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A CONFLICT OF EMPIRES: SPAIN AND THE NETHERLANDS 1618-1648*

"SINCE THEY DERIVE ALL THEIR GAINS FROM TRADE WITH SPAIN AND Italy", claimed the marqués de Aytona, referring to the Dutch in the Spanish Council of State in July 1622, "should they lose this commerce, they shall be less powerful enemies and we can expect a good settlement favourable to Spain".[1] This assertion of one of Philip IV's senior ministers well illustrates the thinking that lay behind Spanish policy at the outset of the Spanish-Dutch struggle of 1621-48. Essentially, Philip's ministers aimed to weaken the United Provinces sufficiently to win a *buen concierto*, an agreement settling the various issues in Spanish-Dutch relations, mostly relating to commercial and colonial matters, to the advantage of the Catholic Monarchy. The principal means by which it was proposed to achieve this, and that which was primarily used, was the application of economic pressure on a scale that had never before been attempted and with which there was to be nothing comparable until Napoleon's Continental System more than a century and a half later. In the conflict of 1621-48 the land war was mostly rather static and often perfunctory. The famed army of Flanders played a largely secondary and defensive role. As regards Spain at least, it was in the sphere of economic warfare that the major effort was made, producing a considerable impact not only on the Netherlands and Spain itself but on much of the rest of Europe.

By any measure, the second Spanish-Dutch war was a key formative episode in early modern history and yet curiously, until very recently, it has attracted virtually no scholarly interest. Partly perhaps this may be due to a lingering tendency to regard the conflict as a continuation of the Dutch struggle for independence which, to all intents and purposes, was won by 1609 when the first Spanish-Dutch war ended. A common assumption, at any rate, is that there is an essential continuity between the wars, that the struggle of 1621-48 was merely the second phase of a so-called Eighty Years War in which a declining but incorrigibly obstinate Spain exhausted itself in-

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[1] *Consulta*, 6 July 1622, fo. 5: Archivo General de Simancas, Estado, legajo (hereafter A.G.S. Est.) 2036.

effectually striving to suppress the political and religious independence of an increasingly vigorous republic. And this, except perhaps for old-fashioned Dutch patriots, does not constitute a very edifying subject. Nevertheless, there has long been good cause for doubting such an interpretation. Decades ago it was shown that the way in which the Spanish-Dutch rupture was presented publicly in the United Provinces in 1621 was largely determined by domestic political considerations and especially the need to convince the Dutch people of the necessity of a war for which there was enthusiasm only in certain quarters.[2] The mission of Archduke Albert's delegate, Petrus Peckius, from Brussels to The Hague in March 1621, was deliberately twisted by the *stadhouder*, Prince Maurice, and his circle to look like an uncompromising demand that the States General submit to the sovereignty of Philip III when in fact it was nothing of the kind. The actual Spanish demands of 1621, satisfaction of which was the condition for renewal of the truce, were that freedom of worship be conceded to the Dutch Catholic minority, that the river Scheldt be reopened and that the Dutch withdraw from the Indies east and west. This too has long been known[3] and yet, until recently, little or nothing has been done to take the analysis further, and to consider how serious Spain was in making these demands, why they led to the type of war that ensued and how Spanish and Dutch thinking changed as the struggle proceeded. Nor has much thought been given to the enormous impact of this struggle on the countries involved.

The view of the second Spanish-Dutch war put forward recently by José Alcalá-Zamora in a major Spanish contribution to our knowledge of Europe in this period,[4] though it stops short at 1639, is unquestionably a dramatic advance on the meagre picture that preceded it. "Spain's struggle from 1621 to 1639", concluded Alcalá-Zamora, "was more a fight for economic survival, under threat of constriction and paralysis by the Dutch, than a quest to realize a programme of territorial expansion or hegemony".[5] Alcalá-Zamora,

[2] M. G. de Boer, "De hervatting der vijandelijkheden na het twaalfjarig bestand", *Tijd. Gesch.*, xxxv (1920), pp. 34-49; I. Schöffer, "De crisis van de jonge Republiek, 1609-1625", *Algemene geschiedenis der Nederlanden,* ed. J. A. van Houtte *et al.*, 12 vols. (Utrecht, 1949-58), vi, pp. 57-8.

[3] De Boer, *op. cit.*, p. 35; Pieter Geyl, *The Netherlands Divided, 1609-1648* (London, 1936), p. 84; J. J. Poelhekke, *'T Uytgaen van den Treves: Spanje en de Nederlanden in 1621* (Groningen, 1960), pp. 37-41.

[4] José Alcalá-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte, 1618-39* (Barcelona, 1975). I first read Alcalá-Zamora after completing the original draft of this piece. In the present version an attempt is made to condense the analysis as much as possible where it agrees substantially with that of Alcalá-Zamora.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 475-6. In another recent work Peter Brightwell, though he makes several important points regarding colonial rivalry, in general leans towards an older view, seeing the Spanish crown as being insistent above all on maintaining the territorial integrity of the empire, and leaves out of the account much of the economic reasoning: Peter Brightwell, "The Spanish System and the Twelve Years Truce", *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, lxxxix (1974), pp. 270-92.

convinced that the struggle was essentially for domination of the North Sea and the Baltic, concentrates on Spanish naval activity and ambitions in north European waters,[6] though he does consider that the Spanish war effort was intended to damage Dutch interests in all parts. However, Alcalá-Zamora did not use any Dutch or Flemish sources, printed or manuscript, and although his work is based on the rich Spanish archival material at Simancas, he confined himself only to certain sections of it.[7] The result is that his documentary base is relatively narrow — indeed, rather too narrow for what he attempts. Major aspects of the conflict in the north, especially the effect of Spanish actions on the Dutch but also, in some cases, the Spanish actions themselves, such as the great river blockade of 1625-9 or the attack on Dutch North Sea fishing, are treated too cursorily, with many features distorted or omitted. Furthermore, Alcalá-Zamora, preoccupied with the north, barely touches on Spanish actions against the Dutch in the south which, arguably, are no less crucial and possibly more so. With Alcalá-Zamora we have an extremely significant new picture, but one that is rather roughly sketched and in need of both modification and extension, particularly by reference to a fuller range of sources, Spanish and non-Spanish.

In Spain, Flanders and Portugal (which was then attached to the Spanish crown), discussion of Spanish-Dutch relations was intense throughout the period of the Twelve Years Truce (1609-21) and, from 1618, the Dutch question was a chief concern of no less than four royal councils at Madrid, those of State, War, Portugal and the Indies. In all those councils, and also at Brussels, at least among the Spanish officials, and at Lisbon, it was the general view that the truce of 1609 had been utterly ruinous both for Spain and for the empire as a whole and that it was vital, on its expiry in April 1621, to put an end to the situation that had arisen from it, either by negotiating different terms or by war. Some influential officers and officials such as Luis de Velasco, Carlos Coloma and Juan de Villela, openly preferred war, advising that Spain should only seem to want a new truce for the sake of appearances.[8] Others, more aware of the chronic state of the royal

[6] Alcalá-Zamora, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-8, 67, 172.

[7] The Simancas series containing relevant material of importance which are unused by Alcalá-Zamora are the rough drafts of *consultas* relating to the Low Countries (A.G.S. Est. 2138-2160), royal correspondence with Flanders (A.G.S. Est. 2230-2246), letters from ministers in Flanders to the king (A.G.S. Est. 2300-2321), *consultas* relating to Spain and Portugal (A.G.S. Est. 2645-2664), and the *consultas* for the relevant years of the *consejo de guerra* and *consejo de hacienda*. On these papers, see M. van Durme, *Les Archives générales de Simancas et l'histoire de la Belgique*, 4 vols. (Brussels, 1964-73), and G. Parker, *Guide to the Archives of the Spanish Institutions in or concerned with the Netherlands, 1556-1706* (Brussels, 1971).

[8] Velasco to Philip III, 11 Feb. 1619: A.G.S. Est. 634 doc. 321; Villela to Philip III, 22 Dec. 1620: A.G.S. Est. 2309; "Carta de Don Xroval de Benavente para su Mg^{d} haz^{do} relacion de las cosas de Olanda", 9 June 1620: Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14005, fos. 34-40.

finances, on balance preferred new terms.[9] But all, virtually without exception, agreed that war was better than the old terms. The advice of Georges de Henin, a Walloon official who was almost alone at Madrid in urging that Spain should at all costs avoid war and seek a respite from struggle (a respite which in his view was desperately needed if the many internal problems of the country were to be solved), was dismissed by Balthasar de Zúñiga, Olivares's uncle and the most influential minister of the period, as well-intentioned but hopelessly confused.[10]

The general conviction in the Iberian world that the truce was a disaster was based mainly on the obvious fact that the years of truce had coincided with a transformation of the Spanish-Dutch relationship to the disadvantage of Spain. Clearly the truce years were a period of dramatic expansion in Dutch navigation and trade and Philip III's ministers were inclined to link the two phenomena as cause and effect.[11] The truce had removed all obstacles to Dutch trade with Spain and Portugal,[12] had left Antwerp blockaded while Amsterdam continued to usurp the functions that had once been Antwerp's,[13] and enabled the Dutch to dominate Europe's north-south carrying trade, including the vital flow of Baltic grain, copper and naval stores to the Iberian peninsula and Italy, to an extent that had never been seen before.[14] This in turn meant that a very large proportion of the silver leaving Spain proceeded to Holland, thus making possible further Dutch investment in navigation and trade and bringing the Dutch a decisive advantage over such rivals as the English and the Hanseatic towns.[15] It was also evident that Dutch and Dutch Jewish merchants were, by such means as misusing grain licences and smuggling in quantities of false copper coinage, using their success in Spain and Portugal to evade the king's trade regulations and to extract additional silver illegally, thereby increasing further

[9] *Consulta* of the Brussels junta, 3 Apr. 1620, and Albert to Philip III, 14 Apr. 1620: *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne sur les affaires des Pays-Bas au XVII^e siècle,* ed. H. Lonchay and J. Cuvelier, 6 vols. (Brussels, 1923-37), i, docs. 1466 and 1468.

[10] "Jorge de Henin muestra las consideraciones . . ." and the memorandum on this of Balthasar de Zúñiga: A.G.S. Est. 2851.

[11] Brit. Lib., Egerton MS.2078, fos. 45-52; Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14005, fos. 34-40.

[12] "Olandeses. Discurso sobre el prorrogar mejorar o romper las treguas con ellos", 15 Jan. 1620: Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14005, fo. 46.

[13] *Ibid.*; Carlos Coloma to Philip III, Cambrai, 8 June 1620: A.G.S. Est. 2308.

[14] *Consulta* of the Council of Portugal, 28 May 1618, and memorandum of Francisco Retama: A.G.S. Est. 634.

[15] *Ibid.* The export of silver to Asia was of course crucial to the operations of the East India Company: Kristof Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade, 1620-1740* (Copenhagen and The Hague, 1958), pp. 51-3; for the role of Spanish silver in Dutch-Russian trade, see S. Hart, "Amsterdam Shipping and Trade to Northern Russia in the Seventeenth Century", *Mededelingen van de nederlandse vereniging voor zeegeschiedenis,* xxvi (1973), pp. 26-9.

the alarmingly adverse balance of Ibero-Dutch trade.[16] Significantly in these years a number of Spanish writers, such as Sancho de Moncada,[17] were inclined to see in the unfavourable trade balance the most important cause of Spain's economic decline and it was a widespread belief in the peninsula that it was an increasingly poorer Spain that was financing Dutch growth.

A second feature of the truce deplored by Philip III's ministers was the added impetus that it had lent to further Dutch expansion in the East and West Indies.[18] By 1619, when the Dutch East India Company established its principal Far Eastern base at Batavia, the Portuguese had already lost several possessions and much of their share of the spice trade.[19] In the Americas the Dutch had made less progress and indeed had at first shown some inclination to respect the rather vague clause of the 1609 truce which implied that they were excluded from the king of Spain's Indies. There was at any rate a marked reduction in Dutch activity in the Caribbean after 1609.[20] However, Dutch involvement in the Brazilian sugar trade had continued and, from about 1615, numerous incidents showed that Dutch ambitions in the Americas were reviving. The exploits of a squadron under Van Spilbergen off the Pacific coasts of Peru and Mexico in 1615 caused particular indignation in Madrid. The overthrow of Oldenbarneveldt in 1618 removed any lingering tendency in Holland to accept exclusion from the New World and, although the West India Company was not finally formed until June 1621, after the outbreak of war, Spanish officials in Brussels, who carefully scrutinized commercial initiatives in Holland, knew by 1620 that it would be set up and that short of the use of force or the negotiation of dramatically new terms, there was no way of preventing the Dutch making rapid gains in Spanish America.[21]

A third substantial disadvantage of the truce for Spain resulted from the shift in economic power: increasing wealth enabled the Dutch to acquire, besides the world's largest navy, the only standing army in Europe remotely comparable in strength to that of Spain and this, in turn, facilitated the extension of Dutch influence through Europe

[16] Albert to Philip III, Ghent, 18 Aug. 1618: A.G.S. Est. 2305; memorandum of the conde de Benavente, 12 Sept. 1620: A.G.S. Est. 2309.

[17] Sancho de Moncada, *Restauración política de España* (Madrid, 1746 edn.), pp. 12, 17, 21-2, 53-6.

[18] Memorandum of Juan de Çirica: A.G.S. Est. 634, doc. 318; Philip III to Albert, 12 Jan. 1620: *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne,* ed. Lonchay and Cuvelier, i, doc. 1450.

[19] *Consulta* of the Council of Portugal, 28 May 1618: A.G.S. Est. 634. Of the most valuable Asian commodity, pepper, the Dutch handled over twice as much as the Portuguese by 1621: Glamann, *op. cit.*, p. 74.

[20] C. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast, 1580-1680* (Assen, 1971), pp. 82-3.

[21] Albert to Philip III, Brussels, 28 Feb. 1619: A.G.S. Est. 2306; Pedro de San Juan to Juan de Çirica, Brussels, 29 Feb. 1620: A.G.S. Est. 2308.

and beyond in a way that contrasted all too obviously with the meagre international role played by the republic before 1609. Morever, this spreading Dutch influence seemed to be devoted specifically to one aim — that of checking Spain at every point. In Germany, by 1620, the republic had occupied Emden, much of Jülich-Cleves, and in addition the vital fortress of Papenmutz (Mondorf) on the Rhine between Cologne and Bonn[22] and, by providing men and money elsewhere, was assuming the lead in obstructing Habsburg ambitions in central Europe. In Italy, the United Provinces had succeeded France as the main foreign threat to the Spanish ascendancy and, by agreements and military and naval co-operation with Venice and Savoy, had become a powerful force in the central Mediterranean area.[23] In North Africa, where Spain held coastal strongholds from Larache to Oran as a barrier between Islam and Spain, and Islam and the Protestant powers, there was a remarkable growth in Dutch involvement from 1608, using Dutch and Moroccan Jews as intermediaries; by 1621 the republic was the main supplier of arms and manufactures to North Africa and the chief ally of the sultan of Morocco in his confrontation with Spain — a fact that caused much disquiet in Madrid, especially as it coincided with a marked resurgence in Muslim piracy around the coasts of Spain, Portugal and Sicily.[24]

The truce that Madrid would have settled for in 1621 was one that would have reversed the shift that had occurred in the years 1609-21. The three conditions were intended precisely to secure such a reversal. The demand for religious rights for Dutch Catholics, though invariably placed first and undoubtedly of consequence, was nevertheless the least important of the three as is shown by the lesser emphasis placed on it by Spanish ministers in any discussion of the proposed terms.[25] Partly, this requirement derived from the traditionally militant Catholic stand of the Spanish crown, but it was also a shrewd political move, not only in that Dutch compliance with it would serve Spanish prestige internationally but also because the Dutch Catholics were

[22] *Consulta,* 12 Nov. 1620: A.G.S. Est. 2034; Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14005, fo. 35.

[23] *Ibid.,* fos. 35, 45; Alfred van der Essen, "L'alliance défensive hollando-vénétienne de 1619 et l'Espagne", in *Miscellanea historica in honorem Leonis van der Essen,* 2 vols. (Brussels and Paris, 1947), ii, pp. 819, 829.

[24] See the discourse of Carlos Coloma printed in Antonio Rodríguez Villa, *Ambrosio Spínola, primer marqués de los Balbases* (Madrid, 1904), pp. 385-6; Sultan Moulay Sidan to the States General, Marrakesh, 10 Apr. 1611, and other documents: *Les sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc de 1530 à 1845,* ed. H. de Castries, 2nd ser., *Archives et bibliothèques des Pays-Bas,* 6 vols. (Paris and The Hague, 1906-23), i, pp. 668-71.

[25] Poelhekke, *'T Uytgaen van den Treves,* pp. 37, 40; memorandum of Juan de Çirica: A.G.S. Est. 634, doc. 318. A recent article seems to make the mistake of confusing the religious issue of 1621 with the very different and more decisive religious issue that prevailed before 1598: see G. Parker, "Why did the Dutch Revolt last Eighty Years", *Trans. Roy. Hist. Soc.,* 5th ser., xxvi (1976), p. 62.

such a large and potentially active minority in the republic. In Madrid the mounting religious strife in the United Provinces after 1609 — both the growing dissension among the Protestants, and the persistence of the Catholics in the face of increased Calvinist pressure — was regarded as the one solid gain from the truce,[26] and anything likely to undermine Dutch domestic stability still further was considered highly desirable. At the same time the demand explicitly acknowledged Dutch political and religious independence and demonstrated the changed and strictly limited nature of Spanish aims. The second condition, concerning the Scheldt, was doubtless partly meant to involve the interests of the Southern Netherlands in those of the empire as a whole with respect to the confrontation with the Dutch Republic. However, it is quite clear that the revival of Antwerp was above all intended to restore part of Europe's north-south carrying trade to direct Spanish control and reduce the role of Holland, thereby stripping the Dutch of the gains they had made since the closure of the Scheldt and particularly since 1609.[27] The last demand, concerning the Indies, reflected the fears of the councils of the Indies and of Portugal. The Spanish intention was to prevent the formation of the West India Company, secure unqualified acceptance from the States General of Dutch exclusion from the New World and salvage at least a part of the Portuguese-Asian trade. In other words, the third condition was designed to bring Dutch colonial expansion to a complete halt.

The Spanish conditions, though they did not directly threaten the existence of the republic, stood no chance whatever of being accepted, precisely because they did threaten its prosperity and well-being. The very groups who stood to lose most from war and were least swayed by thoughts of liberating Flanders from the Spanish yoke, the merchants of Holland, would have had to make the greatest sacrifices to obtain a new truce. The almost miraculous economic boom of the previous twelve years simply could not continue beyond 1621 whether the States General gave in to Spanish pressure or not. In the circumstances the unenthusiastic were forced into the camp of Prince Maurice and the war party. Nevertheless, mere rejection of the Spanish terms was quite inadequate as a popular explanation and justification of the war. The status of the Scheldt was of concern to relatively few and its opening would actually have favoured some parts of the country,[28] while colonial commerce hardly seemed a

[26] Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14005, fos. 36^{v}-37; *consulta*, 30 July 1621, fo. 5: A.G.S. Est. 2035.

[27] Coloma to Philip III, 8 June 1620, fo. 2: A.G.S. Est. 2308.

[28] Isabella to Philip IV, 22 Sept. 1621: *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne*, ed. Lonchay and Cuvelier, ii, doc. 109. Indeed, some Zeeland towns, notably Flushing, seemed quite anxious that it be reopened; see A. Gielens, "Onderhandelingen met Zeeland over de opening der Schelde, 1612-13", *Antwerpsch archievenblad*, 2nd ser., vi (1931), pp. 194-9.

fundamental issue in the four inland provinces now faced with heavier taxation and other burdens. Consequently, there was some reversion in the Dutch popular pamphlets of 1621 to the stirring themes of an earlier epoch:[29] the cruel and oppressive Spaniard was determined still to place the Dutch once again under his despotic rule. At the same time, however, there was added some additional propaganda more relevant to the times. War, it was held, would serve both the economic and political interests of the republic.[30] The economic argument, which was to play a major role in Dutch as well as Spanish thinking throughout the struggle, perhaps made little sense with respect to Holland, but in other areas, notably Zeeland where the truce had brought stagnation rather than growth,[31] war did offer some real attractions, especially the prospect of trade with the Americas and privateering. As for political aims Dutch pamphleteers claimed that the republic would never be fully secure while Spain remained so powerful, and that numerous advantages would follow were Spain to be weakened. It is difficult to see that they were wrong.

The conflict envisaged in Brussels and Madrid during the course of the deliberations of 1618-21 was emphatically not a war of conquest. Spanish officials, mindful of the strength of the Dutch defences, proposed either a limited use of the army of Flanders in conjunction with economic pressures or else, in some cases, of economic pressures alone. Cristóbal de Benavente, *veedor general* of the army of Flanders, urged the conquest of Cleves and a limited thrust in the Arnhem region, combined with embargoes in the peninsula and the Spanish viceroyalties in Italy, and a river blockade in Flanders and north-west Germany.[32] Others such as Carlos Coloma made similar proposals.[33] Hurtuño de Urizar, however, a Basque official of long experience in Flanders, proposed keeping the army entirely on the defensive and defeating the republic by economic means alone — in particular, the breaking of the Dutch north-south carrying trade by embargo.[34] The peculiarly Spanish inclination towards a systematic use of embargoes had, in fact, been generally apparent both in Spain and Flanders since the sporadic attempts at such action in the years 1598-1607. Philip

[29] Anon., *Propositie ghedaen vanden Ambassadeur Peckius* (The Hague, 1621; Knuttel 3187); anon., *Aen-merckinge op de propositie vanden Ambassadeur Peckius* (Amsterdam, 1621; Knuttel 3196), p. 8, states that Peckius had demanded that: "We should recognize the king of Spain as our lord and submit ourselves to the Spanish yoke"; see also anon., *Den Compaignon vanden verresienden Waerschovwer* (The Hague, 1621; Knuttel 3204), fo. 2[v].

[30] *Den Compaignon*, fos. 3-4.

[31] *Ibid.*, fo. 3; anon., *Resolutie by de heeren Raeden ende Vroetschappen der Stadt Aherlem* [*sic*] *ghenomen* (Haarlem, 1630; Knuttel 4009), p. 8; F. Snapper, *Oorlogsinvloeden op de overzeese handel van Holland, 1551-1719* (Amsterdam, 1959), pp. 63, 65-6.

[32] Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14005, fos. 37-9.

[33] Rodríguez Villa, *Ambrosio Spínola*, pp. 387-9.

[34] Recommendations of Hurtuño de Uriçar, 3 Feb. 1618: A.G.S. Est. 2847.

III's embargoes had undoubtedly made some impact.[35] It was an appealing argument that much greater success could be achieved simply by maintaining the embargoes longer and with more determination than before. Thus, embargo had a central place in all Spanish strategic thinking of the period. The strategy actually decided on in the first instance was that favoured by most officials, a limited land war combined with economic pressure.

The expiry of the truce in April 1621 was followed not by any immediate outbreak of hostilities, but by months of general uncertainty both in the Low Countries and the peninsula, to which the death of Philip III a few days before the expiry added considerably.[36] However, to those in the know, the situation in the spring and summer of 1621 was much less unclear than it was generally, since there was no sign of any shift in previously stated positions at either Madrid or The Hague, and the young king, Philip IV, was clearly resolved to follow the path indicated by his father. The inaction of the army of Flanders was in fact due to its lack of preparedness and especially its lack of cash.[37] Only in the economic sphere did the conflict begin in earnest in April 1621. Dutch vessels were ordered out of all ports of the empire in Europe and North Africa and everything owned or manufactured by subjects of the republic was placed under a total embargo. A massive exodus took place from Flanders, the peninsula and southern Italy. At San Sebastián the entire Dutch contingent left port on the day of the expiry,[38] while on the Spanish east coast the viceroy of Valencia within five days expelled 41 Dutch vessels including 11 from the salt pans of La Mata alone.[39] Eventually, however, the land war began also. Spínola, commander of the Flanders army, first of all moved against Dutch-occupied Jülich which fell after seven months of siege in February 1622; during the summer of 1622 he invaded Dutch Brabant capturing Steenbergen and laying siege to Bergen-op-Zoom. This siege, though not discussed by Alcalá-Zamora, was in fact a major turning-point of the war. It was not merely unsuccessful but rather a ruinous failure in which Spínola's strike-force of 18,000 men melted away through death and desertion to 7,000 in only a few months.[40] Not surprisingly,

[35] J. H. Kernkamp, *De handel op den vijand, 1572-1609*, 2 vols. (Utrecht, 1931-4), ii, pp. 227-8, 252, 260, 271; E. Sluiter, "Dutch-Spanish Rivalry in the Caribbean Area, 1594-1609", *Hispanic Amer. Hist. Rev.*, xxviii (1948), pp. 170, 176-7.

[36] Isabella to Philip IV, 26 July 1621: *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne*, ed. Lonchay and Cuvelier, ii, doc. 73; Poelhekke, *'T Uytgaen van den Treves*, pp. 1-3.

[37] *Consultas*, 17 and 30 July 1621: A.G.S. Est. 2035.

[38] Martín de Amezquita to Philip IV, 14 Apr. 1621: A.G.S. Guerra 873.

[39] Viceroy of Valencia to Philip IV, 18 Apr. 1621: Consejo de Aragón, Archivo de la Corona de Aragón, Barcelona (hereafter A.C.A. C.A.), 684 86/2.

[40] *Consulta*, 27 Oct. 1622, fo. 3: A.G.S. Est. 2036.

the setback caused a considerable shock in Madrid and indeed provoked a marked reaction against the whole concept of using the army to put pressure on the republic.[41] Spanish ministers, with Olivares increasingly prominent among them,[42] concluded that besieging Dutch towns was nothing but a waste of men and money. The Council of State reckoned that in Flanders in 1622 it had spent to no purpose some 3,700,000 ducats from the Spanish and Italian revenues.[43] The decision to dispense entirely with the army as a means of putting pressure on the Dutch, though not finally taken until after 1623, was certainly in the making. In December 1623 Brussels was instructed to reduce the monthly expenditure on the army from 300,000 to 250,000 ducats and to increase naval spending in Flanders from 20,000 to 70,000 ducats a month.[44]

The Breda campaign of 1624-5, the most famous Spanish success of the war and the inspiration for one of Velázquez's greatest paintings, was begun on Spínola's own initiative, possibly to redeem his reputation, but in any case to the utter dismay, when they learnt the news, of Philip IV's ministers in Madrid.[45] Breda was even better fortified than Bergen-op-Zoom and it was considered in Madrid that, even if Breda fell, the siege would serve only to decimate once again both the army and the king's coffers. Indeed, even Spínola's triumph, the taking of Breda and the enormous impact of its capture in the capitals of Europe, failed to weaken in the least the conviction now deeply entrenched in Spain that besieging Dutch towns was completely pointless, leading inevitably and only to "little fruit and much cost".[46] There was some half-hearted discussion as to whether Dutch territory could be usefully invaded without besieging towns, but from this nothing emerged. After the fall of Breda, Isabella, Philip's aunt and the governess of the Southern Netherlands, was instructed to keep the army strictly on the defensive.[47] During the period 1625-35 the army of Flanders remained under these orders and, apart from the brief invasion of 1629 to Amersfoort intended to force the lifting of the siege of Den Bosch by the Dutch, fought only *guerra defensiva*. The Breda campaign, then, led to what by any standard is an extraordinary situation. A predominantly land power, much weaker than its opponent at sea, having won a resounding victory on land, resolved to dispense with its land forces and defeat its enemy by economic pressure alone.

[41] *Consultas*, 23 Oct. 1622, and 16 Sept. and 26 Oct. 1623: A.G.S. Est. 2037.
[42] *Consultas*, 14 and 24 June 1623: A.G.S. Est. 2037.
[43] *Consulta*, 14 Apr. 1623: A.G.S. Est. 2037.
[44] La Cueva to Philip IV, 4 Jan. 1624: A.G.S. Est. 2038; Isabella to Philip IV, 7 Jan. 1624: A.G.S. Est. 2038.
[45] *Consultas*, 18 Sept. and 5 Dec. 1624: A.G.S. Est. 2038.
[46] *Consultas*, 11 Mar., 29 June and 28 Sept. 1625: A.G.S. Est. 2039.
[47] Rodríguez Villa, *Ambrosio Spínola*, pp. 440, 446-7; Alcalá-Zamora, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte*, p. 210.

This economic pressure certainly included a measure of naval warfare. Spain possessed in 1621 substantial naval forces at Cádiz, Lisbon, on the Basque coast and elsewhere and, in 1621, new *armadas* were established in Flanders and Galicia and at Gibraltar. However, these forces were not used, at any rate before 1639, to challenge the Dutch navy as such. Their role was to protect Spanish and Portuguese traffic, especially the Atlantic *flotas*, and to disrupt Dutch commercial shipping. As regards the latter, especially high hopes were placed on the *armada* of Flanders and, initially, on the Gibraltar squadron, on which some 150,000 ducats yearly was spent in the early 1620s.[48] But the squadron and straits of Gibraltar in the event posed a much less considerable hindrance to the Dutch Mediterranean trade than Spanish ministers had hoped. Although some Dutch vessels were lost at Gibraltar, the Dutch admiralty colleges countered the threat by forming the *straetvaert* into large, heavily armed convoys, usually of over fifty vessels carrying some seven hundred guns, convoys that were too strong for the Gibraltar squadron to tackle.[49] Despite this, the Mediterranean convoy system was a major nuisance and expense for Dutch merchants and added considerably to the strain on the resources of the Dutch navy. Nevertheless, only the *armada* of Flanders caused heavy losses to the Dutch at sea.

At first, the *armada* of Flanders grew slowly. In 1622 there were only four *coningsschepen* (king's ships), though these captured a dozen Dutch vessels in that same year, mostly carriers of salt and wine from western France.[50] After the capture of Bergen-op-Zoom, however, the build-up in the Flemish ports acquired new momentum.[51] By 1625 there were twelve *coningsschepen*, a number of privateers and plans for acquiring up to fifty royal vessels and, although expansion ceased with the financial collapse of 1629 in Flanders, there were, throughout the 1630s and 1640s, some twenty large warships in Philip's northern *armada*. To this force the Dutch admiralty authorities could find no answer. Having formed the *straetvaert* into a costly convoy system, the Dutch were by 1625 forced to use convoys on every route to the Danish Sound, Norway and Muscovy, as well as to London, Yarmouth, "Scotland" (usually Newcastle), St. Malo, Nantes,

[48] La Cueva to Philip IV, 22 Sept. and 26 Dec. 1621: A.G.S. Est. 2310; Philip IV to commander of the *armada del estrecho*, 2 Feb. 1623: A.G.S. Guerra 888.

[49] Records of the Admiralty Colleges, verzameling Bisdom, Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague (hereafter A.R.A. Bis.), vol. 48 ii, pp. 89, 164, 491. The fifty-one *straetvaerders* of the convoy of May 1622 carried a total of 720 guns, an immense armament for the time.

[50] "Relacion de las pressas q ha hecho el armada", 8 Oct. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 2312.

[51] A.R.A. Bis. 52, fo. 106; A.R.A. Bis. 53, fo. 140; A.R.A. Bis 54, fo. 305; A.R.A. Bis. 55, fo. 63^{v}.

Bordeaux and Bayonne.[52] However, it was simply not possible to convey all Dutch sea-borne trade by convoys and, in any case, the *armada* was too powerful for any but the strongest escort squadrons. Immense effort was put into blockading the *armada*'s bases, Ostend, Nieuwpoort and Dunkirk, with usually thirty and often more Dutch warships patrolling the Flemish coast, but it was impossible, given the conditions of the time (especially after storms and during the long winter nights), to make the blockade fully effective.[53] The *armada* consequently carried out some extremely punishing sweeps,[54] the first in November 1625 when several dozen Dutch vessels were seized and sunk. From January to March 1627 the *armada*, together with the privateers, took 38 Dutch and English vessels and sank a further 18. In the first two months of 1628 the *armada* sank 3 vessels and captured 36 Dutch and English prizes, valued at 400,000 ducats — or more than the entire cost of maintaining the army of Flanders for a period of six weeks. In the winter of 1636-7 the *coningsschepen* took 35 prizes and in 1642, among numerous others, captured a convoy of 9 returning from Archangel with furs and caviare worth 130,000 ducats. In view of such losses it is not surprising that, as Spanish officials noted with satisfaction, freight and insurance rates in Holland were forced up drastically.[55] Between 1625 (when it was already much higher than in 1621) and 1645, the cost of shipping timber from Norway to Holland increased by over 50 per cent and at times by nearly 100 per cent. The benefit of this sharp rise in Dutch costs was of course mainly enjoyed by Holland's competitors.

The *armada* of Flanders, besides disrupting Dutch merchant shipping, was also employed against another major pillar of Dutch prosperity — the North Sea fisheries. It had long been a Spanish aim to attack the famous herring fishery, which was thought to account for some three-fifths of the total Dutch fish revenues, earning over 600,000 ducats yearly.[56] Some herring-busses were sunk as early as

[52] Papers of the Dutch Admiralty Colleges (hereafter A.R.A. adm.) 2456, Res. Coll. Zeeland, 21 Feb., 29 June, 11 July and 3 Oct. 1626; the Bordeaux convoys sometimes took the Calais *vaerders* and others with them; at other times separate convoys were organized for Calais, Rouen, St. Malo and Nantes.

[53] A.R.A. Bis. 51, fos. 18-19; A.R.A. Bis. 52, fos. 71-2; A.R.A. Bis. 53, fo. 33. The blockade force was strengthened and its official fire-power raised from over 600 to over 700 guns in 1627: A.R.A. Bis. 54, fos. 305^{v}-307.

[54] Alcalá-Zamora, *op. cit.*, p. 205; La Cueva to Philip IV, 23 Apr. 1627: A.G.S. Est. 2318; Isabella to Philip IV, 11 Mar. 1628: A.G.S. Est. 2321; E. Stols, *De Spaanse Brabanders of de handelsbetrekkingen der zuidelijke Nederlanden met de Iberische wereld* (Brussels, 1971), pp. 172-6.

[55] La Cueva to Philip IV, 6 Mar. 1628: A.G.S. Est. 2321; J. Schreiner, "Die Niederländer und die norwegische Holzausfuhr im 17. Jahrhundert", *Tijd. Gesch.*, xlix (1934), p. 324.

[56] *Analecta Vaticano-Belgica*, 2nd ser., *Nonciature de Flandre*, vi (1938), pp. 658-9; P. J. Blok, "Een merkwaardig aanvalsplan gericht tegen visscherij en handel der vereenigde Nederlanden in de eerste helft der 17de eeuw", *Bijdragen en mededelingen van het historisch genootschap*, xix (1898), pp. 8-9.

1622 but the real pressure began in October 1625 when the *armada* caught the South Holland division of the herring fleet off the Scottish coast, destroying 80 busses according to Spanish sources and 60 according to reports from Newcastle.[57] The States General assigned as many warships as was feasible to the protection of the fisheries (19 in 1626) but the overburdened admiralty colleges, hampered by a constant shortage of cash, could not cope.[58] Even when naval escorts were up to strength, which was rare, it was difficult to shield the herring fleets from attack because the size and complexity of their nets compelled the busses to spread over a wide area. In 1626 there were more losses, while in October 1627 the Dunkirkers crushed part of the naval escort and captured and sank many dozens of herring-busses.[59] Another heavy attack occurred in 1632, while in August 1635 the *armada* ravaged the Zuider Zee division of the *groote visscherij* on its way to the fishing grounds, capturing 906 herring-men and sinking 89 herring-busses, according to Spanish sources, and over 100, according to the town of Enkhuizen, which took the heaviest loss.[60] In 1637 well over one hundred more busses were destroyed; and in 1639,[61] and again in 1642, when Zierikzee alone lost 18 herring-busses, there was further considerable damage.[62] Some idea of the scale of losses to the Dutch herring towns is given by the reports of the States of Holland to the States General on the situation at Maassluis, the leading herring port of the South Holland area supplying the Rotterdam market.[63] The South Holland fleets formed one of the three main groups of fleets, those of Zeeland, South Holland and the Zuider Zee constituting the Dutch herring fishery. The three were of roughly equal size though the Zeeland fleets formed a slightly smaller entity than the other two.[64] From 1631 to 1634 Maassluis, besides losing 25 non-herring fishing craft, lost 162 busses with their nets, affecting nearly two thousand fishermen; another 50 were lost in the years 1635-7 when Enkhuizen, in fact, took much heavier losses. Herring-busses, sizeable craft with an average crew size of ten, though often manned by as many as sixteen men, were

[57] *Consulta,* 25 Nov. 1625: A.G.S. Est. 2039; A.R.A. Bis. 52, fos. 260^{v}, 271, 277; *Calendar of State Papers: Venetian, 1625-6,* p. 213.

[58] A.R.A. Bis. 54, fos. 130, 139, 163^{v}, 165-6.

[59] *Consulta,* 8 Oct. 1627: A.G.S. Est. 2041.

[60] A.R.A. adm. 2458, Res. Coll. Zeeland, 29 July 1632; A.R.A. Bis. 62, fo. 191; *Memorial histórico español,* 49 vols. (Madrid, 1851-1948), xiii, pp. 247-8, 272, 308; *Calendar of State Papers: Venetian, 1632-6,* pp. 44-5.

[61] *Memorial histórico español,* xiv, pp. 201-2.

[62] Lieuwe van Aitzema, *Historie of verhael van saken van staet en oorlogh in, ende ontrent de Vereenigde Nederlanden,* 14 vols. (The Hague, 1667-71), v, pp. 360-1.

[63] A.R.A. Bis. 62, fo. 59; Aitzema, *op. cit.,* vi, p. 624.

[64] The naval escort for the Zeeland fleets was fixed in ratio of 5:7 or, in some years, of 4:6 as against both the South Holland and Zuider Zee divisions: A.R.A. Bis. 50, fo. 60, and A.R.A. Bis. 52, fo. 72.

officially reckoned as being worth over 5,000 guilders each, so that in this seven-year period Maassluis lost one million guilders worth of herring gear, the equivalent of 350,000 Spanish ducats. If one counts this as half the damage suffered by one-third of the total herring fleet during about half of the period of heavy Spanish pressure (surely a conservative estimate), the total damage, without counting loss of herring sales or ransoms paid for captured fishermen, may well have been in excess of twelve million guilders. Nevertheless, despite the extent of this destruction, Spanish naval activity has scarcely figured in recent accounts of the herring fishery in the seventeenth century,[65] though it has been suggested, contrary to what was once commonly believed, that the herring fleets were in fact in decline well before the first Anglo-Dutch war of 1652-4. It has been noticed that certain herring fleets, notably those of Schiedam and Delftshaven, both belonging to the South Holland division,[66] contracted markedly in the first half of the century. What should be noted in addition, however, is that the decline at Schiedam at least, from an average of 49 busses in the decade 1616-25 to only 23 in the decade 1626-35 (a loss of more than half) is very abrupt, suggesting not a gradual process but a sharp setback in the 1620s and 1630s — caused, surely, by Spanish naval action. Certainly other factors besides the Dunkirkers can be pointed to as contributing to the herring recession in these years. The river blockade damaged herring sales, at least briefly, while the salt shortage contributed to the sharp increase in herring prices in Holland after 1627[67] and, possibly, to the slight shrinking in the proportion of herring in Dutch exports to the Baltic.[68] But these phenomena were also consequences of Spanish actions and ones designed to complement the activity of the *armada* and, to that extent, they would tend to strengthen the argument that there is a direct link between Spanish pressure and the decline of the Dutch herring fishery.

Yet the *armada* of Flanders, for all its undoubted effectiveness, should not be seen as being in itself Spain's alternative to the army of Flanders as the principal means of attacking the Dutch. When Philip

[65] Kranenburg does not mention the Spanish campaign and nor does van der Woude in his study of the Noorderkwartier, though it is mentioned in some older works such as that of de Jonge: H. A. Kranenburg, *De zeevisscherij van Holland in de tijd der Republiek* (Amsterdam, 1946); A. M. van der Woude, *Het Noorderkwartier*, 2 vols. (A. A. G. Bijdragen, xvi, Wageningen, 1972); J. C. de Jonge, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche zeewesen*, 5 vols. (Haarlem, 1858-62), i, pp. 235-6, 262.

[66] Kranenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-4, 217-18; H. Wätjen, "Zur Statistik der holländischen Heringfischerei im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter*, xvi (1910), p. 159.

[67] N. W. Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis*, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1943-64), i, p. 85, and ii, pp. 277, 658.

[68] A. Christensen, *Dutch Trade to the Baltic about 1600* (Copenhagen and The Hague, 1941), diagram 20; van der Woude, *Noorderkwartier*, ii, p. 406.

IV's ministers stated, as did the duque del Infantado in July 1622, that the "greatest hostility that can be shown to the Dutch is to deprive them absolutely and totally of their commerce, increase the *armada* of Flanders and arrange matters at the Straits [of Gibraltar] so that they enter and leave [the Mediterranean] with difficulty",[69] what they meant was that naval action was to be part of a wider programme in which the embargoes were to be the main element. Alcalá-Zamora, though he misses several of the main points concerning the Dunkirkers and their effect, nevertheless maintains that the naval offensive was the principal Spanish weapon and dismisses the embargoes, on which he says little, as unworkable, ineffective and of only marginal importance.[70] In fact, however, Spain kept within fairly modest limits in taking the offensive at sea. Annual expenditure on the *armada* of Flanders never exceeded 600,000 ducats and was usually more in the region of 400,000 ducats or less — about one-eighth of the spending on the army.[71] Arguably, the new commercial system was considerably costlier, required a greater administrative effort and had a far heavier impact on the Dutch and Iberian economies.

The departure of several hundred Dutch vessels from Philip IV's European dominions in April 1621, though it severely jolted Europe's commercial structure, was only a first step in the laying of the embargoes. Dutch flags and passports were no longer seen in the peninsula, but Dutch merchants were able, at first, to continue their trade there by various means. Dutch cargoes were transported in neutral shipping, especially English and Hanseatic,[72] while some Dutch vessels continued to visit Spanish-controlled ports under the pretence of being neutrals. Even so, the setback was considerable. Many of the eight to nine hundred Dutch vessels which had traded annually with the Spanish territories during the last years of the truce[73] could no longer be used, causing a serious slump in shipping in Holland.[74]

[69] *Consulta,* 6 July 1622, fo. 1^{v}: A.G.S. Est. 2036.

[70] Alcalá-Zamora, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte,* pp. 182-4.

[71] "Relacion de lo q SM^{d} ha menester . . ." gives 600,000 ducats for the peak year 1626: A.G.S. Hacienda 621; the *consulta* of 8 Dec. 1630 gives under 300,000 ducats for 1631: A.G.S. Est. 2148; and the "Relacion de la provission . . ." gives 349,800 for 1644: A.G.S. Est. 2062.

[72] H. Taylor, "Trade, Neutrality and the 'English Road', 1630-48", *Econ. Hist. Rev.,* 2nd ser., xxv (1972), pp. 236-60; H. Kellenbenz, *Unternehmerkräfte im Hamburger Portugal- und Spanienhandel, 1590-1625* (Hamburg, 1954), p. 63.

[73] Francisco de Retama, in his "Conssideraciones . . .", fo. 4, estimates 821 vessels yearly: A.G.S. Est. 2847; Alcalá-Zamora, in what is presumably a misprint, gives the figure of 8,000: Alcalá-Zamora, *op. cit.,* p. 179.

[74] La Cueva to Philip IV, 17 Oct. 1621: A.G.S. Est. 2310; La Cueva to Philip IV, 11 Mar. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 2311. That there was a shipping slump in Holland in or around 1621 is not in dispute; however, the phenomenon is usually explained without any reference to Spain. See Christensen, *Dutch Trade to the Baltic,* p. 88; M. Bogucka, "Amsterdam and the Baltic in the First Half of the Seventeenth Century", *Econ. Hist. Rev.,* 2nd ser., xxvi (1973), pp. 437-8.

Moreover Dutch ships still trading with the peninsula after April 1621 had to sail mainly with foreign crews, which forced thousands of Dutch seamen out of the carrying trade, though there was now the alternative of an expanding navy and the newly-founded West India Company. The carrying of salt from Portugal, in which a high proportion of the Dutch ships visiting the peninsula had been involved was continued, though sporadically, with French and particularly Scottish crews — as the States General explained to the Moroccan sultan, baffled as to why numerous Scots sailors were suddenly falling into the hands of his captains off Portugal and why The Hague desired him to treat these Scotsmen as he would Dutchmen.[75] Yet despite the early impact of the embargoes, ministers in Madrid, aware that the Dutch could not easily be forced to give in and confronted daily by evidence of loopholes, were at first highly dissatisfied with the working of their measures.

Little by little the embargoes were extended and refined. Local authorities in the ports were instructed to insist that neutral shippers to the peninsula bring certificates from their ports of embarkation, signed by magistrates and stating that cargoes had not originated in the republic and were not owned by Dutch subjects.[76] Ships owned by neutrals but built in Holland after the expiry of the truce were also placed under embargo. Appeals from the royal Council of Finance, disturbed by the shortage of copper after 1621,[77] and from the authorities concerned with organizing American trade in Seville,[78] hampered by the growing shortage of naval stores, that Dutch ships be allowed with German crews to bring at least some supplies, were repeatedly rejected: it was made clear in the Council of State that the exclusion of the Dutch was to take priority over every other consideration no matter how vital. Early in 1622 the *corregidores* (district officers) of the Castilian ports, under new instructions, began inspecting neutral shipping more methodically than previously and the first English and Hanseatic ships were seized for carrying Dutch goods.[79] In Galicia similar new boarding procedures were introduced in 1623-4 by the captain-general, the marqués de Cerralvo.[80] Nevertheless evidence continued to accumulate that local officials were often less than zealous in imposing the embargoes and that the system of

[75] States General to Moulay Sidan, The Hague, 20 Jan. 1623: *Les sources inédites de l'histoire du Maroc*, ed. Castries, 2nd ser., *Archives et bibliothèques des Pays-Bas*, i, pp. 261-2.

[76] *Consulta*, 27 Nov. 1621: A.G.S. Est. 2645.

[77] *Consulta*, 7 July and 3 Nov. 1621: A.G.S. Est. 2645.

[78] Antonio Domínguez Ortiz, "Guerra económica y comercio extranjero en el reinado de Felipe IV", *Hispania*, xxiii (1963), p. 73.

[79] *Corregidor* of Guipúzcoa to Philip IV, 1 May 1622: A.G.S. Est. 2847.

[80] Cerralvo to Philip IV, Corunna, 26 May 1623: A.G.S. Guerra 898; Cerralvo to Philip IV, 19 Feb. 1624: A.G.S. Guerra 901.

certificates was as yet very imperfect.[81] A case particularly noted in Madrid was that of a New Christian of Lisbon, Jorge Rodríguez, who had been arrested for infringing the embargoes and in whose possession was a letter from a Jewish merchant of Hamburg, Duarte Esteves de Piña, revealing that the senate of Hamburg was openly providing merchants with false certificates asserting that they had sworn before magistrates that they were complying with the embargoes, when in fact no such oaths were actually taken. In October 1623 the crown, using special commissioners, simultaneously put into effect an *embargo general* in Andalusia and Portugal, seizing 160 neutral and ostensibly neutral vessels, including 44 (the largest group) in San Lúcar and 33 in Cádiz.[82] Trade was brought to a standstill for months and there was a storm of protest from foreign ambassadors, but the exceptionally thorough search that took place led to numerous foreign merchants suffering fines and confiscations for acting as intermediaries for the Dutch and the arrest of several secret correspondents of Dutch merchants who had been operating along the coast from Málaga to Lisbon.

Such findings made it clear that there was a limit to how far commercial regulation could be tightened while employing the existing administrative machinery.[83] If more was to be achieved, new and more efficient institutions were needed. Already in December 1622 Philip IV had set up a new central economic committee, the *junta de comercio,* to advise on virtually every aspect of Iberian economic life, but with the specific purpose of finding means of rendering the measures against the Dutch more effective.[84] Also in 1622 it was decided that implementation of the embargoes could no longer be entrusted to the ordinary local administration, particularly not in the most vital areas, Andalusia and Portugal, and plans were accordingly drawn up for establishing more specialized and readily disciplined officers. Commissioners of commerce were appointed in Seville, San Lúcar, Lisbon, Oporto, Bilbao and other ports and also in the Canaries and the Azores where the Dutch had begun to go for many of the products they could no longer obtain in the peninsula.[85] Then in October 1624, in a crucial step towards a reformed commercial administration, Philip IV set up the *almirantazgo de los países septentrionales*, based in Seville, to supersede completely the previous

[81] Fernando Alvia de Castro to Philip IV, Lisbon, 8 and 19 Oct. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 2847; Kellenbenz, *Unternehmerkräfte*, p. 26.

[82] Instructions to Pedro de Arze: A.G.S. Contaduría Mayor de Cuentas (hereafter A.G.S. C.M.C.) 2267 expediente 10; papers relating to the *embargo general* in San Lúcar: A.G.S. C.M.C. 1437; Pedro de Arze to Philip IV, Cádiz, 18 Feb. 1624: A.G.S. Guerra 895; Kellenbenz, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

[83] *Consultas,* 6 July, 28 Sept. and 8 Oct. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 2036.

[84] Philip IV to Montesclaros, 1 Dec. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 2847.

[85] "Los comissarios q su M^{d} ha nombrado para lo del comercio": A.G.S. Est. 2847.

arrangements for the control of trade between Andalusia and northern Europe.[86] Partly, the *almirantazgo* was intended to organize heavily armed convoys sailing between San Lúcar and Dunkirk, but in this it was not very successful. Its major importance was as an extremely formidable customs apparatus which by 1626 was staffed by sixty regular officers operating in all the Andalusian ports. In 1625 an *almirantazgo* was also established in Flanders, based at St. Winoksbergen near Dunkirk, with the purpose of acting in conjunction with the body at Seville.[87] In the Southern Netherlands and eventually also in the Hanseatic towns the *almirantazgos*, using a system of permanent residents, were able to develop a considerably more sophisticated framework of procedures and certificates than had previously existed. In addition, to handle the many cases arising from infringements of the embargoes with reasonable dispatch, the crown removed such cases from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts and set up a special judicial structure for commercial cases at the head of which it placed the *tribunal mayor del almirantazgo* formed in 1625 at Madrid.

Clearly the impact of the new methods was considerable. If the *embargo general* had only a temporary effect, the new boarding procedures, the *almirantazgos* and the commercial courts transformed conditions in Spain's ports for good. The city administrations of Seville, San Lúcar, Málaga and elsewhere protested repeatedly that their trade was being ruined,[88] but the crown remained unmoved. Philip IV's ministers preferred to suffer loss of trade and commercial revenues if in so doing they could injure the Dutch. The pressure was unremitting. One Spanish writer declared that:

> with the *almirantazgo* all the trade of the entire world passed to Holland and Amsterdam . . . for the *almirantazgo*, armed with the decrees against contraband, especially that of 15 October 1625, closed the door to all commerce, of friends and enemies alike, with their certificates, inspections, condemnations and confiscations such that within a short time, Spain was without trade, ships, supplies or foodstuffs, customs revenues fell and the produce of the country was without means of exit.[89]

And indeed, the evidence for the contraction of those sectors of Castilian commerce in which the Dutch had predominated until 1621, while the share of neutrals sharply increased, is generally so substantial that the historian has either to attribute the phenomenon to problems of supply affecting the Dutch alone, of which there is no indication, or accept that in large measure the Dutch were shut out of

[86] Royal *cédula*, 4 Oct. 1624: A.G.S. Est. 2847; Domínguez Ortiz, "Guerra económica y comercio extranjero", pp. 78-9.

[87] *Ibid.*, p. 79.

[88] *Consulta de parte*, 11 Aug. 1627: A.G.S. Est. 4126; *consulta* of the *junta de comercio*, 30 Jan. 1626 and 28 Sept. 1627: A.G.S. Est. 2645; Seville to Philip IV, 7 Sept. 1627: A.G.S. Est. 2646.

[89] "Cavsas por donde crecio el comercio de Olanda y se hizo vn monopolio vniuersal": Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14005, fo. 27.

Castile by Spanish action. The export of Andalusian salt, which had been carried only by the Dutch, dwindled in the four years 1621-5 to virtually nothing.[90] Indications of a chronic shortage of copper, timber and other naval stores from 1621 are so frequent that it can scarcely be doubted that the supply of these materials to Spain was interrupted. In exporting to and carrying from Bilbao, Santander and San Sebastián, the English, French and other neutrals took a dramatically increased share of the trade from 1621 while at the same time the total value of trade to the north Castilian ports was almost exactly 10 per cent lower in the years 1621-4 than it had been in 1617-20 and, after 1625, much more than 10 per cent lower.[91] The conclusion must surely be that the Dutch carrying trade to Castile largely collapsed.

In eastern Spain, as in Castile, economic warfare against the Dutch was waged with considerable determination. The crown had three initial aims in the east of the peninsula:[92] to halt the supplying of Valencia, Barcelona and Alicante by the Dutch with the grain and fish which traditionally had been imported there in massive quantity, to deny the Dutch the use of the salt pans, especially those of La Mata and Ibiza, and to prevent the entry of Dutch goods into Castile from the neighbouring French port of Bayonne via Navarre and Aragón. In 1623 a fourth aim was added when, prompted by the *junta de comercio*, the crown sought to exclude spices from the Dutch East Indies, previously a major import at Alicante, by decreeing that in future, whatever merchants and ships brought the spices, only Portuguese spices registered in Lisbon could be admitted.[93] These aims, despite some evasion facilitated by the great strength of local institutions in the eastern viceroyalties, were on the whole achieved. As in Castile new boarding and inspection procedures were introduced at the ports and trade contracted, with sharp falls both in the importing of foodstuffs and the export of local wines, soap and fruit.[94] At a time when salt was short in much of Europe, the salt pans of Valencia and Ibiza fell almost into disuse owing to the efforts of the viceroys of Valencia and Mallorca to drive the Dutch away.[95] Spices were

[90] *Consulta*, 8 Mar. 1626: A.G.S. Hacienda 621.

[91] "Diezmos del mar de Castilla" gives the yearly revenue totals for the various north coast ports for 1617-28: A.G.S. C.M.C. 1950 expediente 1.

[92] "Para la prohibicion del comercio de los rebeldes", sections on Aragón, Catalonia and Valencia: A.G.S. Est. 2847.

[93] Protest of the *arrendador* of the *aduana* of Alicante: A.C.A. C.A. 603 12/16; "Discurso sobre la prohibicion de la entrada de pimienta de la India oriental en Alicante": A.C.A. C.A. 603 12/28.

[94] *Consulta*, 12 Sept. 1630: A.G.S. Est. 2648; "Diputats del gnl del reyno de Valencia", 24 Jan. 1629: A.C.A. C.A. 576.

[95] Viceroy of Valencia to Philip IV, 11 Feb. 1623: A.C.A. C.A. 603 doc. 5. Pedro Martínez de Vera stated that no salt was extracted from La Mata in 1622 owing to the "wars of Flanders": Pedro Martínez de Vera to Nicolas Mensa, 9 Mar. 1623: A.C.A. C.A. 603 doc. 6.

checked systematically for Lisbon seals, much to the distress of the city council of Alicante.[96] The loophole through Navarre proved extremely difficult to close and the cortes at Pamplona fought its hardest to resist the jurisdiction of the *tribunal mayor del almirantazgo* in Navarre; but it indicates the extent of royal determination that the question of Castilian procedures and jurisdiction in checking trade became the foremost constitutional issue in Navarre and remained so throughout the 1620s.

More important than the campaign in eastern Spain, however, though likewise unmentioned by Alcalá-Zamora, was the campaign in Portugal. The Portuguese ports were a major market for naval stores and one of the largest for Baltic grain, as well as being an important source of supply for sugar and other Brazilian products, and wines, olive oil and fruit; moreover, at Setúbal lay the richest salt pans in all Europe. Portuguese trade was in fact of fundamental importance in the overall structure of Dutch European commerce since much of the Dutch Baltic trade depended directly on it;[97] and Portugal, in the sphere of European trade, was in fact Philip IV's most vital possession after Andalusia. Consequently, throughout the period from 1621 until the Portuguese secession in 1640, the regulation of Portuguese commerce was a major preoccupation in Madrid. The decision to circumvent the local Portuguese administration, which in Spain was regarded as being particularly unreliable, was put into effect even before that relating to Andalusia. Despite the fact that since annexation in 1580 Madrid had been wary of antagonizing Portuguese feeling and had mostly left Portugal's administration as it was, from 1623 the crown did not hesitate to use Castilian officers to impose the embargoes and placed them under the jurisdiction not of the Council of Portugal but of the Council of War, staffed mainly by Castilian noblemen. Considerable tension developed between Portuguese and Castilian officers in Portugal, and also between the two councils in Madrid,[98] but there was no relaxation of the pressure. Diego López de Haro, who directed the operation in the Lisbon-Setúbal area, introduced the new boarding procedures and, by May 1623, reported to Madrid that the Dutch had given up Lisbon and were being driven from Setúbal.[99] One vessel manned by Scots escaped from Setúbal only by threatening López de Haro and his

[96] Alicante to Philip IV, 14 Mar. 1624: A.C.A. C.A. 603 12/3; viceroy of Valencia to Philip IV, 15 Jan. 1624: A.C.A. C.A. 603 12/14. On Ibiza, see the *consulta* of 8 Aug. 1631: A.G.S. Guerra 1030.

[97] Bogucka, "Amsterdam and the Baltic", pp. 437-8.

[98] López de Haro to Philip IV, Lisbon, 12 Aug. and 23 Sept. 1623: A.G.S. Guerra 898; *consulta* of the Council of Portugal, 2 Sept. 1624: Brit. Lib., Egerton MS.1131; and Brit. Lib., Egerton MS.1135, fo. 199^{v}.

[99] López de Haro to Philip IV, Lisbon, 7 Jan. 1623: A.G.S. Guerra 895; López de Haro to Philip IV, 5 Feb. 1623: A.G.S. Est. 2847; López de Haro to Philip IV, 19 May 1623: A.G.S. Guerra 988.

guards with a salvo of musket fire. Subsequently Castilian commissioners were also used in investigations at Oporto, Aveiro, Faro and elsewhere.[100] The Lisbon city council complained endlessly that the Castilian officers were ruining Portugal's trade with northern Europe,[101] but these complaints, though supported by the Council of Portugal, made no headway in the Council of State, which supported the Council of War. Spanish ministers did not deny that the new procedures were causing or contributing to the economic depression in Portugal but held that, if slump was the price of damaging the Dutch, then they were determined to pay it.[102] At Lisbon and Setúbal the slump was to continue, despite the granting after 1630 of licences to a limited number of Dutch shippers to take salt, until the revival in Dutch-Portuguese trade began in 1641. At Faro in the Algarve Dutch shipping almost entirely disappeared until 1641 and, despite a marked increase in neutral and especially Hanseatic traffic, the increase was a mere fraction of the massive loss caused by the absence of the Dutch.[103]

In Italy there was further scope for Spain in the economic struggle with the United Provinces. Italy, like Spain and Portugal, had since the 1590s imported via Holland great quantities of Baltic grain and other north European products.[104] Even in years of good harvest Dutch shipping was used extensively to carry Sicilian grain to Naples and Genoa and also in Italian coastal trade generally. Italy was also dependent on Dutch shipping to bring wool and salt from Alicante and La Mata. Generally, the Dutch-Italian trade was believed to be balanced heavily in favour of the Dutch, with Italy's stock of cash being drained gradually into the financing of other Dutch activities in the same way as Spanish silver.[105] The embargoes of April 1621 were imposed in the Spanish viceroyalty of Naples (in area the largest state in Italy), and in Sicily, Sardinia and the duchy of Milan,[106] while

[100] *Consulta* of the *junta de comercio*, 28 Apr. 1624: A.G.S. Est. 2847; *consultas*, 13 Jan. 1627 and 24 May 1628: A.G.S. Est. 2646.

[101] *Elementos para a história do Municipio de Lisboa*, ed. E. Freire de Oliveira, 6 vols. (Lisbon, 1882-91), iii, pp. 154, 417, 458, 525, 567, and iv, p. 145; V. Rau, *A exploração e o comercio do sal de Setúbal* (Lisbon, 1951), pp. 166, 174.

[102] *Consulta* of the Council of State, 27 Sept. 1624: Brit. Lib., Egerton MS.1131, fos. 288, 290-1.

[103] V. Rau, "Subsidios para o estudo do movimento dos portos de Faro e Lisboa durante o século XVII", *Anais da Academia portuguesa de história*, 2nd ser., v (1954), pp. 219-27.

[104] H. Wätjen, *Die Niederländer im Mittelmeergebiet zur Zeit ihrer höchsten Machstellung* (Berlin, 1909), pp. 122-3, 393, 398-403; G. Coniglio, *Il viceregno di Napoli en secolo XVII* (Rome, 1955), pp. 52 note, 110, 120 note; C. Trasselli, "Sul naviglio 'Nordico' in Sicilia nel secolo XVII", in *Homenaje a Jaime Vicens Vives*, 2 vols. (Barcelona, 1965-7), ii, pp. 689-702.

[105] *Consulta*, 6 July 1622, fo. 5: A.G.S. Est. 2036. See also Antonio Serra, *Breve trattato delle cause che possono far abbondare li regni d'oro e d'argento dove non sono miniere* (1613), repr. in *Scrittori classici italiani di economia politica*, ed. P. Custodi, Parte antica, 7 vols. (Milan, 1803-4), i.

[106] Philip III to Italian viceroys, 27 Mar. 1621: A.G.S. Est. 1883; Brit. Lib., Add. MS.18787, fos. 223^{v}-4.

Genoa, with which Spain had close ties, and the Papacy were subjected to heavy pressure not to deal with the Dutch in the matter of grain supplies.[107] The force of the Spanish measures in Italy, though doubtless rather less in overall impact than in the Iberian peninsula, was nevertheless considerable. The harvest of 1621-2 was bad throughout Italy, yet the Dutch were, except for a few specially licensed cases, prevented from carrying supplies to Naples, and they did not transport Sicilian grain; Genoa, despite maximum diplomatic effort in Madrid, could not obtain Spanish consent to call in the Dutch. Moreover, the viceroy of Naples who infringed the embargoes through fear of the consequences of food shortage in the largest city in Italy, was rebuked by the king with special severity and left in no doubt that in future he had to face riots in the streets rather than again call in the Dutch.[108] The Dutch were certainly cut out of the carrying trade between Spain and Italy with considerable injury to many Genoese merchants who had hitherto supplied Italy with Spanish products using Dutch shipping.[109] Of course, the republic still had reliable entrepôts at Livorno and Venice; and after 1630, at Naples, as in Portugal and Spain, the crown began to issue grain licences to Dutch shippers in times of food shortage. Nevertheless, it is clear that Dutch trade with Italy suffered through Spanish action in a variety of ways and that a substantial number of Dutch ships and crews, attempting to trade under foreign flags, were seized in Sicily and Naples during the course of the war.[110]

In northern Europe Spanish power in 1621 was based principally on Flanders and the adjoining areas of Germany where Spain maintained *plazas fuertes* (fortified strongholds). In this region economic warfare against the republic was waged in two phases, one of which, a total river and canal blockade, lasted only the four years from 1625 to 1629. Before and after these years only a limited embargo was in effect but it nevertheless deprived the Dutch of one of their best customers for shipping in Europe. Where Dutch ships had formerly crowded Flemish ports, from 1621 to 1646 they were almost completely absent and Flemish merchants used English and French shipping.[111] Furthermore, not only did they dispense with the Dutch in their carrying trade but, knowing only too well the rigours of the

[107] Philip IV to viceroy of Naples, 22 Jan. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 1884.

[108] Viceroy of Naples to Philip IV, 17 Mar. and 2 June 1622, and viceroy of Naples to Mateo de Aróstegui, 3 Mar. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 1884.

[109] Castañeda to Philip IV, Genoa, 22 June 1624: A.G.S. Est. 1936; Castañeda to Philip IV, 14 Oct. 1624: A.G.S. Est. 2038.

[110] Castañeda to Philip IV, 4 Dec. 1624: A.G.S. Est. 1936; viceroy of Sicily to Philip IV, 14 Sept. 1641: A.G.S. Est. 1893. There were 115 Dutch sailors prisoner in Sicily in 1629: A.R.A. Bis. 56, fo. 39.

[111] Stols, *De Spaanse Brabanders,* pp. 121-9; J. de Smet, "Le mouvement de la navigation au port d'Ostende, 1640-55", *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'histoire,* xciv (1930), pp. 208-14.

almirantazgos, ceased also importing Dutch cloth and manufactures via the *binnenstromen* (inland waterways) for re-export to the peninsula, Spanish Italy and Spanish America.[112] From 1622, however, Spanish ministers in Madrid began working towards something rather more rigorous. One of the most vital sectors of Dutch commerce was the export, via the inland waterways, of immense quantities of foodstuffs, materials and manufactures to the Spanish Netherlands, Liège and the Cologne region, and the importing by the same routes of Rhine and Maas timber, Flemish flax and other materials. The revenues collected by Isabella from this traffic were substantial, amounting in 1623 to over 800,000 florins or 270,000 Spanish ducats, the largest part from the Maas *comptoirs* and about 25 per cent from the *plazas fuertes* on the German routes, especially the Rhine, Lippe and Ems;[113] understandably, Philip's aunt was reluctant to relinquish them. The pressure from Spain however was such that in July 1625[114] a full river and canal blockade against the Dutch was put into effect, while in October the republic replied to this "insolent and tyrannical edict" with their own ban on inland trade,[115] a move interpreted in Brussels as an attempt to avoid loss of prestige. The Dutch ban was subsequently removed in 1627 in response to domestic pressure.

The blockade, contrary to the view of Alcalá-Zamora who alleges that it was ineffective,[116] had an enormous impact. Fleets of barges were turned back at Antwerp, and on the Maas, Rhine, Ems and other Flemish and German waterways.[117] Spanish claims that what remained of Zeeland's trade now collapsed totally, that the common people of Holland suffered heavily from the loss of outlets for their herring and other produce, and that Dutch cheese prices fell by half (not to mention one report that Dutch cheese, butter and wine prices tumbled to virtually nothing) are doubtless rather exaggerated, but nevertheless grounded in fact.[118] Cheese and butter prices in 1625-6, while they rose sharply at Antwerp and Brugge,[119] in Holland collapsed to almost their lowest level of the seventeenth century, and

[112] Stols, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

[113] Isabella to Philip IV, Brussels, 18 Apr. 1624, and enclosed list of river revenues: A.G.S. Est. 2038.

[114] Anon., *Ordinantie ons Heeren des Conincx, inhoudende verbodt vanden coophandel mette gherebelleerde provintien* (Brussels, 29 July 1625; Knuttel 3584); Aitzema, *Van staet en oorlogh*, ii, pp. 75-9. The ban was imposed on the Scheldt, Maas, Rhine, Lippe and Ems (at Lingen) and at Groenlo (Grol).

[115] Placcaet of 15 Oct. 1625: A.R.A. archive of the States General 4947 ii; A.R.A. adm. 2457, Res. Coll. Zeeland, 14 Oct. 1627.

[116] Alcalá-Zamora, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte*, pp. 184-6, 297-9.

[117] *Consulta*, 28 Sept. 1625: A.G.S. Est. 2039.

[118] La Cueva to Philip IV, 17 Sept. and 2 Oct. 1625: A.G.S. Est. 2315; *Analecta Vaticano-Belgica*, 2nd ser., vi, p. 661.

[119] *Dokumenten voor de geschiedenis van prijzen en lonen in Vlaanderen en Brabant, xv^e-xviii^e eeuw*, ed. C. Verlinden *et al.*, 3 vols. (Brugge, 1959-65), i, pp. 63, 85, 104-5, 112, and iii, pp. 712, 720, 734-5, 739.

there were sharp falls also in wine, herring and other fish prices.[120] At the same time Flemish flax and fruit and German timber and wine were held back causing, according to Spanish sources,[121] among other effects a rise of 30 per cent in the cost of shipbuilding timber in Holland. There was also a total ban on correspondence, which disrupted much of Antwerp's insurance business in the republic. However, the blockade was soon defeated by its own drastic effect. Food shortage, ruinous price rises and mounting difficulty in supplying the Spanish garrisons led in June 1626 to the lifting of the ban on the importing of butter, cheese, grain and herring.[122] In other respects, however, the blockade continued. Spices, wines, sugar, cloth, bricks, soap and Newcastle coal were the Dutch commodities most affected, while the ban on the Rhine continued to hamper Dutch shipbuilding. The importing of sugar from Holland via Antwerp, a thriving activity until 1625, remained at a mere fraction of its previous level.[123] Rhenish wine continued to be largely absent from Dutch exports to northern Europe.[124] The river blockade, with the exception of a special ban on Rhine timber, was finally called off, not in 1630,[125] but in April 1629. The reason was not that the blockade was ineffective, nor that it annoyed the German princes, though it did annoy them considerably,[126] but simply that it was proving too damaging to Flemish commerce, was causing too much discontent in the Southern Netherlands, and was depriving Brussels of sizeable funds at a time, during the Mantuan Succession crisis in northern Italy, when considerable Spanish resources were being diverted from Flanders and

[120] Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis,* ii, pp. 262, 474, 500, 708-9, 776, 807.

[121] La Cueva to Philip IV, 2 Jan. 1626: A.G.S. Est. 2316.

[122] A.R.A. adm. 2684, Res. Coll. Zeeland, 20 June 1626; *Relazione veneziane: Venetiaansche berichten over de Vereenigde Nederlanden van 1600-1795,* ed. P. J. Blok (Rijks geschiedkundige publicatiën, vii, The Hague, 1909), p. 190.

[123] H. Pohl, "Die Zuckereinfuhr nach Antwerpen durch portugiesische Kaufleute während des 80 jahrigen Krieges", *Jahrbuch für Geschichte von Staat, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Lateinamerikas,* iv (1967), pp. 355-8; the article, however, gives no explanation as to why sugar importing from Holland collapsed in 1625.

[124] J. M. Bizière, "The Baltic Wine Trade, 1563-1657", *Scandinavian Econ. Hist. Rev.,* xx (1972), pp. 125-32.

[125] Alcalá-Zamora is inaccurate on this: Alcalá-Zamora, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte,* pp. 297-8. See Isabella to Philip IV, 3 Mar. 1629: A.G.S. Est. 2322; anon., *Nievwe Liiste van t' Recht vande Licenten . . . lancx de riviere van Antwerpen, Sas van Gendt . . .* (Antwerp, Apr. 1629); H. H. G. Wouters, "Het Limburgse Maasdal gedurende de tachtigjarige en de dertigjarige oorlog", in *Limburg's verleden: Geschiedenis van Nederlands Limburg tot 1815,* ed. E. C. M. A. Batta *et al.,* 2 vols. (Maastricht, 1960-7), ii, p. 200.

[126] *Consulta,* 16 Feb. 1628: A.G.S. Est. 2328. The lifting of the river blockade was apparently proposed by Olivares, worried at the condition of Flanders, in January 1629: *consulta,* 9 Jan. 1629, in *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne,* ed. Lonchay and Cuvelier, ii, doc. 1334; see also Hurtuño de Urizar to Philip IV, 8 June 1629: A.G.S. Est. 2322.

the Brussels administration was facing an exceptionally difficult financial situation.

In Germany the Spaniards were driven from Wesel, Rheinberg, Lingen, Orsoy and their other lower Rhine and Ems bases in the years 1629-34, and thereby lost any remaining capacity to damage Dutch interests on German waterways. However, besides the north Rhine region, there remained another area of Germany offering important assets to Spain in the economic struggle with the republic — the north German maritime zone. In the years 1626-9, during which the armies of the emperor and the Catholic League largely overran north Germany, Madrid endeavoured to establish, in co-operation with the emperor and the king of Poland, a combined Spanish-German navy at Wismar, to be paid for largely by Spain, and intended to secure northern Germany, dominate the Baltic and impose a measure of Habsburg control on the Baltic trade.[127] This project, with its obvious dangers for the Dutch republic, collapsed with the Swedish invasion of 1630 and the capture of the materials and cash already gathered by Spain at Wismar. However, there remained a less grandiose scheme which had long attracted Spanish attention and which was more easily realizable — that of persuading the Hanseatic towns to accept a measure of Spanish influence in the regulation of their trade, while in return filling the vacuum in the carrying trade to the peninsula left by the departure of the Dutch. Spain had to have Baltic grain, copper and naval stores, and it would clearly constitute a major gain were these to be supplied by the Hanseatic towns acting as rivals to the Dutch rather than as their intermediaries.[128] It was grasped in Madrid that purely commercial factors, such as freight rates and shipping resources, told against the north Germans, but it was considered that forging new Spanish-Hanseatic links was precisely the sort of shift that could be achieved by Spain's unrivalled territorial and administrative power. The Hanseatic towns did not like either the residents sent to them from Flanders and Spain or the rigorous inspection of cargoes by customs authorities in the peninsula, but although friction over certificates and boarding continued throughout the Spanish-Dutch war, the Hanseatic towns were forced to accommodate themselves both to the *almirantazgos* and to the residents, especially with the development of substantial Spanish-Danish commercial co-operation from 1628 onwards.[129] Although it has been questioned whether the Hanseatic towns managed to increase their Iberian trade after the outbreak of the Spanish-Dutch war,[130] it is

[127] Alcalá-Zamora, *op. cit.*, pp. 267-76.
[128] *Consulta*, 8 Oct. 1622: A.G.S. Est. 2036.
[129] *Consulta*, 14 May 1628: A.G.S. Est. 2328; *consulta*, 1 Sept. 1629: A.G.S. Est. 2329; H. Kellenbenz, *Sephardim an der unteren Elbe* (Wiesbaden, 1958), p. 144.
[130] Christensen, *Dutch Trade to the Baltic*, p. 89.

perfectly clear that except for Emden, which being under Dutch occupation was embargoed in common with the Dutch,[131] Spanish-Hanseatic trade expanded dramatically. Hamburg became Spain's principal supplier of Baltic products and organized a massive convoy system.[132] Over 50 Hamburg vessels sailed to the peninsula in 1625, most of the tonnage bound for west Andalusia and Portugal. The Hamburg convoys of 1627 and 1629 were also of over 50 vessels each, while that of 1633 was of 43; in each case San Lúcar was the port most visited. Lübeck, despite the Baltic depression of the 1620s, which was in fact mainly a Dutch depression, also greatly increased its business with the peninsula, culminating in the decade 1630-9 when two and a half times as many Lübeck vessels visited the peninsula as in the decade 1610-19.[133] Like Hamburg, and in the face of continuing Dutch hostility, Lübeck formed its Iberian trade into convoys, that of 1626 consisting of 17 vessels loaded with grain, masts, ropes and copper. Much of the Lübeck commerce, however, involved Portuguese salt and largely collapsed in the 1640s when the Dutch returned in force to the Portuguese salt pans. Other north German ports that notably increased their traffic to the peninsula until 1641 were Danish-controlled Glückstadt, Friedrichstadt, Stettin and Danzig itself.[134]

In general the Spanish measures against the Dutch can be said to have been one of the principal factors determining Dutch economic development — and indeed that of all Europe — in the period 1621-48. Until 1621 the Dutch carried Baltic grain chiefly to the Iberian and Italian peninsulas. In the 1620s, while the Hanseatic grain trade was thriving, the Dutch Baltic trade entered a severe slump owing at first largely to Spanish measures, and in the years 1626-30 to a combination of Spanish measures and Swedish action against Danzig and the Prussian ports.[135] From 1630 Dutch Baltic trade revived, aided by a run of exceptionally bad harvests in Portugal, Spain and North Africa but, as has been shown,[136] instead of carrying to Lisbon, Seville, Valencia and Naples, the Dutch now carried mainly to western France, especially Bordeaux, from which port the grain was often carried on in

[131] *Consulta,* 27 Nov. 1621: A.G.S. Est. 2645.

[132] A.R.A. Bis. 53, fos. 76^{v}, 111; A.R.A. Bis. 54, fos. 96^{v}-97, 239, 253^{v}; Kellenbenz, *Unternehmerkräfte,* pp. 61, 63; Kellenbenz, *Sephardim an der unteren Elbe,* p. 144.

[133] A.R.A. Bis. 53, fo. 111; W. Vogel, "Beiträge zur Statistik der deutschen Seeschiffahrt im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert", *Hansische Geschichtsblätter,* xxxiii (1928), pp. 135-41.

[134] *Consultas* of the *junta de estado,* 28 Sept. 1627 and 3 Jan. 1628: A.G.S. Est. 2328; Kellenbenz, *Sephardim an der unteren Elbe,* p. 144; A. Jürgens, *Zur schleswig-holsteinischen Handelsgeschichte des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1914), pp. 197, 203-7.

[135] Bogucka, "Amsterdam and the Baltic", pp. 434-5, 437-8; Christensen, *op. cit.,* pp. 88, 104, 315-16.

[136] Bogucka, *op. cit.,* pp. 438-9. Bogucka demonstrates the shift but entirely misunderstands the reason for it, offering the unconvincing explanation that trade with the Iberian peninsula had become unprofitable.

English and French vessels. Only from 1641, with the revival in Dutch-Portuguese trade, was Dutch grain-carrying restored to full health. No less affected than grain was salt. If the Dutch were denied Iberian salt, they were also deprived of the Caribbean supplies which they had been exploiting sporadically since the 1590s.[137] In 1621 the Spaniards began building forts at the Caribbean salt pans and, in the December of that year, the first convoy of Dutch *zout-vaerders* (salt-ships) returned empty to the Zuider Zee from the Venezuelan coast.[138] By the late 1620s very little Caribbean salt was reaching Holland. It is true that in shifting the focus of their carrying trade from the peninsula to western France, the Dutch were able to obtain La Rochelle salt without difficulty, except during the sieges of the Huguenot town by the French government, but French salt matched the Iberian product in neither quality nor quantity.[139] Salt prices in Amsterdam, from being stable at just over 5 guilders per barrel during the truce, rose to over 10 guilders in the period 1628-34 and did not again fall below 8 guilders until after the Portuguese secession[140] — and all this despite the collapse of Dutch salt-carrying to Italy and a marked shrinking in Dutch salt exports to the Baltic.[141] The sharp rise in the price of salt in turn affected a wide range of Dutch food prices.[142] In addition, a number of other consequences resulted from France's replacement of the peninsula as Holland's chief trading partner in the west, notably the virtual disappearance of Spanish and Portuguese wines from north European markets combined with the dramatic boom of viticulture in the Bordeaux region.[143] All Dutch merchants involved in European carrying were affected by these great changes, some very seriously. One of the major indicators of the effectiveness of the Spanish measures was the setback sustained by the Dutch Jews. Amsterdam Jewry, a group which had specialized in the Iberian trade, was, despite the prominent role it played in the trade with western France and North Africa, so hard hit by the changes of 1621 that it was only after Portugal's secession from Spain that it began finally to recover. As late as 1641 there were still only 89 Jewish depositors with the Amsterdam Wisselbank, as compared with 106 in 1620.[144]

Arguably one of the most important consequences of the Spanish

[137] Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean,* pp. 126-37.
[138] A.R.A. Bis. 48 ii, fo. 170.
[139] *Consulta,* 12 Sept. 1658: A.G.S. Est. 2091.
[140] Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis,* i, pp. 215, 217-18, and ii, pp. 291-2, 453, 633, 778.
[141] Christensen, *Dutch Trade to the Baltic,* diagrams 9 and 10.
[142] Posthumus, *op. cit.,* i, p. 85, and ii, pp. 277, 500, 658.
[143] Bogucka, *op. cit.,* p. 438; Bizière, "Baltic Wine Trade", pp. 124, 127, 132.
[144] A.R.A. Bis. 49 i, fos. 113^{v}-114^{v}; J. G. van Dillen, "Vreemdelingen te Amsterdam in de eerste helft der zeventiende eeuw. I, De Portugeesche Joden", *Tijd. Gesch.,* l (1935), pp. 14-16.

measures was the setback to new drapery production in Holland and the general transformation of the Dutch textile industry, accompanied by the temporary advance of new drapery output in Flanders and a more permanent advance in England, and due particularly to loss by the Dutch of key markets controlled by Spain. Until about 1621 the manufacture of a wide range of cheap, light draperies had steadily developed in several Dutch towns and particularly at Leiden, the centre of the Dutch textile industry. As with Flemish and English new draperies a large part of Dutch production was destined for export to southern Europe and especially Andalusia and Portugal. Although N. W. Posthumus, the great historian of the Leiden cloth industry, assigned no role to Spain in his account of the decline of Dutch new drapery output after 1621,[145] the evidence for the loss of the territories controlled by Spain as textile markets for the Dutch is so considerable that there can scarcely be doubt that it did indeed constitute a serious blow. Certainly in Brussels it was assumed that Spain had inflicted great damage on Holland's cloth industries and, by 1626, it was estimated that some 40,000 textile workers had been thrown out of work in the republic since 1621, many having to go abroad in search of work.[146] The corresponding growth in output of similar types of textiles in Flanders and England strongly suggests that as a result of the Spanish measures these rivals were able to take over what Holland was losing.[147] Of course, as it happened, Leiden managed to compensate for its losses in new draperies by expanding its production of old draperies, the celebrated *lakens* which were more suited to north European markets; but although the overall value of textiles produced at Leiden undoubtedly increased between 1621 and 1648 (old draperies being much costlier than new draperies), in terms of quantity of cloth produced and of labour required Leiden in fact declined. During the 1620s the Dutch also completely lost their former prominence in the carrying of Castilian wool from Bilbao and San Sebastián to northern Europe — first to the English, then to the French and, after 1630, once again to the English — and ceased also to carry such vital dyestuffs as Mexican cochineal, Campeche wood and Guatemalan indigo from Seville and Cádiz; these changes however were probably much less harmful to Dutch industry than the loss of markets. Very little Spanish wool was used at Leiden until after 1635 when the French textile centres of Normandy and Brittany, which had traditionally used much more Spanish wool than Holland, were cut

[145] N. W. Posthumus, *De geschiedenis van de Leidsche lakenindustrie*, 3 vols. (The Hague, 1908-39), iii, pp. 930-2 ff.

[146] La Cueva to Philip IV, 27 Mar. 1626: A.G.S. Est. 2316.

[147] Stols, *De Spaanse Brabanders*, pp. 147-50; E. Coornaert, *La draperie-sayetterie d'Hondschoote* (Paris, 1930), pp. 50, 53, 57; P. Deyon and A. Lottin, "Évolution de la production textile à Lille aux XVI^e^ et XVII^e^ siècles", *Revue du Nord*, xlix (1967), pp. 31-2.

off from their supplies by the outbreak of the Spanish-French war, and Leiden did not go over to a virtual dependence on Spanish wool until after 1648. However, it is noteworthy that the price of Mexican cochineal on the Amsterdam exchange rose sharply in the 1620s, remained high throughout the war and fell steeply again from 1646 as the embargoes began to be lifted.[148] Indigo prices in Holland rose likewise as Guatemalan indigo became scarce, though here the East India Company was able to profit from the situation by importing limited supplies from Asia; with the return of Guatemalan indigo in the mid 1640s, indigo prices in Amsterdam dropped by nearly 50 per cent.

Yet for all the evidence that the Spanish measures affected Dutch interests substantially, for various reasons which require explanation, the Dutch Republic was not weakened and the States General came nowhere near being forced to sue for a truce on Spanish terms. Moreover the war did so much damage to the economies of Spain and Portugal that Spanish ministers began to consider whether the disadvantages of the war for Spain were not even greater than what they continued to regard as the disadvantages of the truce. Already before 1621 there had been some disagreement in Madrid as to whether war or a new truce on Spanish terms was the better alternative; after 1621 the range of disagreement widened. By 1623 a small junta, consisting of Agustín Messía, Fernando Girón and the bishop of Segovia, and delegated to assess the contacts being made between Brussels and The Hague, was strongly criticizing the views of such hard-liners as the marqués de Montesclaros, head of the *junta de comercio,* and the Cardinal de la Cueva, the chief Spanish minister in Brussels.[149] The Dutch were supposedly willing to agree to a new truce on the terms of 1609, plus a few lesser concessions, but would go no further. Montesclaros and La Cueva persisted in maintaining, for all the ruinous cost to the king and the collapse of trade, that the previous truce had been worse than the present war. They even held that it was better to suffer military setbacks and lose some Flemish towns than settle again for the terms of 1609.[150] The bishop of Segovia and those who thought like him, by contrast, considered that, given the state of the finances and the risk of mutiny and other disasters in Flanders, Philip had no choice but to compromise; the war, they believed, was worse for Spain than the previous truce. The matter was decided at the highest level. Philip, guided presumably by Olivares, who inclined to the hard line, put a stop to the discussion; there was to be no

[148] Posthumus, *Nederlandsche prijsgeschiedenis,* i, pp. 415-16, 420-1.

[149] *Consulta* of the junta deliberating contacts with the Dutch, 5 Mar., 4 and 14 July 1623, and junta to Olivares, 5 July 1623: A.G.S. Est. 2147.

[150] *Consulta,* 14 Nov. 1623: A.G.S. Est. 2147.

settlement on terms close to those of 1609. Major concessions by the Dutch were essential.[151]

From 1623 until the start of the Mantuan Succession crisis in Italy in 1628 the respective Spanish and Dutch stands remained essentially unchanged. However, the diversion of Spanish funds and troops to Italy in 1628, which very substantially weakened the Spanish position in the Low Countries, led to a resumption of heavy pressure from moderates in both Madrid and Brussels. At the time, the principal point of contact between Spanish and Dutch was at the talks being conducted by officials of both sides at Roosendaal in Dutch Brabant over a proposed exchange of prisoners. Isabella used the occasion to sound out the Dutch and met with a somewhat conciliatory initial response which included some mention of the Scheldt being re-opened in the event of a new truce being arranged.[152] Many, possibly most, Spanish officials, and still more Isabella and Spínola, now considered that the king should quickly come to a settlement. In the end, after protracted and at times bitter argument in Madrid, the opportunity, if such it actually was, was allowed to slip by. Traditionally, this failure to respond has been blamed on the alleged monumental inflexibility and blindness to reality of Olivares himself.[153] Certainly he was now personally determining Spanish policy to a much greater degree than in the early 1620s, but it is by no means clear that he was acting so imprudently. It needed considerable courage not to panic in the circumstances that prevailed in 1629 when there was a real prospect of the simultaneous collapse of Spanish power both in the Netherlands and north Italy. As the Roosendaal talks proceeded Olivares became convinced that the Dutch were not negotiating in earnest, but simply holding out bait as part of their scheme for exploiting to the utmost an unrivalled opportunity to weaken Spain.[154] When in the summer of 1629 the Dutch forces lay siege to Den Bosch, the most vital Spanish fortress town in north Brabant, he was confirmed in this belief. Olivares in any case was right in thinking that in 1629 Spain was negotiating from a position of exceptional weakness and that there was no reason to think that this weakness would long continue. If the European situation, and Olivares normally looked at matters in a European perspective, promised the Dutch great successes, it was also one fraught with dangers for them, owing to the Habsburg

[151] *Ibid.*

[152] Isabella to Philip IV, 13 Aug. 1628 and 3 June 1629: *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne,* ed. Lonchay and Cuvelier, ii, docs. 1265, 1405; Aitzema, *Van staet en oorlogh,* ii, pp. 907 ff.; J. Cuvelier, "Les negociations de Roosendael, 1627-30", in *Mélanges d'histoire offerts à Henri Pirenne,* 2 vols. (Brussels, 1926), i, pp. 73-80.

[153] Cuvelier, *op. cit.,* pp. 74, 78; Rodríguez Villa, *Ambrosio Spínola,* pp. 480-92.

[154] *Consulta,* 2 June 1629 "voto del conde duque", and *consulta,* 29 Aug. 1629: A.G.S. Est. 2043.

victories in Germany, the crushing of Denmark, and the occupation of much of north Germany by Catholic forces. And indeed, despite the situation at Den Bosch, it seemed highly probable in 1629, barring the unexpected, that once Spain extricated itself from Italy, it could in combination with the emperor have put heavier pressure than ever on the republic.

Olivares's assessment that the republic was not in earnest in wanting a truce in 1629 was based at least in part on information sent to him from Flanders by Spanish officials, who were following the political situation in the republic and recognized that the Dutch war party was still much stronger than the peace party.[155] And in this analysis, Olivares's informants were undoubtedly correct. This continued preponderance of the hard-liners in the United Provinces may appear at first sight to tell against the notion that Spain succeeded in inflicting considerable damage on the Dutch economy. The *stadhouder* Frederik Hendrik (1625-47) and the military leadership were doubtless likely to favour war because their influence was much greater in war than in peace-time. But this is no answer for, as Spanish observers saw, the strength of the Dutch war party derived not from the *stadhouder*, the army or the French, but from massive support from the city administrations and provinces of the republic. Wars that are extremely expensive and have been several years in progress are not normally popular. Moreover, besides the general evidence that Spain did damage to the Dutch economy, it should be noted that it was widely realized in the republic during the 1620s that Dutch trade was contracting under Spanish pressure because, despite various increases in duties, total customs receipts for Holland failed to increase while those for several parts of the country actually fell.[156] Besides this, the additional taxation needed for the war was often highly unpopular, as is shown by the case of the increase in 1624 of the tax on butter in Holland which caused riots at Alkmaar, Haarlem, Amsterdam and Enkhuizen and the killing of several burghers by the troops called out to quell them.[157] All this presents the historian with a problem.

Actually, opinion over the war in the republic was deeply divided but, for several reasons, those who wished to fight on had the greater influence at all levels of Dutch government. Dutch society in the golden age, for all its confidence and prosperity, was racked with tensions. The republic had a far larger Catholic minority than

[155] Pedro de San Juan to Olivares, 30 Aug. 1629, and Juan Boberio to Olivares, 13 Nov. 1629: A.G.S. Est. 2322.

[156] A.R.A. Bis. 54, fos. 93-94^{v}; de Jonge, *Nederlandische Zeewesen,* i, p. 240; Snapper, *Oorlogsinvloeden,* pp. 70-1, 73.

[157] La Cueva to Philip IV, 15 June 1624, and "avisos de Amsterdam", 3 and 10 June 1624: A.G.S. Fst. 2314; see also La Cueva to Philip IV, 16 Apr. 1626: A.G.S. Est. 2316.

England and this minority, estimated at 40,000 in Amsterdam alone, considered pro-Spanish and suspected of collusion in the fall of Amersfoort to the Spaniards in 1629, was rigorously excluded from any part in the political process.[158] Also, the Protestant majority was in turn sharply split between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants.[159] Since the overthrow of Oldenbarneveldt in 1618 most city councils in the republic had been linked with the staunchly Calvinist Counter-Remonstrant party and associated politically with the *stadhouder*. At the same time factions opposed to the Counter-Remonstrants remained active and, with the support of many who opposed the war, gathered strength, particularly in Holland. Since the Counter-Remonstrants, a dominant but threatened group, had always presented themselves as the patriotic party and preached the necessity of war with Spain, Dutch local government was in effect in the hands of an embattled faction, representative of only a section of Dutch society and strongly inclined to continue the war for local political and religious reasons. The more those opposed to the Counter-Remonstrants spoke of the need for a truce, the more the latter sought to overwhelm their opponents with votes and printed propaganda advocating war.

This however is only part of the answer. For whatever the ideological stand of the Counter-Remonstrants, they could surely not for so long have dominated enough city administrations, and therefore the provincial states, had they not had the assistance of important economic forces and effective economic propaganda. Curiously, it was maintained by the Dutch war party with only somewhat less persistence than it was in Madrid that the truce of 1609 had been a disaster for their trade and, like Montesclaros and La Cueva, they argued that whatever the disadvantages of the war, the situation was nevertheless still better than that of the truce.[160] The Counter-Remonstrants claimed that several regions, notably Zeeland, had declined during the truce, implied and sometimes openly stated that it was actually better for Dutchmen to do without trade to the peninsula, and held that in any case the war had not adversely affected the common man. And, indeed, Zeeland had stagnated during the truce. It is true, of course, that Zeeland's trade dwindled still more after 1621 and that everyone in Zeeland knew it: the States of Zeeland declared in the States General in 1627 that its customs revenues had

[158] *Analecta Vaticano-Belgica*, 2nd ser., v, p. 162. Geyl mentions an estimate that one quarter of the population of Holland was Catholic in 1624 and one third of that of Friesland and Groningen: Geyl, *Netherlands Divided*, p. 144.

[159] Aitzema, *op. cit.*, ii, p. 919, and iii, pp. 54-60; the Counter-Remonstrant war party dominated most completely in Friesland and Zeeland.

[160] Willem Usselincx, *Waerschouwinge over den Treves* ... (Flushing, 1630; Knuttel 4016); *Resolutie* ... *der Stadt Aherlem*, pp. 8-9, 14; anon., *Klare Aenwijsinge dat de vereenigde Nederlanden gheen Treves met den Vyandt dienen te maecken* (The Hague, 1630; Knuttel 4014), pp. 8 ff.

fallen every year since 1616 owing to Spanish action.[161] But this did not lessen in the slightest Zeeland's fierce support for the Counter-Remonstrants and the war. On the contrary the war was regarded as the salvation of Zeeland, for the funds and seamen of Middelburg and Flushing, driven from local and European trade, found new opportunities in the West India Company, itself born of war, and the privateering, chiefly at Portuguese expense, which was supported by the Company. This crucial shift, a frequent theme of La Cueva's reports to Madrid,[162] made Zeeland the staunchest supporter among the seven provinces of the West India Company and was the most dramatic instance of several investment and employment shifts within the Dutch economy which favoured the war party. The East India Company, like the West India Company, strongly opposed peace with Spain, even after the secession of Portugal,[163] not only in the hope of acquiring additional Portuguese possessions in Asia, but because the slump at home favoured it by causing a flow of cash from European into colonial commerce. The other major beneficiary of the war, and therefore of the slump in European trade, industry and the fisheries, was Dutch agriculture. If Spanish ministers were right, as surely they were, that the export of foodstuffs via the *binnen-stromen* was of vital importance to the Dutch, it cannot be denied that the war increased this importance — except briefly in the years 1625-6. The Dutch and Spanish armies, by far the largest and most costly armies in Europe, encamped close together in fixed positions along the canals and rivers of the Low Countries and north-west Germany, did not pilfer their food in the style of the armies in the rest of Germany. They represented a fixed and strong demand and paid in cash. The huge sums spent on the food supplies of the Dutch forces may be viewed as a subsidy paid by the Dutch maritime towns to inland agriculture, while expenditure on the Spanish forces was also in a sense payment by the non-noble populace of Castile and Naples to the Dutch farmers. In this respect the Counter-Remonstrants were right to argue that their war by no means injured the common man.

After the failure of the Roosendaal talks the character of the Spanish-Dutch struggle was soon considerably changed by events. In 1630, strengthened by the capture of the Mexican silver fleet in 1628, West India Company forces gained their first substantial foothold in the Americas — the Pernambuco region of northern Brazil.

[161] A.R.A. Bis. 54, fo. 94; La Cueva to Philip IV, 18 Oct. 1627: A.G.S. Est. 2319.

[162] La Cueva to Philip IV, 15 Jan. and 4 Feb. 1627: A.G.S. Est. 2318; La Cueva to Philip IV, 6 Mar. 1628: A.G.S. Est. 2321.

[163] Aitzema, *Van staet en oorlogh*, vi, p. 87. As it happens, the end of the Spanish-Dutch war and the revival of Dutch trade with Spain from 1647 did in fact coincide with a remarkable loss of momentum in the development of the East India Company: Glamann, *Dutch-Asiatic Trade*, p. 16.

In 1632 Frederik Hendrik launched the most successful Dutch offensive of the war at home, capturing Venlo, Roermond, Sittard, Maastricht and Limburg in rapid succession. With this breakthrough in the Maas valley Spanish power in Flanders, severely curtailed by the low level of remittances from Spain following the Mantuan war, the loss of the silver fleet, and the crushing of Habsburg forces in Germany in the unexpected force of the Swedish invasion, came close to collapse. A wave of revulsion against the war swept the Southern Netherlands, and Isabella, in her panic and much to the displeasure of Philip IV and Olivares,[164] gave way to pressure to convene the previously almost defunct States General of the southern provinces. The representatives of the southern provinces at once opened negotiations with the Dutch States General, thus initiating the most public and formal of the various rounds of talks that took place during the conflict, those of 1632-4. The Dutch, seemingly on the verge of massive victories, were understandably in no mood to offer anything to Spain.[165] In return for a truce the Dutch States General demanded the total withdrawal of Spanish forces from the Low Countries and north-west Germany, the continued closure of the Scheldt, the restitution of Breda, the annexation of all the places captured by the Dutch plus those parts of the hinterland of Den Bosch still occupied by Spain, the *status quo* in the Indies east and west, numerous tariff concessions and such freedom of movement and private religious practice for Jewish subjects of the republic in the Spanish territories as Dutch Protestants would enjoy.

This, of course, was an opening position and the Dutch were prepared to yield somewhat on certain points.[166] Nevertheless, even the most conciliatory Flemish delegates were appalled by the vast gulf that now existed between the two sides. Olivares was thoroughly disgusted with the whole affair.[167] He was totally opposed even to considering the Dutch terms, whether regarding Europe or the Indies. Besides looking on the talks as disreputable, originating as they did in circumstances verging on rebellion against the crown, he regarded the Dutch ambitions for territory on the Maas and Rhine, as well as in Brazil, as incompatible with the essential interests of Spain which he, in distinction perhaps to other Spanish ministers, saw as being strategic as much as economic and colonial. The Dutch now held almost all the Maas and lower Rhine crossings formerly possessed by Spain and, in Olivares's view, unless Spain recovered the major Maas crossings, especially Venlo and Maastricht, and at least one key Rhine crossing,

[164] *Consulta*, 2 Mar. 1633: A.G.S. Est. 2151.

[165] M. G. de Boer, *Die Friedensunterhandlungen zwischen Spanien und den Niederlanden in den Jahren 1632 und 1633* (Groningen, 1898), pp. 66-8.

[166] *Ibid.*, p. 90.

[167] *Consulta*, 29 May 1633 "voto de Olivares", and *consulta*, 16 June 1633 "voto del sr conde duque" (drafts): A.G.S. Est. 2151.

preferably Rheinberg (the "whore of war"), Flanders would no longer serve as a viable base, or *plaza de armas*, for Spanish power in northern Europe.[168] Deprived of all her Maas and Rhine strongholds, Spain in Flanders, as the conde-duque subsequently put it, would be "locked in a cage".[169] To secure a Spanish-Dutch compromise at this time, Olivares was prepared to offer the Dutch Breda, Stevensweert, one million ducats and concessions in the sugar market at Lisbon in return for northern Brazil, the disbandment of the West India Company, and Venlo, Maastricht and Rheinberg, it being understood that the Dutch would keep their other conquests.[170] But as matters stood he saw that there was not the slightest chance of the Dutch accepting these terms. Most of the conde-duque's colleagues in Madrid were as indignant as he was at the Dutch "condiciones indecentes", as they were termed by the duke of Alva, most of all that regarding the Jews,[171] and when the Dutch suggested, in view of the impasse reached concerning the Indies, that the proposed truce relate to Europe only, leaving the war to continue in Asia and the Americas, the indignation spread to the councils of Portugal and the Indies.[172] It was consequently, despite the now catastrophic condition of both army and finances, much easier for the conde-duque to fling back the Dutch terms in 1634 than it had been in 1629.

With the breakdown of the talks of 1632-4, continued Spanish weakness in Flanders and Swedish success in Germany, it seemed to Olivares that what was now needed was a major effort by Spain to swing the European balance of power back in her favour. Only thus could Spain wrest reasonable terms from the republic. For several years heavier taxes had been levied in Castile, Portugal and Naples and, by September 1634, Spanish ministers were planning to spend the enormous sum of $5\frac{1}{2}$ million ducats in Flanders — that is, against the Dutch — in 1635. The sending of Ferdinand, the cardinal-infante, to the Spanish Netherlands, because of his exploits against the Swedes in Germany in 1634 during the march from Milan, and the subsequent outbreak of war between France and Spain in May 1635, has never been sufficiently recognized as being a move intended, essentially, to swing the balance against the Dutch. It has even been written, quite erroneously, that when the Spanish-French war began in 1635, the "war against the Dutch was at once abandoned".[173] In

[168] "Voto del conde-duque", 16 Oct. 1633 (draft): A.G.S. Est. 2151.

[169] Olivares to the cardinal-infante, 15 Dec. 1636: Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (hereafter B.S.), MS. cod. hisp. 22, fo. 33^{v}.

[170] "El conde duque mi s^{or} sobre la tregua" (undated 1633, draft): A.G.S. Est. 2151.

[171] *Consulta*, 16 Mar. 1634: A.G.S. Est. 2048.

[172] *Consulta* of the Council of the Indies, 4 Mar. 1634: A.G.S. Est. 2150.

[173] G. Parker, "Spain, Her Enemies and the Revolt of the Netherlands, 1559-1648", *Past and Present*, no. 49 (Nov. 1970), p. 92.

fact, no sooner was the French invasion of Flanders in 1635 repulsed than Ferdinand, aided by a diversion of Dutch forces due to a successful surprise attack on Schenkenschans in July, invaded Dutch-occupied territory with 26,000 men capturing Goch, Cleves and Gennep, while another Spanish force retook Limburg.[174]

The Spanish offensive of 1635 against the Dutch, though a departure from the concept of *guerra defensiva* of 1625-34, was nevertheless consistent with the strategic maxims formulated in Madrid in 1622-4 in that Ferdinand, attacking where he could penetrate quickly, while still posing a threat, nevertheless studiously avoided besieging any well-fortified towns. The taking of Schenkenschans on the Gelderland border, an unexpected stroke of luck, breached the entire Dutch defensive system in the east, opening an easy route, north of the rivers, into the heart of the republic. The event caused dismay throughout the United Provinces and so elated the conde-duque that, with his usual extravagance of phrase, he assured Ferdinand that, in holding Schenkenschans, he could not win more glory were he to capture Paris or The Hague.[175] The purpose of the offensive was made clear when Ferdinand entered into new truce talks with the Dutch at Kranenburg in the duchy of Cleves. In line with Olivares's aspirations Spain demanded Venlo, Maastricht, Rheinberg and Dutch withdrawal from the Americas, offering in return Schenkenschans, Goch, Gennep, Cleves, Breda and a large cash sum.[176] Once again, the talks broke down.

To Olivares the capture of Schenkenschans signified not just a vital breach in the Dutch defences but also the chance to fortify a line running from Eindhoven via Helmond and Gennep to the Rhine, which would undoubtedly have proved extremely dangerous for the Dutch and would have virtually cut off Venlo and Maastricht from the rest of Dutch-occupied territory.[177] Although in 1636 the conde-duque and his colleagues gave priority to the French front, there was a great reluctance to do so. Remarkably enough, the start of the war with France coincided with a completely new phase in the Spanish-Dutch war in which Spain for the first time since 1622 resumed

[174] Cardinal-infante to Philip IV, 24 Dec. 1635: A.G.S. Est. 2050; A. Waddington, *La république des Provinces-Unies, la France et les Pays-Bas espagnols de 1630 à 1650*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1895-7), i, pp. 272-3.

[175] Olivares to the cardinal-infante, 14 Mar. 1636: B.S. MS. cod. hisp. 22, fo. 12; Brit. Lib., Add. MS.14007, fos. 53^{v}, 57-60; F. H. Westermann, *Rückblick auf die Geschichte des Herzogthums Cleve ... vom Jahre 1609 bis 1666* (Wesel, 1830), pp. 189-90.

[176] Cardinal-infante to Philip IV, Gennep, 11 Oct. 1635: A.G.S. Est. 2050; Martin de Axpe to the cardinal-infante, Kranenburg, 27 Oct. 1635: *Correspondance de la cour d'Espagne*, ed. Lonchay and Cuvelier, iii, doc. 219; Aitzema, *Van staet en oorlogh*, iv, pp. 223-4.

[177] "El conde duque sobre los puntos principales del ultimo despacho de Flandes", 19 Sept. 1635: A.G.S. Est. 2153; *consulta*, 16 Nov. 1635 "voto del conde duque": A.G.S. Est. 2153.

deliberate use of the army of Flanders as a major means of squeezing the United Provinces. In the years 1635-9, in both Flanders and Madrid, there took place a continuing strategic debate as to whether it was in principle better for Spain to direct her main effort against France or the republic and, in general, there was a marked preference for concentrating against the latter.[178] It was argued that although it was easier to invade France and take French towns than to penetrate Dutch territory, there was little to be gained by doing so. It was thought that Spain's best prospect for breaking the Franco-Dutch alliance was to maintain the pressure that had been kept up for so long and use the exceptionally large funds available in the years 1635-8 to gain the additional bargaining counters needed to secure a satisfactory settlement with the republic. However, this general preference was partially checked by the fear of leaving France with a free hand and, in particular, the risk of a French invasion of Italy. Thus the Spanish invasion of France from Flanders in 1636, which caused such panic in Paris, was nothing more than a short-term preventive strike which, in Madrid, was considered by no means as important strategically as holding the gains made at the expense of the Dutch in 1635. When Ferdinand, as a result of the effort against France, nevertheless lost Schenkenschans in April 1636 there was a great storm of anger and dismay in Spain, including one of the worst rages of Olivares's entire career.[179]

In 1637, however, the Dutch theatre of war was once again the centre of operations and, although Ferdinand was too slow to prevent Frederik Hendrik's encirclement of Breda and the subsequent loss of the town, he did break the Dutch line in the Maas valley, recapturing Venlo and Roermond and isolating Maastricht; despite this he was rebuked in Madrid both for the loss of Breda and for not penetrating further and laying siege to Grave or Nijmegen.[180] The offensive of 1637 was the final attempt on land to acquire more bargaining pieces from the Dutch. The loss of Breda also put an end to plans for initiating a new phase of amphibious warfare, using heavily armed barges on the canals running north from Breda. In the three years 1635-7 Spain had spent over 15 million ducats in Flanders with only modest gains, and yet the funds available for offensive action against the Dutch as a result of the increased taxation in the peninsula were not yet exhausted.[181] The stalling of the offensive on land was due to

[178] *Consultas*, 8, 25 and 26 Feb. 1637: A.G.S. Est. 2051; *consulta*, 7 Oct. 1637: A.G.S. Est. 2052; *consulta* of the *junta de estado*, 7 Mar. 1638: A.G.S. Est. 2053.

[179] *Consulta*, 17 June 1636: A.G.S. Est. 2051; B.S. MS. cod. hisp. 22, fos. 17^{v}-19^{v}.

[180] *Consulta*, 7 Oct. 1637 "voto del conde duque": A.G.S. Est. 2052.

[181] B.S. MS. cod. hisp. 22, fos. 30^{v}, 41^{v}; officially, the cardinal-infante was receiving 500,000 ducats monthly during the first half of 1638.

the increasing co-ordination of the French and Dutch attacks on Flanders and the mounting difficulty of supplying the Southern Netherlands with Spanish and Italian troops, especially after the capture of Breisach by the French in 1638 which effectively closed the Rhine route to Spain. The last phase of the Spanish offensive to end the Dutch war consequently took place at sea. In 1639 two large *armadas* were dispatched from Spain, one to Brazil to try to end the most troublesome of Spanish-Dutch embroilments in the colonial sphere by recapturing Pernambuco, and the other to the Channel to force supplies through to Flanders and challenge the Dutch to a decisive battle for supremacy at sea. Both initiatives failed utterly, with the battle of the Downs ending in a major disaster for Spain with 32 warships destroyed by the Dutch under Admiral Tromp.[182] The losses involved in the two setbacks, naval and financial, were overwhelming. From 1639 Spain neither did, nor could, endeavour any longer to acquire gains from the Dutch by force and, weakened further by the paralysing effect of the revolt of Catalonia and the breakaway of Portugal, both in 1640, was reduced to the role of a shattered power striving only to keep what it still held against superior forces. In 1641 Portuguese Brazil followed Portugal itself and severed its links with Spain.

The loss of southern Brazil, and with it all prospect of recovering any part of the territory, was actually much less decisive in determining Spanish-Dutch relations in the 1640s than one might suppose. Brazil had, of course, been the single most difficult point of contention in the various negotiations of the 1630s and, in the long run, its loss cleared the path to peace by making plausible the exclusion of the Dutch from Spanish America without depriving the West India Company of all *raison d'être*. But in the medium term, as was soon realized in Madrid,[183] the implications of the loss of Brazil for Spanish-Dutch relations were not particularly auspicious. The West India Company itself, contemplating a reduced Spain and seemingly an easy task for itself in Brazil, now had less reason than ever for agreeing to relinquish its other American ambitions, and was indeed far from doing so as is shown by the sending of the expedition under Hendrik Brouwer to Chile in 1643. In any case the crux of the problem lay not in the Indies but in the United Provinces, where Frederik Hendrik and the war party were still dominant and, aided by French money and influence, had every intention of keeping the war in progress. The *stadhouder*, despite considerable ill-health, showed a continuing zest for leading the Dutch forces and conquering more Flemish territory which, indeed, the recent collapse of Spanish power

[182] Alcalá-Zamora, *España, Flandes y el Mar del Norte*, pp. 429-34.

[183] J. J. Poelhekke, *De Vrede van Munster* (The Hague, 1948), appendix iv, pp. 547-51.

promised to facilitate. In the city administrations, though losing ground in Holland, the Counter-Remonstrants still had the upper hand. Moreover, there can be little doubt that Spanish ministers were correct in their somewhat pessimistic forecast. Indeed, opposition to a Spanish peace in the republic, despite a wavering Holland, remained so strong after 1641 that, despite enormous efforts by Madrid, Brussels and those in the United Provinces who wanted peace, there was no significant breakthrough in the Spanish-Dutch talks at Münster until the winter of 1645-6.[184]

The breakthrough, when it came, took place essentially because of a crucial shift in the balance of political forces within the republic which substantially increased the power of those interests involved in European commerce. Although the resurgence of Dutch-Portuguese trade from 1641 made good one of the principal setbacks that Dutch commerce had suffered from the Spanish economic measures, the embargoes and the Dunkirkers continued to register a substantial effect which, it may be argued, in the gradually changing circumstances of Dutch domestic politics in the 1640s actually produced better results for Spain than during the years when the embargoes had included Portugal. The Dutch continued to be shut out of every Spanish port except insurgent Barcelona, and also out of southern Italy and Flanders. The effectiveness of the Dunkirkers against Dutch merchantmen and fishing fleets alike, especially in the years 1641-3 when very heavy losses were suffered by the Dutch, was such that Dutch marine insurance and freight rates now reached their highest levels of the entire war.[185] At the same time the flow of capital from European into colonial commerce, which had served the Dutch war party so well in the 1620s and 1630s, now completely ceased and, indeed, moved strongly back. By 1641 West India Company shares were already losing value as it became clearer that judged as a commercial enterprise the company made no sense: it had to fight both Spaniards and Portuguese to make its way, and colonial warfare was so costly that it could make no profit. However, after 1641, responding to the failure either to complete the conquest of Brazil or to reduce military spending there, and the Chilean fiasco, the company's shares began to fall much faster, so that by 1645 they stood at well under half the value they had held in 1640,[186] and the company carried a mere fraction of the political weight in the United Provinces that it had done formerly. Elsewhere on the Dutch

[184] *Consulta* of the *junta de estado*, 3 June 1646: A.G.S. Est. 2065; *Colección de documentos inéditos para la historia de España*, ed. M. Fernández Navarrete *et al.*, 112 vols. (Madrid, 1842-95), lxxxii, pp. 317, 331-45.

[185] Aitzema, *Van staet en oorlogh*, v, pp. 360-1, and vi, p. 216; Schreiner, "Die Niederländer und die norwegische Holzausfuhr im 17. Jahrhundert", p. 324.

[186] Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean*, p. 509.

political scene the other champions of war were also losing ground. The hard-line Counter-Remonstrants were virtually stripped of all power in the town councils of Holland, and interests hostile to the ambitions of the *stadhouder* and intent on promoting European trade began to become more assertive.[187] The contention of the war party that Spain in Flanders was a continuing threat to Dutch security was increasingly countered by pointing out that France in Flanders would now be an even graver threat. For a time Frederik Hendrik and the army pressed on with their campaigns, recapturing Gennep after a hard siege in 1641 and, in 1644 and 1645 after fighting through a formidable complex of canals and forts, the *stadhouder* conquered, much to the advantage of Zeeland, the towns and districts of Sass van Ghent and Hulst in Flanders. Hulst, however, was the last campaign. From 1645 Holland refused any longer to provide funds for the war and, since Holland with its great wealth supplied more than the other six provinces put together, this brought the army to a complete halt.

Peace was finally forced through in the years 1646-8, almost entirely owing to the pressure of the great commercial centres of Holland and against continuing strong resistance — especially in devoutly Calvinist Friesland, in Utrecht where the nobility was influential and closely linked with the *stadhouder*, and above all in Zeeland which fought to the last to keep the war alive.[188] Even after the signing of the treaty of Münster, formally ending the twenty-seven year war, the issue was far from dead. "Those of Amsterdam", Spain's first ambassador to the republic informed Philip IV in 1649, "are our best friends and those who contributed most to the peace and who contribute still to maintain it despite the wishes of other towns".[189] Amsterdam moreover soon obtained its reward. Trade between Spain and Holland flowered so rapidly from 1647, as the carrying trade of Holland's competitors to Spain, Flanders and southern Italy slumped, that it was soon once again a key element in Dutch European commerce. Indeed, in some respects, such as the greater dependence of Dutch textile manufacturing on Spanish wool, Spanish-Dutch economic relations in the years after 1647 were closer than they had ever been. Before long it was again the case that when Spanish ministers viewed with alarm the outflow of silver from Spain to northern Europe in payment for imports of food and manufactures, what preoccupied them almost exclusively was its movement to Holland.[190]

The struggle of 1621-48, obviously, was essentially a victory for the United Provinces, yet in many ways the treaty of Münster was less

[187] Geyl, *Netherlands Divided*, pp. 139-40.
[188] Poelhekke, *De Vrede van Munster*, pp. 515-17, 529.
[189] Brun to Philip IV, 27 Aug. 1649, and *consulta*, 15 Sept. 1650: A.G.S. Est. 2070.
[190] *Consulta*, 26 Dec. 1649: A.G.S. Est. 2070; *consulta*, 5 Feb. 1650: A.G.S. Est. 2072; *consulta*, 24 Aug. 1656: A.G.S. Est. 2088.

an ending than a turning-point in the Spanish-Dutch confrontation as it had begun to develop since the time of the Twelve Years Truce. Spain had gone to war to weaken the republic in order to solve the problems posed by increasing Dutch influence both economic and political. In fact, as a result of the conflict, as well as of other factors, it was Spain that was weakened. Nevertheless Spain remained the centre of a large empire of crucial importance in international affairs and trade, and many of the specific problems that had arisen during the truce were to reappear after the treaty of Münster. The Dutch largely dominated commerce with Spain itself and became by far the leading European interloper in Spanish America, especially at Cartagena and Buenos Aires.[191] Furthermore it was more important than ever for Spain, increasingly threatened by the rising power of France and England, to prevent the republic from reinforcing her enemies. In 1621 Madrid had sought a solution through war; the solution that was attempted from 1648 onwards was to try to forge a special political relationship with the United Provinces, both as a counterweight to France and England, which Spanish ministers claimed were a threat to the well-being of the republic as well as to Spain (as indeed they were), and also to provide the political means with which to moderate the force of Dutch economic penetration.[192] Although most of the points in dispute at Münster had been settled in favour of the republic, with Dutch Catholics remaining without the right of public worship, the Scheldt staying closed and the Dutch keeping their conquests, there had been one solid Spanish gain: the republic formally acknowledged and accepted the total exclusion of its subjects from all the territories of Spain in the Indies.[193] From this starting-point Spanish ministers started on a new path after 1648 to obtain by pressure and agreement a series of further concessions in commerce and navigation,[194] to keep constant check on the working of these agreements by means of Spanish representatives and agents in Holland, and to secure the co-operation of the States General in their implementation by every political means at Philip IV's disposal. In this way, after 1648, relations with the Dutch Republic continued to be a major pre-occupation of those who governed the Spanish empire.

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[191] *Consulta,* 7 Oct. 1651: A.G.S. Est. 2076; *consulta* of the Council of the Indies, 19 Apr. 1652: A.G.S. Est. 2078.

[192] *Consultas,* 15 and 25 Sept. 1650: A.G.S. Est. 2072; "Parecer del conde de Peñaranda sobre union con Olandeses": A.G.S. Est. 2081.

[193] *Consulta,* 6 Aug. 1650, fos. 2^{v}-3: A.G.S. Est. 2072; Poelhekke, *De Vrede van Munster,* pp. 359-60.

[194] *Consulta,* 3 July 1650: A.G.S. Est. 2072; *consulta,* 2 Oct. 1651: A.G.S. Est. 2076.