 26 June 1945 Gerrit J. ten Hoor accredited American civilian and [] accredited Dutch civilian, both attached to this Mission, departed from this headquarters in Jeep No. 20147235 on the morning of 26 June 1945 with orders to proceed to Groningen, Holland for three days temporary duty on a field assignment. Since no traffic is permitted over the Afsluit Dijk (Zuiderzee Dike) while it is being used as a prisoner of war camp, it was necessary to proceed over the Amersfoort route to Groningen.

At 1900 hours on 29 June 1945, a telegram reached this headquarters from the Fifth Canadian Casualty Clearing Station near Amersfoort stating that Ten Hoor and [] had been involved in a jeep accident on 26 June 1945, that Ten Hoor was in their hospital and that [] had been sent to the First Canadian General Hospital in Nijmegen for treatment.

Upon receipt of above telegram, this officer in company with Lt. (USNR) William Spoelhof proceeded to Amersfoort and visited Ten Hoor who gave us the following report of the accident:

"We were proceeding along the main highway between Amersfoort and Nijkerk when the accident occurred. [] was driving. Previous to this time we had picked up a soldier of the Dutch Red Cross Auxiliary Corps, a Dutch Boy Scout and a Dutch Sea Scout. Just before reaching Nijkerk there is a railroad crossing intersecting the highway at an angle. As we came into that crossing, traveling at about forty miles an hour, suddenly the jeep lurched to the left side of the road and then began careening madly back and forth across the highway. Sensing that [] had lost control of the Jeep I jumped out, landing on my spine. Just before this the two Dutch scouts had jumped out. Then I remember seeing the jeep turn over once, coming to a stop right side up. I stood up and walked around still in a daze. My next impression was that of seeing both [] and Goettsch (the Red Cross boy) lying on the ground covered with blood. The other two Dutch boys had disappeared. The three of us were then carried to a barn near by where we were given first aid by the 23rd Canadian Advance Medical Unit, Tactical No. 77, stationed near Nijkerk.

* Members of the Dutch Red Cross Auxiliary Corps have semi-military status and an identification card requesting Allies to assist them.

This unit also took our jeep with the promise that they would hold it until called for. We were then brought here where Goettsch and I were put to bed and I was told that [] was to be taken to Nijmegen because a specialist was needed to sew up his ear. The two Dutch scouts apparently took off without further ado."

Leaving Ten Hoor we then went to Nijmegen to determine [] condition. He was not in the Canadian hospital but in the civilian St. Canisius Hospital, St. Annastraat 289. Since it was after midnight when we located him we were allowed to speak to him only for a few minutes, but were assured by the nurse that his injuries, while serious, were responding nicely to treatment.

On 1 July 1945 Lt. Spoelhof returned to Nijmegen and took the following statement from []

"We were traveling along the highway approaching the town of Nijkerk at a speed of about 40 miles an hour. I was driving. I had picked up a Dutch Red Cross soldier who was riding in front with Ten Hoor and myself, and two Dutch scouts who were riding in back. It was good weather. There was almost no traffic on the road and everything was going well. The next and only thing I remember was that suddenly the car swerved. I have no recollection of how the accident occurred nor of any further events until I regained consciousness and saw Ten Hoor walking around and Goettsch lying on a stretcher, raised on his elbow, and smoking a cigarette. My first thought was, at least these people are not badly hurt."

In so far as we have been able to determine, there were no witnesses to this accident outside of the occupants of the jeep involved. None of the occupants can account for the accident nor can they explain exactly what happened, but the people who came upon the scene after the accident found the jeep still on the road with a broken windshield, and damaged bumper and headlights. The road was lined with trees but the jeep did not collide with them though it may have grazed a tree, before coming to a stop on the highway. Ten Hoor stated that the jeep turned over once, landing on its wheels again. No one else can affirm or deny this. Presumably the two Dutch scouts could have given an account of the accident, but no one knows who they were nor where they went following the accident.

The jeep has been recovered and repaired. Damage was so slight as to be almost unexplainable if the jeep did, in fact, turn completely over.

We have made every attempt to arrive at a more detailed and conclusive report, waiting until the driver of the jeep had sufficiently recovered to give us a comprehensible account, but this is the extent of the facts revealed by our investigation.

The fact that we were not informed of this accident until the fourth day after it occurred, explains the fact that we were unable to reconstruct a more exact and documental account of the accident.

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The driver's accident report could not be filled in by the driver himself since his right arm and shoulder are in a cast, but the report was filled in by Lt. Spoelhof at the bedside of [] from the information given by the latter.

The injuries sustained by [] are covered by his personal insurance policy, the details of which will be submitted as soon as obtainable.

FRANK B. WELX
1st Lt. AUS
Commanding

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Diagram of ~~Accident~~ Scene of Accident

