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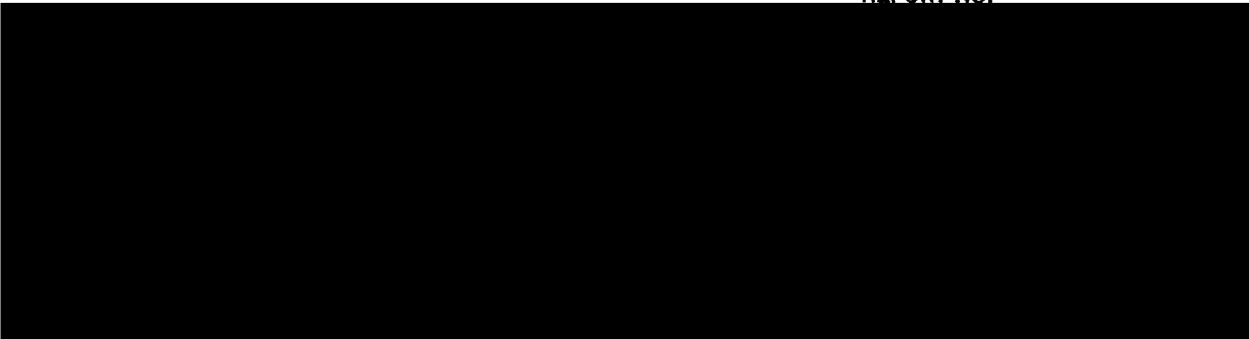
SUBJECT De Waarheid, The Official  
CPN Paper

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1. Originally published clandestinely under the German occupation, De waarheid (The Truth) now represents the CPN's most powerful propaganda medium for influencing the Dutch masses. Immediately following liberation, De Waarheid became the mouth-piece of the "Association of the Friends of De Waarheid", the CPN nucleus during the period May - October 1945, before the CPN was formally re-established. After the latter date, De Waarheid became the recognized CPN organ for the country and under the Party's direct control, with the editorial staff considered an executive arm of the Central Committee.
2. To force De Waarheid's editorial policy into strict conformity with Communist principles, the Editor-in-Chief, A. J. Koejemans, was replaced by Siegfried Baruch in 1947 and the latter, shortly thereafter, by Paul de Groot, Secretary General of the CPN, who occupied this post until the Communist reverses in the July 1948 elections. De Groot was then removed ostensibly to devote his full time to the affairs of the Central Committee of the Party. A. D. Schoonenberg succeeded him and remains to date the Editor-in-Chief.
3. De Waarheid is published by the Benepak Foundation, established in 1933 to encourage the Dutch working-class press by subsidies and by gratuitous advice and support to those daily, weekly and monthly papers and periodicals considered deserving by the directors. The Foundation obtains funds from voluntary donations, legacies, gifts and so forth. Currently its directors are: Paul de Groot, Secretary General of the CPN; Petrus Clerckx, a member of the CPN's Finance Committee once dismissed for embezzlement of funds of the pre-war CPN paper, De Tribune; Jacob C. Lisdonk, a member of the CPN's Central and Executive Committees; Gerben Wagenaar, a member of the CPN's Executive Committee; Jacob Brandenburg, an active CPN member; and Johannes F. Reuter, an important member of the CPN's Government Personnel Department in Amsterdam. The Foundation is financially responsible for De Waarheid, not the CPN, and is the owner of the Felix Meritis Building in Amsterdam, De Waarheid's new headquarters.
4. The immediate post-liberation circulation of De Waarheid reached the astonishing total of 400,000 copies daily which was far in excess of anticipated distribution and contributed to administrative difficulties later responsible for financial losses and the need for drastic reorganization. Poor management and second-rate journalistic talent are considered largely responsible for a rapid decline in

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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circulation which set in not long after the paper's initial success. By January 1947, copies distributed daily had dropped to 193,000, or less than half the original circulation, while by October of 1948 this figure had fallen to 139,000. Concurrently, the management reduced daily publication from 22 editions printed in 23 various cities, towns or districts to 7 editions, the contents of which were practically identical except for a small amount of local news.

5. The possible political consequences of these developments alarmed the CPN Central Committee and spurred it into adopting a campaign of mass meetings and other propaganda activities designed to reawaken public interest in De Waarheid and thereby to reverse the declining trend in circulation. Such efforts met with little success, however, as circulation continued to drop and the financial position of the paper deteriorated seriously, reflecting operating losses and expenses incurred in an ambitious expansion program.
6. As a result of these factors, the Central Committee launched appeals for subscription to three debenture loans. The first for fl. 500,000 in 1947 was oversubscribed by fl. 51,725 by some 9,000 people; the second for the same amount netted only fl. 400,000 provided by 30,000 subscribers in 1948; while the third for fl. 300,000, floated late in 1948, had netted fl. 150,000 by November. The CPN now plans to persuade subscribers to cancel their claims on the paper to assure its existence, as its sponsors fear it will soon be unable to meet its financial obligations. In the meantime, the management's intention to set up De Waarheid's own rotary press, purchased in England for 136,000, have been held up by litigation over a property adjoining De Waarheid's new premises in the Felix Meritis Building. Until this problem is settled, the paper is being printed on the presses of the Algemeen Handelsblad.
7. A subsidiary facility provided the CPN by De Waarheid is the paper's radio contact with Tass in Moscow through a "hellschreiber" which affords Moscow a direct and uninterrupted communications link over which flow political and other data of interest to the paper and CPN. As might be expected, the Tass representative for the Netherlands, George Afrin, is closely in touch with the staff of De Waarheid, while the latter likewise maintains contact with the Indonesian Center in Prague.

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