

Foreword

Since 2003, the Stichting Eerherstel Oorlogsslachtoffers Curaçao¹ (SEOC) has worked assiduously for fifteen Chinese strikers who were shot dead on Curaçao in April 1942, as well as for their surviving relatives. These people were the only victims who fell on Curaçao during World War II. While the SEOC is conducting a continued investigation into the true circumstances of this massacre, it is also constantly working to obtain recognition of the event (as well as recognition for the victims and their relatives) from the government. The SEOC was successful in doing this on Curaçao – the so-called ‘Aprilmoorden’ (April Murders) were recognised by the local government, and the 20th of April declared a National Day of Remembrance for the victims. But in the Netherlands, the government is keeping a lid on it for the time being.

At the end of 2011, the SEOC, via its lawyer Liesbeth Zegveld, sent the Minister of Foreign Affairs a letter in which the State was requested to:

- recognise the Chinese victims as victims of war;
- recognise that this concerns a preconceived act of needless violence for which the government is partly to blame;
- answer the question as to whether it intends to investigate the case further.

An important part of the third point was also the pressing question of which documents the government has not yet made available, notably the autopsy reports which the SEOC is looking forward to reading and which should exist.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs assigned this letter to his colleague, Mr Plasterk, Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. Following a meeting on the 28th of May 2013 between senior officials from the ministry, the lawyer and the SEOC chairman, Minister Plasterk sent a letter to the SEOC lawyer on the 10th of July 2013. The complete text of this letter from Mr Plasterk can be found in Annex 1. Briefly, it comes down to this:

An investigation was conducted into the incident and the State has concluded that:

- there are no grounds to recognise the victims as victims of war;
- there are no grounds to speak of a calculated, preconceived act of violence (murder), let alone the government being an accessory;
- there is no cause for further investigation.

1. Foundation for the Rehabilitation of Curaçao Victims of War.

For the third point it is noted that the SEOC is free to conduct its own research in the National Archives and the Curaçao archives, as it is public. Just like the Administration of Curaçao at the time, Minister Plasterk deeply regrets the horrendous incident.

On the six pages substantiating these conclusions, there is much to be disputed. Plasterk bases his conclusions mainly on the judicial reports from Curaçao; an institution that was known to be particularly poor and unreliable during the war years (as well as during the preceding decades). The SEOC can produce a hefty file on this poor reputation, in which the head of the investigative committee, whose job it was at the time to investigate the circumstances of the incident, plays a significant part.

In addition, Plasterk cites legislation that would have been applicable at the time. The SEOC can however demonstrate – through documents found in the archives – that the legislation came into effect precisely because of this strike, only after it had started and the Chinese had been interred.

Moreover, he discredits the SEOC witnesses without giving them a hearing. However, with these witnesses, and the new insights from documents which were also researched for the publication of *De Aprilmoorden* (Makdoembaks, 2012)², the SEOC can support its arguments for a reasonable suspicion of premeditated and deliberate use of lethal force.

In the context of this violence, the SEOC has moreover conducted research on the position, value and treatment of Chinese workers by the colonial government and its subjects in both the East and the West. This clearly shows a pattern: contempt, highly permissible and prominent use of violence, covert slavery, bending of the rules to use violence, institutionalised use of violence (doctors examining Chinese workers to see whether they were capable of enduring their violent punishments – as a policy!) and a deep-rooted fear based on an equally deep-rooted racism.

All of this and more is made public in this new SEOC publication about the April Murders. In the absence of photos, the SEOC commissioned the making of historical sketches to provide explicit illustrations (not suitable for children). In addition, this publication provides numerous scans of official documents and their translations which the SEOC collected during its research and through which the foregoing is distinctly made clear.

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2. *De Aprilmoorden* is a book by SEOC chairman Nizaar Makdoembaks describing the historical context of the strike and the events on and around the 20th of April 1942. The term for the National Day of Remembrance '*De Aprilmoorden*' mentioned earlier was coined in this book.

Plasterk is certainly right in that the practice of hearing both sides is difficult when investigating a case that has been swept under the rug for over fifty years. But to present this as grounds to refrain from further investigation is an example of political self-protection, against which the SEOC wishes to protest with this publication.

The SEOC invites you to take note of the facts and the context in which they took place, and to then decide for yourself whether no “unambiguous assessment of what happened” (Plasterk, 2013: 2) can be given and whether “what really happened” really “cannot be traced”.

Introduction

Extensive historic research has yielded a hefty dossier on the events on and around the 20th of April on Curaçao. This research extends from the first contact with the Curaçao publicist Junnes Sint Jago (who published the so-called ‘Chinese-incident’ in 2000 in two parts) in 2002, to the foreseeable future, in which I will consider Minister Plasterk’s advice and diligently continue searching for missing documents. In *De April-moorden* (Makdoembaks, 2012) I wrote extensively about the historical side of the fatal shooting incident. This was preceded by a summary in 2011, appropriately provided in the letter the SEOC sent via its lawyer, Ms Zegveld, to the Dutch Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (ref. 2011-2000486181), as has been outlined above.

Recapitulation

Because the letter of the 13th of September 2011 in retrospect seems to be the starting point for this publication, it would not be amiss for those who are unfamiliar with the tragedy that occurred on Curaçao at the time, to begin with the summary:

‘[...]

Background

From 1791 up to and including 1954, Curaçao was a Dutch colony. In 1940 Curaçao possessed the largest oil refinery in the world. This oil was of vast importance for the provision of fuel to the allies during World War II. The oil was extracted in Maracaibo (Venezuela) and transported to the strategically located Curaçao under the auspices of the Curaçaosche Scheepvaart Maatschappij (CSM)¹, a subsidiary of the Curaçaosche Petroleum Industrie Maatschappij (CPIM)², the predecessor of Shell Curaçao. It was because of these oil shipments that the Caribbean Sea was declared a war zone. German U-boats regularly torpedoed the CSM tankers. Nevertheless, transport by sea had to continue for the benefit of supplying the allies with oil.

The CSM fleet carried a thousand men and consisted of forty ships (Sint Jago, 2000, part 2). The unarmed, rather outdated and badly maintained ships made an easy target for the German U-boats. Among the thousand CSM employees were around four hundred Chinese who worked as stokers and other engine room personnel.

1. Curaçao Shipping Company

2. Curaçao Industrial Petroleum Company

Despite their dangerous work (Howarth e.a., 2007, p. 57) they were treated worse than the rest of the workers (Kersten and Manning, 1984, part IV, p. 577): they were paid less, less care was taken for their safety, and they were prohibited from entering Willemstad after mooring. (Kersten and Manning, 1987, part V, p. 36)

In February 1942, the number of incidents at sea on the CSM shipping route increased and a number of Chinese lost their lives. The fear this aroused in the Chinese – combined with their poor standing in the company – led to them downing tools en masse on the 24th of February 1942 in order to negotiate better working conditions. A number of Dutch officers also went on strike.

Negotiations between the Chinese strikers and the CSM proved to be difficult caused, according to the CSM, by the leaders of the group of Chinese. The CSM wanted these men removed from the group in the hope that the remaining Chinese would then capitulate. The CSM asked the Curaçao authorities to arrest these men on the grounds of the applicable labour conscription (striking was prohibited due to the importance of oil transportation for the war). (Government decree of the 6th of December 1941, P.B. 1941/146)

The massacre at Camp Suffisant

On the 13th of March 1942, the Chinese strikers were summoned to appear at the police headquarters on Wilhelmina Square in Willemstad, Curaçao. The eighteen men who were regarded as the leaders were ordered to sail and resume work. When they refused, they were arrested and taken by military truck to a CPIM camp, Camp Suffisant outside Willemstad. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1)

The desired result was not achieved: the remaining Chinese persisted with their strike. On the 14th of March 1942 they were also taken by military truck to Camp Suffisant. Following the arrest of a number of strikers and the arrival of a few Chinese who wanted to show their solidarity, a total of 420 Chinese were being held in Camp Suffisant. (Kersten and Manning, 1987, part V, p. 37)

The camp was not designed for so many people. There was a shortage of space, food and sanitary resources. In addition, access was denied to the Chinese counsellor and a Roman Catholic mediator. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 17) This created a situation which the CPIM guards at the camp described as ‘highly explosive’. An attempt by the Foreign Police to separate the leaders from the group on the 17th of April 1942, failed. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 18)

Despite the 'explosive' situation, the Governor of Curaçao decided together with CSM Vice President Van Eyk and the General Military Commander of Curaçao, Baron Van Asbeck, to go ahead and conduct the separation, while not eschewing the use of violence. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 31) On the 20th of April 1942, Curaçao's Chief Inspector of Police, Van der Kroef was ordered by the Commander of the Military Police Force, Venema, to select 85 of the Chinese and take them to another camp. In doing so, he was assisted by eight officers from Curaçao's Foreign Police, thirteen military police and a number of CPIM security guards. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 19)

Van der Kroef set up a table in the courtyard of the camp where all the Chinese had meanwhile gathered. He had at his disposal, the names and photographs of the 85 Chinese who were to be transferred to another camp. However, the proposed separation resulted in a violent confrontation in which twelve [sic] Chinese were killed and 44 wounded were taken away, three of whom later died of their injuries. (Kersten and Manning, 1987, part V, p. 39) Four members of the police were slightly wounded. (Journal of the District Master of the 2nd district of Curaçao for the month of April 1942, Monday, the 20th of April 1942)

After the injured were transported to hospital, the separation of the Chinese proceeded without further incident. Approximately 50 Chinese were separated from the larger group and transferred to another location on the island.

Aftermath

As a result of the incident at Camp Suffisant, there was a great deal of unrest on Curaçao. The Chinese were known to be quiet and hardworking and would not resist authority without good reason. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 38) Hundreds of citizens quickly gathered at the Sanatorium to express their sympathies. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 28) The authorities however, seemed to want the incident covered up as quickly as possible. The dead were buried early on the morning of the 21st of April 1942. This was extremely unusual because funerals at the time traditionally took place in the afternoon on Curaçao. The time of the funeral was not announced and the hearses proceeded to the cemetery without mourners. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 29) The dead Chinese were buried in the 'Graveyard of shame', as the unconsecrated section of burial ground Kolebra Bêrdê, in the Cas Chiquito district was known (according to catholic rules, sinners, unbaptised and criminals had to be buried here). The dead were buried in anonymous graves, even though their identity was known. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 225-5) The Curaçao authorities also proclaimed a ban on publishing anything about the incident. (Howarth e.a., 2007, p. 57; Van der Horst, 2004, p. 92-3; Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 29)

The Curaçao authorities, under the leadership of Governor Wouters, were embarrassed by the incident. The Chinese government protested to the Dutch government in London about the acts of violence against the Chinese strikers. This was because of the discrepancy between their own version and the official Dutch version of the incident (Kersten and Manning, 1987, part V, p. 36). This official paper was based on a memorandum from CPIM management and the report of April 1942 made by the Chief Inspector of Police, Van der Kroef. The Chinese government insisted on a joint investigation. (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 49-51) This request was refused by the Curaçao authorities, mainly for political reasons. (Kersten and Manning, 1987, part V, p. 361)

A unilateral investigation was set up on Curaçao (Sint Jago, 2000, part 1, p. 39-41), resulting in a report. (Report by Commission of Inquiry, the Parliament of Curaçao, 4th of August 1942, Central Historical Archive, CORVO department: Chinese Conflict) Subsequently, the incident was kept as quiet as possible. This policy is illustrated for instance, in a letter sent by the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Van Kleffens to the Curaçao authorities dated 17th of December 1942:

“In order to prevent, while the case about this incident is closed, the (Chinese) Consul General from still wanting to discuss this point with the Governor, it may well be desirable to point out to Dr. Kasteel, that, should this indeed occur, the Consul General must be gagged forthwith.” (Letter from Minister van Kleffens dated 17th of December 1942, letter no. 23328, received item no. 5347)

The dossier containing the precise facts about the Chinese strike on Curaçao has never been released. During the parliamentary inquiry in 1948 on Dutch Government policy during World War II, this issue was not investigated further.

The April Murders - “no reason for a further investigation”

With regards to the above, Minister Plasterk indicates limiting himself to the known facts and not submitting to speculation. This is in essence, exactly what the SEOC also wants. The difference between the two points of view lies in the interpretation of the word ‘known’. For the minister this means something like ‘that which can be removed from the archives within any reasonable period’, where he seems to have a slight preference for the documents on which previous governments have based their judgement of the case. For the SEOC it means: everything conceivably available about the case in the archives.

According to the minister, the sworn statement made by Chief Inspector of Police, Van der Kroef (Annex 9), which is part of the investigative report by the Parliament of Curaçao (Annex 17), provides ‘only a few facts’ that are relevant to the State. The fact that very little can be found in the archives that is concrete in nature is justification for the minister to renounce further investigation.

In doing so the minister completely side-steps the ethos of cover-up that has hung around this case from the beginning, and which will be discussed in detail in the following chapter. He also ignores another point, namely that in all probability important documents do indeed exist, such as autopsy reports. This, in light of the regulations at the time and the way they were properly observed at other times by individuals working in 1942 for the various institutions involved.

Something that possibly escaped the minister and his investigative officials, but certainly not the attention of the SEOC, is the extremely poor name that the Curaçao Court of Justice had in the first half of the 1940s. Mr Sütthoff, Chairman of the State Commission, who investigated the shooting, was in daily life, Chairman of the Court of Justice, which was known for its laziness, corruption and unbecoming conduct. This bold statement also merits further explanation in order to show that it was much less objective with the truth and judicial acts than the minister suggests when he takes Van der Kroef’s report to be ‘leading’.

Furthermore, I will show that the judges of the court did not hesitate to bend the law to suit themselves, and that the Chinese strikers fell victim to legislation made at the special request of the CSM management, which had no official retrospective effect, but was deemed to have. In this way, one can quickly place the incident with the Chinese into, for the government and the companies involved, a manageable framework. A framework that the current Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, 71 years later, also does not want to abandon.

For the SEOC, in the absence of more freely accessible documents about the case, the historical context is essential and also far broader than the few official reports. Based on extensive research concerning some striking statements made about the Chinese by members of government, I have been able to establish that a culture of contempt, exploitation and violence against the Chinese, which was the order of the day in the East Indies, partly consciously and partly in the course of colonial preoccupation, was brought over to Curaçao. An example of this is the relative ease with which armed violence was used against a group of people, by both those who pulled the trigger as well as those who handed down the orders, and by those responsible for the regulations.

The second chapter therefore provides a detailed description of this violence against the Chinese spreading from East to West.

In presenting all of this, the questions that the SEOC asked of the minister remain in effect and will be discussed again in the final chapter, in conjunction with the research that is presented in this book.

Chapter 1: New insights

This chapter addresses a number of known and unknown issues surrounding the massacre that occurred during the Chinese strike of 1942. At the time there was a lot of uncertainty about what the exact position of the Chinese strikers was, and also about the question of which regulations they fell under. This is of importance in determining whether the case was handled correctly by the authorities. What is certain is that the regulations used only came into being after the start, and partly in response to the strike. The CSM pushing the Administration into acquiring the status of a war company was the direct source of all the commotion.

It is therefore hardly surprising that the Chinese diplomats who wanted the case investigated experienced problems with the company's management. It was the management that, because of the strike, tried to get its hands on new powers and coercive measures and who themselves suggested that the use of violence could be an option. A hypothesis that the Chinese had certainly wanted to investigate, is that of a management that due to staffing issues pressured the government in order to settle a conflict and be able to wash their hands in innocence at any escalation.

However, the Chinese diplomats were met with a deaf ear by the government or elsewhere with their request for a joint investigation. Also, censorship was put in place on Curaçao around the strike, and in the Parliamentary Inquiry Government Policy 1940-45 the clearly guiding role of CPIM management was disconnected from what was understood under government policy. This, despite extensive consultation between London and the government on the strike issue, its aftermath and the regulations, which were put into effect during that time and in response to the bloody strike.

Ultimately, it is all about uncovering the truth. Apart from the fact that outsiders (newspapers, Chinese diplomats) were thwarted from the outset, the official reviews on the event itself also raise questions. Witness statements that the SEOC was able to document point in another direction, leading to the following hypothesis: people knew that violence would occur that day. Something the politicians of both then and now systematically continue to deny.

1.1 Unlawful internment of Chinese Shell strikers

On the 24th of February 1942, the day that the Chinese sailors went on strike, the CSM immediately called on the government to be declared a war company, as that would allow labour conscription. But since the rules that applied, which had already been created, would in any case only come into effect after the start of the strike, it made using them on the Chinese strikers with retrospective effect unlawful.



Chinese strikers on grounds of PB 1941 no 146¹ in preventative custody behind barbed wire in front of their barracks in the Suffisant internment camp.

1. Publicatie Blad (PB) is henceforth referred to as 'Official Journal' (unless abbreviated).

1.1.1 CSM as a war company: Chinese strikers the catalyst but not the cause

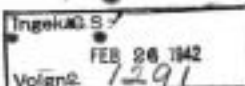
Governor Wouters changed the rules after the start of the strike on the 24th of February at the request of the CSM management. The following documents show how this occurred and substantiate that the Chinese strikers were the catalyst, and in particular also when it would all come into effect:²

2. National Archive of Curaçao, 'Aanwijzing van bedrijven waarin verplicht arbeid wordt verricht, (oud)' (Designation of companies in which compulsory labour is performed (old)) – inventory number 1.835.4, 1942.

N.V. CURAÇAOSCHE SCHEEPVAART MAATSCHAPPIJ

TELEGRAM ADRES: JUDEX-CURACAO
TELEFOON Nos. 12, 192, 212, 268, 606, 620

CODES: BENTLEY's (Du. Ed.): A. B. C. 5-1-2
CODE: SCOTT's 10-1-2



*For adv. G.I.
25-2-1942*

Alle mededeelingen aan de Maatschappij, met een persoonlijk adres, in eigen brief wordt als onderwerp behandeld

All communications to be addressed to the Company and to individuals must refer to deal with one subject only

Aan ~~Uwe~~ Excellentie
den Gouverneur van Curaçao,

WILLEMSTAD.

DE MAATSCHAPPIJ
VORSTEN
GELEIDE VAN DE MAATSCHAPPIJ
TUSSEN 1941-1942

A2

EMMASTAD, 24 Februari 1942.

Excellentie,

Hierdoor verzoeken wij Uwe Excellentiebehoefde onze
Maatschappij te willen aanwijzen als een bedrijf, waarin ver-
plichte arbeid zal worden verricht in den zin van het Besluit
van 9 December 1941, P.B. 1941, No 147.

Met gevoelens van bijzondere hoogachting verblijven
wij, van Uwe Excellentie,

de dienstw. dienstrespe

N.V. CURAÇAOSCHE SCHEEPVAART MAATSCHAPPIJ

Noorduyn

Directeur.

*De Gouven. Lijst bevestigd
Twee 17.12.1941
50/16. worden bevestigd
24/1*

Mech. 11 - Eindhoven - A. & C. B. B.

On the 24th of February 1942, CSM director Noorduyn asked the governor to declare the company as a company in which compulsory labour is performed.

[TRANSLATION]

N.V. CURAÇAO SHIPPING COMPANY
To His Excellency, the Governor of Curaçao,
WILLEMSTAD

EMMASTAD, 24th of February 1942

Excellency,

By this, we deferentially request that Your Excellency designates our Company as one in which compulsory labour shall be performed as according to the Decree of the 9th of December 1941, O.J. 1941, No 147.

With sentiments of the highest consideration we remain, of Your Excellency,
obliging servants

N.V. CURAÇAO SHIPPING COMPANY

[signed: J. Noorduyn]

Director.

[Handwritten note:]

The governor has decided that O.J. 1941 no. 147 shall be applied.

The Secr. Gov.

GECODEEERD
VERZONDEN

- 1.035

*Te communiceren
V.A.M.C. 11
V.P.G.
Vlootf. l. 64
Vlootf. l. 64
20-2-42*

Verzonden vers.c.tgm. aan den Minister van Kolonien, Londen

Ingek. G.S.:

FEB 28 1942

Volgnr.

1375

17
PARKET
VAN DEN
PROCUREUR-GENERAAL
Ingekomen:
3 MRZ 1942

27.2.1942
antw. gft.

Nethaincoel Londen

Heb verband personeels-moeilijkheden de C.S.M. tot oorlogs-

bedrijf verklaard ingevolge P.B. 1941 nummer 147 stop

Zal U op de hoogte houden eventuele uitbreiding maatregelen.

WOUTERS 92

*Copie 1/1
Hof te l. l.*

Van der

*Erin
X l. l. 1/1*

*Te communiceren
De Procureur Generaal*

Van der

On the 27th of February 1942, the Dutch government in London is informed by Governor Wouters that he has had the CSM declared as a war company.

[TRANSLATION]

[Telegram sent to the Minister of Colonies, London, by the governor of Curaçao]

Nethmincol London

Have, due to personnel difficulties, declared the CSM as a war company
in accordance with P.B. 1947 number 147 stop

Will keep you informed of any further increased measures

WOUTERS

Reviewed by the Attorney General

{signature}

Beslissing Gouverneur 44		
	Paraf	Datum
Concept	<i>[Handwritten mark]</i>	27-2-42
Tenageadv. Gedev.		
Beschikking geden		
Overschikking		28-2-42
Stek geden		
Gedeponeerd		28 FEB 1942
Geboekt agenda		
Gecontroleerd		
Elst archief		

aan Onder-Voorzitter en leden van den Raad
van Bestuur.

Alhier.

UN NUMMER (LETTER):

UN BRIEF VAN:

ISS NUMMER:

1291

WILLEMSTAD, 28 Februari 1942.

Bij deen heb ik de eer U te doen toekomen Publicatie
blad 1942 no. 20, waarin is opgenomen mijn beschikking van den
27sten Februari 1942 no. 1291 tot uitvoering van de artikelen 2,
eerste lid, en 3, eerste lid, van het besluit van den 9den Decem-
ber 1941 bevattende een regeling houdende bepalingen betreffend
den verplichten arbeid in bedrijven (P.B. 1941 no. 147), zoals ge-
wijzigd bij besluit van den 26sten Februari 1942 (P.B. 1942 no.
89).

Aanleiding tot het nemen van deze beschikking is voornamelijk
overweging dat de huidige omstandigheden ten aanzien van de N.V.
Caracasche Scheepvaart Maatschappij, van dien aard zijn dat zoo
danig verloop onder het Chineseche personeel in dat bedrijf
dreigt te ontstaan, dat het gevaar bedoeld in artikel 2 lid 1,
van bovengenoemd besluit bestaat.

De Gouverneur van Curaçao,

[Handwritten signature]

(RECEIVED):

[Handwritten note:]
Van de de de de
en de de de de
de de de de

Governor Wouters confirms to the Council that he found this order of compulsory
labour at the CSM necessary, due to the action of the Chinese sailors in the company.

[TRANSLATION]

[Letter from the governor of Curaçao to the Vice Chairman and members
of the Executive Board of Curaçao]

Your Number (Letter) Your letter of: Our Number
1291

WILLEMSTAD, the 28th of February 1942.

I hereby have the honour of providing you with Official Journal 1942, no. 30,
in which my ruling of the 27th of February 1942, no. 1291 is published,
implementing Article 2, first paragraph, and Article 3, first paragraph,
of the decree of the 9th of December 1941 comprising legislation containing provisions
regarding compulsory labour in companies (O.J. 1941 no, 147), as amended by the
decree of the 26th of February 1942 (O.J. 1942 no. 28).

Cause for my making this ruling has been the consideration that the present
circumstances with regards to the N.V. Curaçao Shipping Company, are of such
a nature that a considerable decline in the Chinese members of staff in the
company threatens to arise, that the danger referred to in article 2, paragraph 1,
of above mentioned decree exists.

The Governor of Curaçao,
{signature}

[handwritten note:]
One copy for each member.

Besluiting Gouverneur Ad.

	Periode *	Staat
Concept	27-2-42	27-2-42
Tusschen. Gev.	28-2-42	28-2-42
Besluiting geacht.	28-2-42	28-2-42
Gedrukt	28-2-42	28-2-42
Stuk getekend	28-2-42	28-2-42
Gedrukt	28-2-42	28-2-42
Gedrukt	28-2-42	28-2-42
Gedrukt	28-2-42	28-2-42
Fin. archief	28-2-42	28-2-42

28 FEB 1942

Aan

De Directie van de

N.V. Cur.Scheepvaart Maatschappij.

Winnestad.

UW NUMMER (LETTER):

UW BRIEF VAN:
24 Febr 1942

ONS NUMMER:
1291

WILLEMSTAD, 28 Februari 1942.

Naar aanleiding van Uw brief van 24 Februari 1942 betreffende de aanwijzing van Uw bedrijf als een bedrijf waarin ingevolge de regeling opgenomen in P.B.1941 no.147 verplichte arbeid wordt verricht, heb ik de eer U hierbij mijn desbetreffende beschikking, opgenomen in P.B.1942 no.30, te doen toekomen, naar de inhoud waarvan ik kortheidshalve nog verwijzen.

De Gouverneur van Curacao,

[Handwritten signature]

af.

GESPEEDDEED:

Governor Wouters likewise informed CSM management on the 28th of February 1942, and sent management the relevant Official Journal 1942, no. 30.

[TRANSLATION]

[letter from the Governor of Curaçao to the Management of the N.V. Curaçao
Shipping Company in Emmastad]

YOUR NUMBER (LETTER):	YOUR LETTER OF:	OUR NUMBER:
	24 th of February 1942	1291

WILLEMSTAD, the 28th of February 1942.

Further to your letter of the 24th of February 1942 concerning the designation
of Your company as a company in which compulsory labour is to be performed
pursuant to the regulations documented in O.J. 1942 no. 30, I hereby have the honour
of providing you with my ruling, published in O.J. 1942 no. 30, in this regard,
the contents of which I refer to for the sake of brevity.

The Governor of Curaçao
{signature}

Bestuurs Gouverneur dd.

	Paraaf	Datum
Concept	<i>hut</i>	<i>27-2-42</i>
Tengeten. Gouver.		
Beschikking gezch.		
Geccollationneerd		
Stuk geteekend		
Gekepenleerd		
Geboekt agenda		
Gecontroleerd		
Fiat archief		

WILLEMSTAD, den 27 FEB 1942¹⁹

No. *1291*

ONDERWERP:

De Gouverneur van Curacao.

Gelet op het besluit van den 9den December 1941 bevattende een regeling houdende bepalingen betreffende den verplichten arbeid in bedrijven (P.B.1941 no.147), zooals gewijzigd bij besluit van den 26sten Februari 1942 (P.B.1942 no.28);

Overwegende, dat de huidige omstandigheden ten aanzien van de Curacaosche Scheepvaart Maatschappij N.V., van dien aard zijn dat zoodanig verloop van personeel in dat bedrijf dreigt te ontstaan, dat het gevaar bedoeld in artikel 2 lid 1, van bovengenoemd besluit bestaat;

HEEFT GOEDGEVONDEN:

- De Curacaosche Scheepvaart Maatschappij N.V., gevestigd te Willemstad op Curacao, aan te wijzen als een bedrijf waarin verplichte arbeid wordt verricht.
- Aan te wijzen als het orgaan bedoeld in het eerste lid van artikel 3 van bovengenoemd besluit, de Directie van de C.S.M.
- Te bepalen dat deze beschikking in het Publicatieblad zal worden bekendgemaakt en onmiddellijk na afkondiging in werking treedt.

Willemstad, 27 Februari 1942.

De Gouverneur voornoemd,

Jaarboek 1942

The order dated 27th of February 1942, declaring the CSM as a vital company that could enforce compulsory labour.

[TRANSLATION]

Ruling Governor dated:
WILLEMSTAD, 27 FEB 1942
28 Feb 1942

No. 1291

SUBJECT

The Governor of Curaçao,

In view of the Decision of the 9th of December 1941 containing provisions regarding compulsory labour in companies (P.B. 1941 no. 147), as amended in the decree of the 26th of February 1942 (P.B. 1942, no 28);
Considering that the present circumstances with regards to the Curaçao Shipping Company N.V., are of such a nature that such turnover in staff threatens to arise in that company, that the danger referred to in Article 2, paragraph 1 of the above-mentioned decree exists;

HAS APPROVED

- A. The Curaçao Shipping Company N.V., established in Willemstad, Curaçao, to be designated as a company in which compulsory labour is to be performed.
- B. To designate the board of the C.S.M. as the body referred to in the first paragraph of Article 3 of the above-mentioned decree.
- C. To determine that this ruling shall be published in the Official Journal and immediately following promulgation shall come into effect.

Willemstad, 27th of February 1942.

The aforesaid Governor,
{signature}

A^o. 1942.N^o. 30.

PUBLICATIEBLAD.

BESCHIKKING van den 27sten Februari 1942 No. 1291 tot uitvoering van de artikelen 2, eerste lid, en 3, eerste lid, van het besluit van den 9den December 1941 bevattende een regeling houdende bepalingen betreffende den verplichten arbeid in bedrijven (P. B. 1941 No. 147), ten aanzien van de N.V. Curaçaosche Scheepvaart Maatschappij.

Gelet op het besluit van den 9den December 1941 bevattende een regeling houdende bepalingen betreffende den verplichten arbeid in bedrijven (P. B. 1941 No. 147), zooals gewijzigd bij besluit van den 26sten Februari 1942 (P. B. 1942 No. 28);

Overwegende, dat de huidige omstandigheden ten aanzien van de N.V. Curaçaosche Scheepvaart Maatschappij, van dien aard zijn dat zoodanig verloop van personeel in dat bedrijf dreigt te ontstaan, dat het gevaar bedoeld in artikel 2 lid 1, van bovengenoemd besluit bestaat;

HEEFT GOEDGEVONDEN:

- A. De N.V. Curaçaosche Scheepvaart Maatschappij, gevestigd te Willemstad op Curaçao, aan te wijzen als een bedrijf waarin verplichte arbeid wordt verricht.
- B. Aan te wijzen als het orgaan bedoeld in het eerste lid van artikel 3 van bovengenoemd besluit, de Directie van de N.V. Curaçaosche Scheepvaart Maatschappij.
- C. Te bepalen dat deze beschikking in het Publicatieblad zal worden bekendgemaakt en onmiddellijk na afkondiging in werking treedt.

Willemstad, 27 Februari 1942.

De Gouverneur voornoemd.

Uitgegeven den 27sten Februari 1942.

De gouvernements-secretaris,

The Official Journal in which the order was published, dated 27th of February 1942.

[TRANSLATION]

A° 1942 OFFICIAL JOURNAL N° 30.

Ruling of the 27th of February 1942 No. 1291 implementing Article 2, first paragraph, and Article 3, first paragraph, of the decree of the 9th of December 1941 comprising legislation containing provisions regarding compulsory labour in companies (O.J. 1941 No. 147), with regards to the N.V. Curaçao Shipping Company.

In view of the Decision of the 9th of December 1941 containing provisions regarding compulsory labour in companies (O.J. 1941 no. 147), as amended in the decree of the 26th of February 1942 (O.J. 1942, no 28);

Considering that the present circumstances with regards to the Curaçao Shipping Company N.V., are of such a nature that such turnover in staff threatens to arise in that company, that the danger referred to in Article 2, paragraph 1 of the above-mentioned decree exists;

HAS APPROVED

- A. The Curaçao Shipping Company N.V., established in Willemstad, Curaçao, to be designated as a company in which compulsory labour is to be performed.
- B. To designate the board of the C.S.M. as the body referred to in the first paragraph of Article 3 of the above-mentioned decree.
- C. To determine that this ruling shall be published in the Official Journal and immediately following promulgation shall come into effect.

Willemstad, 27th of February 1942.

The aforesaid Governor,
{signature}

Issued on the 27th of February 1942.
Government Secretary,
{signature}

Motive versus cause: the money issue

Staff turnover was the motive for CSM management's request to be designated as a vital business. However, the cause possibly lay many months earlier, with a message about the consequences of the US's interference in the war. It was deemed of vital importance that Dutch shipping companies, in recompensing employees, should not be secondary to the Americans. This was to prevent a big shortfall of personnel.³



3. National Archive of Netherlands Antilles, Government Archive of Curaçao, access number 1.831 (old):
Gageregeling voor zeelieden, Annex B. (Salary regulations for sailors, Annex B.)

[TRANSLATION]

GOVERNMENT OF CURAÇAO
DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS
To His Excellency
The Governor of Curaçao

Your number (letter)

Your letter of:

Our number:
7218

Willemstad, 8th of January 1942.

Subject:

Attachments: Gouv. Secr. No 7218 dd. 17-12-'41.

In response to the comment made by the Administrator of Finance with regards to the above-mentioned writing, I have the honour of advising Your Excellency on the locally established shipping companies, reporting as follows:

Confidential

Our envoy in Washington forwarded to me an economic overview about the United States, in which shipping is also covered. That which is being raised concerning this subject, I consider of such import that I believe I should not abstain from apprising you forthwith.

The Envoy writes as follows:

“The expansion of the war and the active participation of America will have much wider implications for the import and export, and not be limited to traffic directly related to trade with the Far East.

The merchant fleet has been requisitioned and the transport of troops and weapons will most definitely compromise much of the normal trade. A particular Dutch interest in this lies in attaining wages for our merchant fleet that is more in line with that of the Americans.

[handwritten addition]

K.N.S.M. [Royal Dutch Shipping Company]

C.S.M.

W.J.S.M. [Dutch West-Indies Shipping Company]

Geadresseerde: H.L. Guy. Ons nummer:

Datum: 8 Jan '48 No. Vervolgblad: 2

Went meer dan scheepswijnte sal Amerika bekwame zeelieden noodig hebben,
en thans reeds is voor vele slecht betaalde geallieerde bemanningen de verlei-
ding groot om voor veel hogere gages op Amerikaanse schepen dienst te
doen".

De Gouverneur van Curaçao.

Het Hoofd van het Departement

Sociale en Economische Zaken,



A company in which labour is compulsory did not need to heed the warnings in this document. Moreover, it may also provide a tidy saving.

[TRANSLATION]

Consignee: Z.E. Gouv. Our number:
Date: 8th of January '42 No. Continuation Sheet 2

Because more than the shipping capacity, America will need skilled seamen,
and already the temptation is great for many poorly paid allied crewmen to serve
on American ships for much higher wages.”

The Governor of Curaçao.

The Head of the Department of
Social and Economic Affairs,
{signature}
