

1961

Dear Trobasians

A. C. M. Hanken

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/dl_tr

 Part of the [Accounting Commons](#), and the [Taxation Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Quarterly, Vol. 07, no. 2 (1961, June), p. 06-11

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Deloitte Collection at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Touche Ross Publications by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

NEDERLANDSE ACCOUNTANTS-MAATSCHAP

AMSTERDAM — 'S-GRAVENHAGE — ROTTERDAM
BREDA — ALMELO — MIDDELBURG

G. H. LUYENDIJK

V. H. NEDERLANDS INSTITUUT VAN ACCOUNTANTS

TOUCHE, ROSS, BAILEY & SMART
ACCOUNTANTS

A. C. M. Hanken, head of
our Associated Firm in
The Netherlands, writes a letter

DEAR TROBASIAN...

I am a young (63) Dutch accountant who recently had the honor and pleasure of attending a meeting in Chicago (the 1960 Partners' Meeting) where I became acquainted with representatives of a new race which I will call Trobasians.

I was very much impressed by this new species of mankind. They are all good-looking, healthy fellows with a great enthusiasm for their profession which is auditing, management services and sciences, and tax work. *A spécialité de la maison* is building bridges of friendship and good will all over the world, and the master engineer of this is Donald J. Bevis. After an hour's chat with him you are so infected with TROBAS microbes that you are impatient to begin TROBAS activities in your own country.

When I graduated from the Economic High School in Rotterdam, bookkeeping was very distasteful to me and had anyone suggested



A. C. M. HANKEN

that accountancy was the profession for me I should have knocked him down. My idea was to go out into the wide world, so as a young man I entered the export trade and went to the Far East. I worked very hard for a few years, but looking around I found the life was rather rough and my friends assured me it would take ten to twenty years before I could reach a top position.

Then I met a school friend who was assistant in an accounting office and I resolved to try that job. From the beginning I enjoyed it very much and never regretted my choice, for I am devoted to my profession 100%.

In high school we only had to do with bookkeeping lessons and economics, which are not very appealing to restless young people. Instead, I believe young students should be thoroughly acquainted with the *every day life* of the accounting profession, emphasizing the

management services, because the word "auditing" itself gives many people a certain distaste for the accounting profession.

Shortly after becoming a Dutch CPA I started my own office. I believe success depends on a combination of the following:

1. Give your clients more than they expect.
2. Put yourself in your client's place and give him the data about his enterprise which he needs most.
3. You should feel that you are working for your *own* organization, and clients must be aware of this. With all the members of an accounting firm following these rules, the team-work should lead to high-class work and enthusiasm for the office.
4. Do your very best to keep a high standard of ethics.
5. Work hard — but enjoy your work.

Owing to the fact that in our profession specialization is necessary and the evolving structure of our society makes more and more demands on management, only the big firms can in my opinion satisfy these demands. We therefore see the same tendency in the Netherlands as in the U. S. A.—concentration and specialization in the practice of accounting.

Although our firm already belongs to the big organizations here, we are fully convinced that we are in the beginning of a new era in the field of accountancy and that all efforts are needed to develop the management services department and after that, management sciences. I am grateful for the opportunity I had in the U.S.A. to study the development over there.

It may be useful for all the members of TROBAS to know something about the different countries. Below are some details concerning the establishment of industries in the Netherlands.

* * *

SINCE 1950 AS MANY AS 325 FOREIGN INDUSTRIES have established factories in The Netherlands. Of these, 125 have merged with existing Netherlands industries, while 200 remain in the hands of foreign enterprises, mostly American. In 1958 the number of American settlements in Holland amounted to 120; in 1959 this rose to 140 and is now 160. Various industries—for instance, Dupont de Nemours in Dordrecht—are expanding their plants.

The main reasons are their high opinion of the coming common



This building on a quiet street houses the TROBAS office in Middelburg, which is one of the very old towns in The Netherlands.

Photograph below shows a corner of one of the partners' offices in Middelburg, the old town pictured in photo above.



market in Europe (E. E. G. and free trading zone); the high cost of sending fabricated goods to Europe; the lower wages; and the experience to be applied in European fabrication and distribution.

Chief reasons why the Netherlands has been preferred for the establishment of American business in Europe are the following:

1. The greatest port of the continent, Rotterdam (Europoort) has the reputation of quick service to other places. The Netherlands is centrally located in Europe.
2. The political situation in the Netherlands has always been stable.
3. Communist tendencies, as compared with some parts of Europe, are negligible.
4. The wages are the lowest with regard to the surrounding countries.
5. Labor in the Netherlands is suited to industry owing to the fact that morally and mentally the Dutch worker ranks high.
6. Peace in the labor market. Hardly any country in the world has had fewer serious strikes in the last decade.
7. The Netherlands has been a financial center for centuries.

The president of the partners, D. J. Brandenburg, holds a meeting at the Rotterdam Office with some of the other partners. At left, standing, Mr. van den Ende; at right, Mr. Stouthandel. Seated, from left, Dr. Oosthoek, Mr. Hanken, Mr. Brandenburg, Miss Huizinga, accountant and secretary to the partners, and Mr. Hootsen.

8. Owing to the fact that, till some years ago, the Netherlands possessed colonies in the West and East Indies, Dutch executives often have world-wide experience.
9. The knowledge of other languages: English, German and French have always been a necessity for the people of the Low Countries.
10. It is common knowledge that contracts and agreements with the government or others are always strictly kept. Also the government allows many financial and other aids to keep building costs low and land selling at modest prices.

Generally speaking we may conclude that American industries which have settled in the Netherlands do not regret their choice. The situation will improve more and more so that business will become gradually a bigger force in politics.

There are still a few working windmills in the Netherlands, but a more common sight is the hundreds of bicycles near the entrances of the new industries. For better or worse, the windmills of the past are being replaced by factory chimneys as a symbol of the new art of living of the Dutch laborer.

