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An Orangist revolution?

How successful were the English at achieving their war aims? Was there any evidence that English pressure, either external or internal, succeeded in destabilizing the Dutch republican regime? While Dutch political culture was fluid, its ebbs and flows frequently responding to the most recent battle news from the North Sea, there can be no doubting the ubiquity of popular political criticism throughout the United Provinces in the first two years of the war.

Almost as soon as Parliament resoundingly signaled its support of the war, the usually booming Dutch economy began to wilt. The United Provinces "is in an uproar for want of trade," Gilbert Talbot informed his fellow ambassador Henry Coventry during the war's first spring, the Dutch navy "must be forced to fight us or their leaders will be torn in pieces."[1] In letter after letter George Downing reported that "the people here are weary of the war" not so much for what they had already lost "but because they see no probability of an end thereof, and (say they) how is it possible for us to hold out and have no trade."[2] So discontented were the people that "many poor artists daily quit this country for want of employment, and many merchants speak of removing this spring if the peace be not made before."[3]

Not only had the war severed Dutch trade routes, but the astronomically high taxes necessitated by the war were crushing the domestic economy. Contributions toward the war effort consumed all the profits from the richest East India Company voyages.[4] According to William Temple, in the

1 Gilbert Talbot to Henry Coventry, 30 May 1665, Longleat House, Cov. MSS XXV, f. 73r.

2 Downing to Arlington, 28 April 1665, PRO, SP 84/175, f. 117v; Downing to Arlington, 11 July 1665, PRO, SP 84/177, f. 12v; see also Sylvius to Arlington, 28 November/8 December 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 337v (my translation); Sylvius to Arlington, 25 November/5 December 1665, Goodison, "Buat Affairs," p. 18; John Evelyn, notes for "History of Second Dutch War," Christ Church, Evelyn MSS 134, p. 88; newsletter from The Hague, 19/29 January 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 49r; newsletter from Rotterdam, 26 January/5 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 68r.

3 Downing to Arlington, 15 June 1665, PRO, SP 84/176, f. 79r. See also Downing to Clarendon, 13 January 1665, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 255v; Downing to Clarendon, 23 June 1665, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 239.

4 Downing to Clarendon, 13 January 1665, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 256v.

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erstwhile prosperous Dutch towns "discontents" were "ripening into tumults" because the tax rates were becoming "insufferable."[5] "The charges wherewith the people are taxed" combined with "no trade," George Downing was sure, "are two extremities that cannot live long together."[6]

Given the economic situation, then, it was hardly surprising that "all generally wish for nothing more than a peace."[7] After surveying the voluminous correspondence crossing his desk, Arlington reported to Ormonde that "all the letters from Holland say confidently the party for peace grows very strong."[8] The Dutch "cannot well subsist much longer" without a peace, opined the Duke of Albemarle's secretary Sir William Clarke, "their trade being absolutely at a stand and their seamen not to be prevailed with to serve aboard their men-of-war."[9]

Dutch popular opposition to the war, the popular outcries for peace, were not unpoliticized manifestations of despair. Instead the Dutch enunciated their criticism of the war in sharp, and politically volatile, language. "The people of Holland will have peace with the king on any terms," reported the somewhat optimistic Earl of Castlemaine, "they are in a kind of tumult."[10] The States General, thought another observer, lived in "fear of the communality."[11] The popular political rage was expressed throughout the United Provinces with all of the rich symbols and traditional political celebrations associated with the House of Orange. The "chief misfortune" of the Dutch republican government, thought a Venetian observer, was that "in the very heart of the provinces" – presumably both metaphorically and physically – "are the Prince of Orange and his party."[12] By the first autumn of the war it was known that "the Prince of Orange is publicly prayed for in the churches, and much talk of having him restored to all his dignities."[13] Significantly the young prince's birthday was "now more solemnly kept in the Netherlands than ever heretofore."[14]

Fending off the growing Orangist opposition to the war required all of

5 Temple to Arlington, 3/13 October 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 298v. This letter is transcribed slightly differently in *The Works of Sir William Temple* (London, 1814), Vol. I, p. 218.
6 Downing to Clarendon, 3 March 1665, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 276v. See also William Morrice to Henry Coventry, 5 May 1665, Longleat House, Cov. MSS LXIV, f. 161v.
7 Roquil (United Provinces) to Sir Philip Froude, 1 July 1666, PRO, SP 29/161/1.
8 Arlington to Ormonde, 20 February 1666, Carte 46, f. 257v. The Venetian Giustinian used almost identical language in describing the Dutch political situation six months later. Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 24 July/3 August 1666, *CSPV*, p. 47.
9 Sir William Clarke, Diary, 7/17 May 1666, BL, Add. 14286, f. 21v. See also Thomas Rugge, "Mercurius Politicus Redivivus," 27 May 1666, BL, Add. 10117, f. 161r.
10 Castlemaine to Williamson, 15/25 January 1665, PRO, SP 77/33. f. 191r.
11 Newsletter from Amsterdam, 25 May 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 193r.
12 Sagredo to Doge and Senate, 4/14 August 1665, *CSPV*, p. 176.
13 Robert Southwell to Ormonde, 24 October 1665, Carte 34, f. 452v.
14 St. Serfe's newsletter, 26 November 1665, LOC 18124, Vol. I, f. 7r.

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the vast political acumen of John De Witt and his republican supporters.[15] De Witt committed himself ideologically, physically, and emotionally to the war effort, proclaiming that the Dutch "must rather perish than yield an ace to the king."[16] De Witt set a superhuman example, volunteering to serve on the Dutch fleet like "a Roman dictator," investing his own money in Dutch privateers to harass English trade, offering diplomatic alternatives to capitulation to England.[17] So successful was De Witt in promoting his cause, so skillful was he at negotiating the tricky waters of Dutch politics, that William Temple concluded that the Grand Pensionary of Holland "has far greater power in the government than ever any Prince of Orange had."[18] While people marveled at his "great zeal, industry and diligence" they also muttered that De Witt was "the principal cause of embroiling the state in this war," and that it was his "stratagems" which had "embroiled and engaged this state."[19]

Orangist whispering and murmurings, the subtle reminders of the century-long ideological struggle which gripped the Dutch polity, soon developed into political demonstrations and demands for political action. The economic stress of the war combined with the general perception – a perception encouraged at every turn by Charles II and his ministers at home and abroad – that England was fighting on behalf of the Prince of Orange led ineluctably to Orangist agitation throughout the United Provinces.

Even in Holland, De Witt's own province and the center of republican power, the outbreak of war with England brought with it a revival of Orangist agitation. "The clergy generally throughout Holland," remarked Edmund Ludlow with incredulity, prayed for Charles II "dignifying him in their expressions and prayers with the title of Sacred Majesty, and are for the setting up of his nephew the Prince of Orange."[20] These sentiments were not the ravings of a few renegade predikanten. Rumors spread that "many towns of Holland have proposed placing the prince on the Council of State."[21] All of the evidence did indeed support William Temple's assertion

[15] This story is told in far greater detail than it can be here in Herbert Rowen, *John De Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland, 1625–1672* (Princeton, 1978), pp. 574–682.

[16] Downing to Arlington, 11 July 1665, PRO, SP 84/177, f.12v.

[17] Downing to Arlington, 18 July 1665, PRO, SP 84/177, f. 26v; Downing to Clarendon, 20 January 1665, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 260v. The alliance with France is discussed more extensively below. De Witt always claimed, with some justice, that he was willing to negotiate but that Charles II was uninterested. See, for example, Sylvius to Arlington, 9/19 December 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 353v.

[18] Temple to Arlington, 28 December/7 January 1665/66, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 357v.

[19] Newsletter from The Hague, 29 May/8 June 1666, BL, Add. 32094, f. 87v; Mons. Nypho to Arlington, 10/20 October 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 198r.

[20] Ludlow, "A Voyce," Bod., English History MSS C487, p. 1102.

[21] Letter from The Hague, 29 November 1665, PRO, SP 84/178, f. 39r; see also Downing to Fanshawe, 22 June 1665, BL, Harleian MSS 7010, f. 305; newsletter from Rotterdam, 1/11 December 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 319r; newsletter from The Hague, 13/23 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 114r; Sylvius to Temple, 9/19 December 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 371r.

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that "the Prince of Orange's faction grows certainly in Holland more considerable."[22] In Amsterdam, where William III's father had received his most devastating political reversal, there was open discussion of "the change of the state and some move that the Prince of Orange be restored."[23] In Rotterdam a popular minister was exiled just before the war began for accusing the States General "of great ingratitude in forgetting the family of Orange, and comparing them to Nebuchadnezzar who was turned a grazing, and justifying the putting to death of Barnevelt."[24] Orangist sentiment soon resurfaced in Rotterdam, where by the summer it was "generally reported" among the populous that "the States' rejecting [of the Prince of Orange] is the main cause of the war."[25] When William visited Rotterdam the following spring he was "so thronged with people that they broke his coach and then took the coach up and him in it and carried it upon their shoulders."[26] In The Hague "all the popular preachers cry up the Prince of Orange as much as the Jews presently in expectation of their messiah."[27] At Leiden, a town with a much stronger Orangist tradition than Amsterdam, Rotterdam, or The Hague, when the drums began beating "for more men in the name of the States General, the women got about the drums and cut them in pieces crying out, the devil take the States, beat for the prince."[28] The citizens of the north Holland towns, towns which were also traditional centers of Orangism, "were entirely for peace and much inclined toward the Prince of Orange."[29]

Throughout Zeeland Orangist agitation began almost as quickly, as rumors of war with England spread from island to island. The Grand Pensionary of Holland and others of "the pure republican interest" quickly became suspicious of the Anglophilia of their Zeeland neighbors and "their

22 Temple to Carlingford, 3/13 March 1666, Beinecke Library, Osborn Collection, Carlingford Papers Box II (unfoliated); Temple to Ormonde, 2/12 March 1666, Carte 47, f. 273r.

23 Newsletter from Amsterdam, 11/21 October 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 300r; Ludlow, "A Voyce," Bod., English History MSS C487, pp. 1088–1089.

24 Downing to Clarendon, 20 January 1665, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 260v.

25 Newsletter from Rotterdam, 16/26 June 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 208r.

26 Hollis to William Coventry, 7/17 March 1666, BL, Althorp Papers C13 (unfoliated). See also Williamson's newsletter, 13 March 1666, Carte 222, f. 92; newsletter from The Hague, 6/16 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 148v; newsletter from The Hague, 2/12 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 142r.

27 Newsletter from The Hague, 9/19 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 157r. For more about Orangism in The Hague, see also Downing to Clarendon, 13 January 1665, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 255r; newsletter from The Hague, 2/12 January 1666, Carte 222, f. 80r; newsletter from The Hague, 22 January/1 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 51r.

28 Downing to Arlington, 9 June 1665, PRO, SP 84/176, f. 67r. See also newsletter from Rotterdam, 16/26 June 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 208r; Thomas Corney (Amsterdam) to Thomas Kempe, 9/19 June 1665, PRO, SP 29/124/72I.

29 Sylvius to Arlington, 9/19 December 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 354v. See also P. A. Rompf to his father, 29 November/9 December 1665, Goodison, "Buat Affair," p. 21; De Bacquoy/Van Ruyven to Bennet, 14/24 January 1666, PRO, SP 84/174, f. 37v; Downing to Clarendon, 20 January 1666, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 261v.

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forwardness to set on foot the Prince of Orange's interest."[30] Every week brought news to Holland of Zeelanders insisting upon the "re-establishment of the Prince of Orange in the offices of his ancestors."[31] Almost every report claimed that in Zeeland the Prince of Orange's party "grows stronger every day."[32] Purveyors of gossip maintained that, upon assurances from Charles II "of freedom of commerce in all his Majesty's dominions," the magistrates of Zeeland were contemplating dividing "from Holland upon the Prince of Orange's interest."[33]

The Bishop of Munster's invasion of the United Provinces in the autumn of 1665, an invasion financed in part by and planned in consultation with England, raised the political temperature in the inland provinces as well.[34] As the bishop's troops advanced effortlessly across the inland provinces, the local inhabitants grew increasingly bitter at the inability of their government to protect them. The "swarms of women and children" who fled Friesland initiated "a great cry among the people for peace."[35] So successful was the Bishop of Munster's invasion "that most considering persons" concluded "that the Dutch are so far lost that they must betake themselves either to the French protection or to a truckling peace with England."[36] For many, especially for those in the traditionally Orangist inland provinces of Friesland, Groningen, Utrecht, and Overijssel, negotiation with England necessarily implied elevation of the Prince of Orange, the traditional leader of the Dutch land armies. Indeed Denzil Hollis, almost certainly relying upon French sources, learned that in the inland provinces "the Prince of Orange's party [was] beginning to stir." At Breda, for example, "the people cried openly in the streets 'Vivat the Prince of Orange and the Bishop of Munster,'" a conjunction which seemed perfectly natural since the Bishop of Munster's troops ostentatiously played Orangist tunes as they marched

30 Captain Honeywood to Bennet, 30 January 1665, PRO, SP 84/174, f. 58r.

31 Newsletter from The Hague, 14/24 December 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 329v. See also Downing to Clarendon, 13 January 1666, Bod., Clar. 108, f. 256v; Downing to Bennet, 31 January 1666, PRO, SP 84/174, f. 73r; newsletter from The Hague, 22 September/2 October 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 273r; St. Serfe's newsletter, 17 January 1666, LOC 18124 Vol. I, f. 21r; newsletter from The Hague, 20 February/2 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 126r; newsletter from The Hague, 13/23 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 166; newsletter from The Hague, 13/23 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, ff. 168–169; newsletter from The Hague, 20/30 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 182v; St. Serfe's newsletter, 9 June 1666, LOC 18124, Vol. I, f. 76r.

32 Sylvius to Arlington, 28 November/8 December 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 337v.

33 Letter from Rotterdam, 29 May 1665, PRO, SP 29/122/74. Although no evidence survives that an actual offer of a separate peace was made at this time to Zeeland, such ideas were frequently floated in the Privy Council. Coming so soon after the king's personal emancipation of Captain Evertson this story seems all too plausible.

34 For Bishop Von Galen of Munster's invasion in September 1665 and the negotiations which led up to it see Rowen, *John De Witt*, pp. 598–610; K. H. D. Haley, *An English Diplomat in the Low Countries* (Oxford, 1986), pp. 53-91.

35 Robert Southwell to Ormonde, 21 October 1665, Carte 34, f. 452v.

36 Temple to Arlington, 29 September/9 October 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 294v; Temple to Arlington, 20/30 October 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 307r.

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by Deventer and Zwoll.[37] In Gelderland the English-bankrolled troops of the Bishop of Munster were playing their songs to committed Orangists. There had been an Orangist riot at Tiel when naval recruiters had sought able-bodied seamen in the name of the States General.[38] The following spring the Gelderland provincial assembly voted to make the young Prince of Orange captain general of their armed forces.[39] Groningen, Deventer, and Overijssel "seeing themselves reduced to misery" by the Bishop of Munster's forces had acted more quickly than their neighbor province. Not only did they propose that the States General name the Prince of Orange captain general and admiral but they also proposed that he lead an ambassadorial mission to his uncle Charles II asking for peace and political alliance.[40]

The economic devastation of the war in the maritime provinces combined with the military destruction in the inland provinces brought on by the Bishop of Munster's invasion revitalized the Orangist movement throughout the United Provinces. By the winter of 1665–1666 events seemed about to prove George Downing – who had predicted long before that any military setback would provoke "strange doings" in the United Provinces – a prophet.[41] "If the war continues," enthused the Orangist Gabriel Sylvius, "it will be a miracle if there is not an insurrection for the people murmur loudly against the government and speak openly of the restoration of the Prince of Orange."[42] Upon traversing the United Provinces on his diplomatic mission to Germany Sir Walter Vane concluded that "all the provinces are inclined to the re-establishment of the Prince of Orange."[43] "Impartial letters of men of known discretion" concurred with "the general opinion of the people" in the Netherlands that "the Prince of Orange's faction will carry it against De Witt."[44]

37 Hollis to Arlington, 18/28 October 1665, PRO, SP 78/121, f. 123.
38 Downing to Arlington, 20 June 1665, PRO, SP 84/176, f. 84r.
39 Newsletter from The Hague, 6/16 April 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 228v.
40 John Evelyn, notes for history of the second Dutch War, Christ Church, Evelyn Letters 134, f. 2; Propositions of the States of Overijssel, 24 October 1665, PRO, SP 84/178, f. 198r. See also newsletter from United Provinces, 10/20 October 1665, PRO, SP 101/47, f. 298r; Allen Broderick to Ormonde, 22 October 1665, Carte 34, f. 448v; Temple to Ormonde, 27 October/6 November 1665, Carte 47, f. 264; William Coventry to Ormonde, 29 October 1665, Carte 47, f. 429r; Arlington to Ormonde, 1 November 1665, Carte 46, f. 220r; Temple to Arlington, 24 October/3 November 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, ff. 312-313; Thomas Rugge, "Mercurius Politicus Redivivus," October 1665, BL, Add. 10117, f. 148r. Apparently the proposal was seconded by Friesland in the States General. See Ludlow, "A Voyce," Bod., English History MSS C487, p. 1100.
41 Downing to Arlington, 19 May 1665, PRO, SP 84/176, f. 38r.
42 Sylvius to Temple, 9/19 December 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 371r. See also Sylvius to Arlington, 28 November/8 December 1665, Goodison, "Buat Affair," pp. 19–20; Sylvius to Williamson, 9/19 December 1665, Goodison, "Buat Affair," pp. 24–25; Sylvius to Arlington, 9/19 Deecember 1665, Goodison, "Buat Affair," p. 29.
43 Sir Walter Vane to Arlington, 29 December/8 January 1665, BL, Add. 16272, f. 25r.
44 St. Serfe's newsletter, 12 December 1665, 22 February 1666, LOC, 18124 Vol. I, ff. 12r, 32r; see also [James Ralph], *The History of England* (London, 1744), Vol. I, p. 111.

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Charles II and his privy councilors, indeed all England, were fully cognizant that an Orangist revolution would necessarily, indeed was intended to, bring an end to the war. "One victory more," William Temple predicted, would give Charles II a peace with the Dutch "upon his own terms."[45] "If it please God to give us the blessing to beat them once more soundly," chimed in Sir Robert Moray, then nothing could "hinder us from being *les maîstres*."[46] After reviewing the news of the Dutch economic plight, of the successes of Munster's armies, of English-supported Orangist activity, Arlington gleefully reported in letter after letter that "when the Hollanders shall make up their accounts of this year's losses and expenses I believe they will not go with any heart to the undertaking of another."[47]

Nevertheless the Dutch did not capitulate that winter. No Orangist revolution took place. The English had always known that the Dutch republican regime had a choice – they could accept "a sudden and submissive peace" with England or they could take the "desperate measures of falling under the French king's protection."[48] The English simply could not bring themselves to believe that a Dutch regime, even one so corrupt as that of De Witt, would sacrifice its political independence to so powerful a neighbor. But this was exactly the option John De Witt and his political allies selected in the face of the Bishop of Munster's invasion. "That faction which ever opposed the House of Orange seeing themselves on the brink of destruction," the East India merchant Peter Vandeputt informed George Oxenden, "have now brought in the French amongst them for their private ends, which in the end might prove worse than an open enemy to the country."[49] De Witt turned to France despite his fear of "their greatness," the diplomat Sir Walter Vane concurred, because in the face of "the great inclination everybody had for the restoring the House of Orange" he thought that was "his last refuge."[50]

The French troops which arrived to defend the United Provinces against Munster's invasion, and the subsequent French declaration of war against England, completely altered the political situation in the United Provinces.

45 William Temple to Arlington, 18/28 August 1665, PRO, SP 77/33, f. 267v.

46 Sir Robert Moray to Oldenburg, 9 September 1665, in Rupert A. Hall and Marie Boas Hall (editors), *The Correspondence of Henry Oldenburg*, Vol. II–VI (Madison, 1966–1967), Vol. III, pp. 504–505.

47 Arlington to Carlingford, 23 September 1665, in Karl Taaffe (editor), *Memoirs of the Family of Taaffe* (Vienna, 1856), p. 65; Arlington to Fanshawe, 23 September 1665, BL, Harleian MSS 7010, f. 404v; Arlington to Temple, 23 September 1665, in Thomas Bebington (editor), *The Right Honourable the Earl of Arlington 's Letters* ... (London, 1701), Vol. I, p. 31.

48 William Temple to Thomas Clifford, 20/30 September 1665, NMM, Clifford Papers Vol. II, Dw87.

49 Peter Vandeputt to George Oxenden, 16 March 1666, BL, Add. 40712, f. 53r.

50 Sir Walter Vane to Arlington, 8/18 December 1665, BL, Add. 16272, f. 11r. Some claimed that De Witt did not fear the French because they did not represent an economic threat. Newsletter from The Hague, 13/23 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 169v.

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"Ever since France declared itself so openly for Holland," reported one of Williamson's informants from the continent, "the face of affairs here has radically changed."[51] "The King of France's declaration hath put new life into the governing party there," thought Arlington.[52] New life indeed. The pivotal magistracy elections in Amsterdam, which had previously appeared to be delicately poised between the Loevesteen and Orangist parties, now swung in the direction of De Witt and his political allies.[53] The language of Dutch political discourse was now spoken with a French accent. The French ambassador d'Estrades and the Holland Grand Pensionary were always to be found in tandem, William Temple related to Arlington, so that De Witt "is by all there thought to be too firmly linked with the French ever to be removed."[54] The Dutch republicans were now said to be thoroughly "influenced by France," to have become "the French party" or a "French faction."[55] There now seemed to be little hope that an Orangist popular rebellion, even one with the implicit support of the King of England, could succeed in overthrowing John De Witt and in ending the Anglo-Dutch conflict.

It was not long before French political and military support for the Dutch republican regime had its effect. The Prince of Orange, who only months before had seemed likely to become captain general of the Dutch armed forces,[56] was made by John De Witt and his Holland supporters "a child of the States."[57] This political maneuver entailed placing the young prince's education in the hands of a predominantly republican commission headed by De Witt himself. The Orangists and Anglophiles who had previously made up the prince's little court were summarily dismissed, in some cases with pensions, leaving observers to conclude that the Prince of

51 Nypho to Williamson, 14/24 February 1666, PRO, SP 77/34, f. 76r.

52 Arlington to Ormonde, 6 February 1666, Carte 46, f. 250. See also William Morrice to Henry Coventry, 23 February 1666, Longleat House, Cov. MSS LXIV, f. 313v.

53 Sir Walter Vane to Arlington, 15/25 December 1665, BL, Add. 16272, f. 14r; Vane to Arlington, 30 January/9 February 1666, BL, Add. 16272, f. 49r.

54 Temple to Arlington, 6/16 March 1666, PRO, SP 77/34, f. 114r.

55 Arlington to Ormonde, 19 December 1665, Carte 46, f. 231; Arlington to Temple, 9 February 1666, Bebington, *Arlington's Letters*, Vol. I, p. 59; St. Serfe's newsletter, 28 April 1666, LOC, 18124 Vol. I, f. 58r.

56 On the Captain General dispute see Rowen, *John De Witt*, pp. 668–671; newsletter from The Hague, 12/22 January 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, ff. 28r, 35r; newsletter from The Hague, 22 January/1 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, ff. 50–51; newsletter from The Hague, 25 January/4 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 57; newsletter from The Hague, 30 January/9 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, ff. 72–73; newsletter from The Hague, 9/19 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 102Ar; newsletter from The Hague, 13/23 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, ff. 111r, 114r; St. Serfe's newsletter, 15 February 1666, LOC, 18124 Vol. I, f. 30r; Arlington to Ormonde, 17 February 1666, Carte 46, f. 256r; newsletter from The Hague, 18/28 February 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 121r; newsletter from The Hague, 20 February/2 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 122r; newsletter from The Hague, 20/30 March 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 187r.

57 Letter to Philip Froude, 6 April 1666, National Library of Scotland, Adv. MSS 19–1–26, f. 61r.

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Orange's "party will find themselves frustrated of their expectations and designs."[58] "They have not so much as left him a footman that he had, but changed all," exclaimed Denzil Hollis.[59] There could be no doubting that with this triumph over the Orangists "Monsieur De Witt is become master of that party."[60]

Purging the prince's household confirmed for all who cared to comment that the political balance in the United Provinces had shifted back in favor of the republican party. That it had done so was largely because the French intervention had not only vastly increased De Witt's prestige, it had compelled the Bishop of Munster to accept a peace and withdraw from the war.[61] The implications of the bishop's surrender, leaving England without an ally in the war, were immediately apparent. While the prospects for the House of Orange recently had appeared to be quite rosy, the normally optimistic Arlington informed Ormonde that "the delivery from the bishop may perhaps change the face of things again and leave us with no other hope than what we can gain by our swords."[62] "Those of the prince's party had hoped to gain a great deal by this land war," noted one particularly lucid intelligencer, however they "now see themselves trumped by this peace and the prince forced to undergo a second childhood."[63]

While the republican resurgence was initially buoyed by the Dutch naval victory in the Four Days Battle, the English victory in the St. James's Day Fight (25 July 1666) followed quickly by Sir Robert Holmes's spectacular raid on the Vlie breathed new life into the Orangist cause. Convinced that his defeat at the hands of the English navy on St. James's day had been the result of treachery, De Ruyter vowed that "several of my captains and particularly Tromp shall answer for it."[64] Within days the Dutch seaman Cornelius Van Tromp, who "the previous month had been liberator and defender of their country," was publicly denounced as a traitor on the streets of Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and The Hague.[65] When the States of Holland relieved him of his command it was widely perceived to have been because Van Tromp "was of entire devotion to the Prince of Orange, as his father had always been, and all his children continued to be."[66] Immediately

[58] Newsletter from The Hague, 3/13 April 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 225r. See also newsletter from The Hague, 3/13 April 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 221r; newsletter from The Hague, 6/16 April 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, ff. 232–233.

[59] Hollis to Arlington, 11/21 April 1666, PRO, SP 78/122, f. 140v; see also St. Serfe's newsletter, 7 April 1666, LOC, 18124 Vol. I, f. 50r.

[60] Letter from The Hague, 7/17 April 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 239r.

[61] Haley, *English Diplomat*, pp. 82–87.

[62] Arlington to Ormonde, 21 April 1666, Carte 46, f. 288.

[63] Newsletter from The Hague, 17/27 April 1666, PRO, SP 101/48, f. 272v (my translation).

[64] William Temple to Ormonde, 7/17 August 1666, Carte 72, f. 86r.

[65] Newsletter from Antwerp, 4/14 August 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 15v (my translation).

[66] Edward Hyde, *The Life of Edward Earl of Clarendon* (Dublin, 1760), p. 275. See also Ludlow, "A Voyce," Bod., English History MSS C487, p. 1071.

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the fleet, and the entire United Provinces, entered "into the quarrel of their chiefs."[67] "They are in a great confusion there," Dr. William Denton informed his friend Sir Ralph Verney, "peaching one another of cowardice."[68] In Holland republican mariners openly proclaimed that "if a Zeelander [were to be] in danger next fight they will not relieve [him]."[69] Elsewhere "the seamen and soldiers [were] much dejected and ... extremely passionate for Van Tromp."[70] "Whenever Tromp shows himself in [The Hague]," reported the Venetian Giustinian, "he is always received with great acclamations, exalting his name and the House of Orange."[71] So passionate had party feeling among the sailors become that in Flushing and elsewhere "in the streets of Zeeland" the mariners "kill and stab one another daily."[72] All of this made Thomas St. Serfe seem prescient for having predicted that "the laying aside of Tromp may be of dangerous consequence both because he was a popular man among the mariners and is likewise beloved of the Prince of Orange's faction."[73]

The English victories which gave rise to party violence in the fleet had no less of an impact on the rest of Dutch society. "There had never been seen so great an uproar" as was witnessed at The Hague after news began to filter in of the defeat of the Dutch fleet on St. James's Day.[74] After the burning of the Dutch ships in the Vlie, Amsterdam was the site of unprecedented "desolation and mourning."[75] "Mothers cry and mourn for their children, wives for their husbands, sisters for their brothers, and poor orphans for their fathers, such is the desolation that there is among them," noted one sympathetic observer; "they say one to another that the English are too powerful for us, and it would be much better if we concluded a peace."[76] Clarendon pithily observed that the English victories "hath put them all out of their wits."[77]

Just as defeat had politicized the Dutch seamen, so it reinvigorated the ideological struggle between Orangists and Loevesteeners in the Dutch towns. In Amsterdam, Rotterdam, and The Hague "the Orange party is

67 [Ralph], *History*, Vol. I, pp. 133–134.
68 Dr. William Denton to Sir Ralph Verney, 2 August 1666, Firestone Library, Verney MSS Reel 21 (unfoliated).
69 Ed. Custis to Arlington, 26 August/5 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 96.
70 ? to Sir Philip Froude, 29 August/8 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 101r.
71 Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 28 August/7 September 1666, *CSPV*, p. 65.
72 Ed. Custis to Arlington, 26 August/5 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 96r; William Scott's answers to Aphra Behn, 21 September 1666, PRO, SP 29/172/81I; see also News from Antwerp, 22 August/1 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 81.
73 St. Serfe's newsletter, 23 August 1666, LO, 18124 Vol. I, f. 102v.
74 William Temple to Ormonde, 7/17 August 1666, Carte 72, f. 87r.
75 Aphra Behn to Mr. Halsall, 27 August 1666, PRO, SP 29/169/38; Temple to Ormonde, 18/28 August 1666, Carte 47, f. 291v.
76 Newsletter from Antwerp, 4/14 August 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 15.
77 Clarendon to Ormonde, 18 August 1666, Carte 47, f. 125v.

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increasing and many adherents are disclosing themselves."[78] "At night from the cabarets and crossroads of Amsterdam, The Hague and elsewhere," reported one intelligencer, "one hears cries of 'Long Live the Prince of Orange' while the sailors cry 'Long Live Tromp.'"[79] The North Holland towns of Haarlem, Enckhuysen, and Hoorn soon "declared for the Prince of Orange," following the lead of much of Zeeland.[80] Throughout the United Provinces there was "great animosity of one against another, and faction against faction."[81]

It was clear to all that the Dutch Republic was again ripe for revolution in the autumn of 1666. "Things are in so universal a disorder," reported the government spy and future dramatist extraordinaire Aphra Behn, "that if God give our fleet good success at sea we shall see strange things."[82] Indeed many knowledgeable observers of Dutch politics were convinced that "upon the least misfortune a revolution in the States was to be apprehended," that "if they should have a defeat, [it] will undo De Witt."[83] The Dutch "distempers" were "much about the same height as was that of the English nation in the year 1659 when the Rump first began their fatal end," commented the Scots newsletter-writer Thomas St. Serfe.[84] An English newsletter predicted the following week that if the Dutch "receive a blow this next engagement, De Witt will be lost and the Prince of Orange will up."[85]

78 Arlington to Ormonde, 23 August 1666, Carte 46, f. 358r; Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 4/14 September 1666, *CSPV*, p. 67.

79 News from Antwerp, 8/18 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 125r.

80 William Temple to Arlington, 6/16 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 119r; newsletter from Holland, 27 August/6 September 1666, PRO, SP 101/50, f. 53.

81 News from Antwerp, 5/15 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 116; see also Thomas Corney to Nicholas Oudart, 25 August/4 September 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 92r.

82 Aphra Behn to Halsall, 14 September 1666, PRO, SP 29/171/120. This was common gossip in Italy as well: Joseph Kent to Williamson, 8/18 September 1666, PRO, SP 85/8, f. 128r. English merchants heard similar tales from their Dutch counterparts: see John and Charles Banks to Thomas Clifford, 21 August 1666, PRO, SP 82/11, f. 31r.

83 ? to Sir Philip Froude, 28 July/7 August 1666, PRO, SP 77/34, f. 414v; Pepys, *Diary*, Vol. VII, 23 July 1666, p. 216 (reporting the opinions of William Coventry and George Downing). See also Benjamin Glanville to Williamson, 19/29 August 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 70r.

84 St. Serfe's newsletter, 25 August 1666, LOC, 18124 Vol. I, f. 103r.

85 Williamson's newsletter, 3 September 1666, PRO, SP 29/170/57. See also Arlington to Ormonde, 23 August 1666, Carte 46, f. 358v; Arlington to Ormonde, 28 August 1666, Carte 46, f. 359v; William Temple to Lord Lisle, August 1666, in *The Works of Sir William Temple* (London, 1814), Vol. I, p. 254; Temple to Arlington, 2 July 1666, Carte 35, f. 5r; Temple to Ormonde, 3/13 July 1666, Carte 47, f. 287r; Temple to Carlingford, [18/28 August 1666], *Memoirs of Taaffe*, p. 162; Temple to Arlington, 18/28 August 1666, PRO, SP 77/35, f. 62v; Temple to Carlingford, 25 August/4 September 1666, *Memoirs of Taaffe*, p. 163; Temple to Carlingford, 1/11 September 1666, *Memoirs of Taaffe*, pp. 163–164. So confident were the English that revolution was imminent that in late August all London thought De Witt had fled the country: William Coventry to Ormonde, 18 August 1666, Carte 47, f. 461v; Pepys, *Diary*, Vol. VII, 16 August 1666, p. 250; St. Serfe's newsletter, 21 August 1666, LOC,18124 Vol. I, f. 101r.

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Despite the unpredictable vicissitudes of early modern warfare and the domestic devastation wrought by the plague,[86] then, in the autumn of 1666 the restored English monarchy was on the threshold of achieving its war aims. Dissenters had been politically cowed – the pipeline of arms and ideas which ran from the religiously tolerant Holland towns to the underground conventicles in England's metropolis and throughout the countryside had failed to mount a single serious threat to the government's stability. Instead it was the republican regime in the United Provinces, that source of seditious principles and fount of unbridled ambition, which tottered on the precipice of destruction. By the late summer and early autumn English men and women throughout the country were confident that they were about to win the war with the Dutch. Certain that he and his navy "shall give them another blow" the Duke of Albemarle bragged that the Dutch "will be easily persuaded to give his Majesty satisfaction."[87] "Holmes' exploit puts us almost into a transport," rejoiced Sir Roger Burgoyne, "it may prove a means to procure us an honorable and lasting peace."[88] With "a happy issue of the next engagement," Joseph Williamson confidently predicted in his widely disseminated newsletter, "in all probability the war will be at an end, so near are [the Dutch] to total confusion at home."[89]

[86] For the effects of the plague see Paul Slack, *The Impact of Plague in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford, 1985), *passim*; Ronald Hutton, *The Restoration* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 225–233.

[87] Albemarle to Arlington, 8 August 1666, PRO, SP 29/166/146. It is true, of course, that Albemarle had long predicted an easy victory over the Dutch, but this letter reflects a political rather than a military assessment. For his earlier brags see: William Sancroft to Thomas Sancroft, 1 January 1666, Bod., Tanner MSS 45, f. 53r; Arlington to Temple, 9 February 1666, Bebington, *Arlington's Letters*, Vol. I, p. 61.

[88] Sir Roger Burgoyne to Sir Ralph Verney, 19 August 1666, Firestone Library, Verney MSS Reel 21 (unfoliated). For others who believed the victory would lead to peace see John Maurice (Minehead) to James Hickes, 7 August 1666, PRO, SP 29/166/119. This view was, of course, consonant with official assessments: Sir Thomas Clifford to Arlington, 11 July 1666, PRO, SP 29/162/73; Arlington to Ormonde, 31 July 1666, Carte 46, f. 343r. For a merchant's view see William Atwood (London) to Richard Wickstead, 4 August 1666, PRO, C109/23 Pt. II (unfoliated) and a similar view from Amsterdam: H. O. to Williamson, 14/24 August 1666, PRO, SP 101/50, f. 168.

[89] Williamson's Newsletter, 3 September 1666, PRO, SP 29/170/57; see also John Lysle (West Cowes) to Williamson, 3 September 1666, PRO, SP 29/170/46.

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