

The Hague, May 13, 1947.

To the members of the Group '39.  
- - - - -

My dear colleagues and friends,

The results of the first experimental emission of the European Hellcommune have been reasonable. There were very good receptions and others that were still not good enough. It is therefore that we decided to make a few more experimental emissions. The date and the hours of these new experiments we will write or cable you in time. They depend upon a decision about the possibility of Hellreception in Moscow, as we want a reception there too for the delivery of the Dutch news to the Netherlands embassy there.

In the meantime we are studying the financial basis of the Hellcommune. The Netherlands telegraph administration, asking before the war a payment of 42 guilders for the first hour (divided in emissions of 4 quarters of an hour per day), now asks us 60 guilders an hour. With the Ministry of Foreign Affairs we are in discussion about the delivery of the most important Dutch newsitems to several embassies and legations in Europe, not longer by cable but by Hell. For that reason I have already bought 20 Hell-receivers in Switzerland. My idea is now to combine these Hell-transmissions with the delivery of the most important Netherlands news to you at the same time.

If Anep can begin to operate with Hell by the way of delivering news to several embassies and legations of the Netherlands in Europe, it will be easier for all of us to collaborate for the foundation of a real Hellcommune-service with news from all the agencies concerned, because we will have founded than already a financial basis for a skeleton service of A.N.P. and, as I have reason to hope, of Belga. For the other agencies it will be then only a question of payment for the transmission of so many words as they are wanting to send through the channel of the Hellcommune. I don't reject the possibility of using in the Hell-service of the Hellcommune general news from the agencies sent by airmail, that will be interesting enough to give it in short newsitems by Hell to the rest of Europe, although it would be of course more preferable to receive from you by teleprinter e.g. a resumption of your news for the remittance by the Hellcommune. That would be a question of financial consideration. Whereas one hour transmission by Hell will cost 60 guilders and in one minute can be sent 34 words, or 2040 words in one hour, is it possible to express the costs for you in a financial scale by words. We find then a tariff for each of us of approximately 3 Dutch cents a word (100 cents are going in a Dutch guilder or florin). As each of you should give e.g. 200 words daily for the transmission by the Hellcommune to the rest of Europe, the costs would be 6 guilders daily or less than 180 guilders monthly (as the Hellcommune normally will be closed down at Sundays). This amount would be increased with the costs of sending these 200 words daily by teleprinter (or telephone) to The Hague, the sending station. As the Scandinavian colleagues would gather their daily wordage in Copenhagen and from there send it by teleprinter (if that is possible again) to us. Our Swiss colleague has already a teleprintercommunication with Holland, which is operating "a la minute". Between Belga and Anep is a steady private line operating. A.T.S. Bern can also give its emissions by flex to Brussels for retransmission to our office. I understand that the costs of the exploitation of a European Hellcommune service by our Group, divided over us all, will not at all be unbearable (as I said 180 guilders monthly for 200 words daily), but I also understand that the difficulty for A.T.S. and



the Scandinavian colleagues will be to find as well the covering of the sending costs. Would your Ministry of Foreign Affairs be interested in sending the "home news" of your country daily to a very cheap rate to the embassies and the legations? Our Foreign Affairs Ministry are highly interested because they are paying a lot of money, much more than is necessary for our future Helltransmission; for the transmission of our "home news" by cable now.

I hope, that you will reconsider now the plan for the re-erection of our former Hellcommune, and I will give our Group in consideration the possibility of cooperation with the Austrian Agency APA too, the managing director of which is now our younger friend, Dr. Siepen, and with the Italian Agency ANSA, both agencies being as independent as all of us.

In a separate letter I am explaining you the profit that the Hellcommune can bring us eventually when used for the common transmission of the results of great European sporting events, as for example the Olympic Games. We can use the Hellcommune eventually instead of constantly.

Hoping to read your reactions soon,

I remain, as always,  
sincerely yours,

H.H.J. van de Pol,  
General Manager.