

THE EARL OF LEICESTER'S GOVERNORSHIP OF THE NETHERLANDS

1586 - 1587

by

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ABSTRACT

One of the aims of this study is to describe and where possible to explain the policies of Leicester as governor of the Netherlands; another to analyze the political situation in the provinces under his government.

Among the factors which influenced the governor's career and which have been described in some detail are, (1) the financial and military emergency which the northern provinces faced after the subjugation of the South, and (2) the political duties imposed upon Leicester by the treaty of alliance. In connection with the second point the question has been discussed why not only the States, but some members of the Privy Council as well, preferred a semi-official political union between England and the Netherlands over a mere military alliance. Consideration has been given in this respect to the records of the Privy Council's debates on the question of intervention, to those of the treaty discussions, and to the political terms of the treaty itself.

In the description of the Dutch political scene considerable attention has been given to the divisions between the States and those opposition groups that were to form the Leicesterian faction. An attempt has been made to trace what seemed to be the main causes of the domestic factionism, to define the political and constitutional

aims of the opposition, and to show in what manner the partisan situation was affected by Leicester's government and by the military and political problems of the period. Other factors demanding a more or less detailed discussion were the interprovincial relationships, and the effect which the split between North and South had upon the general political situation and upon Leicester's government.

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PREFACE

Upon the conclusion of this work I wish to express my gratitude to all those who have helped me in my studies.

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It would be impossible to list all the libraries and archives whose officials have, by their cooperative attitude, facilitated my research, but I should like to mention the Historical Institute in Senate House, the Reading Room and Manuscript Department of the British Museum, the Public Record Office, the Algemeen Rijksarchief and the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in The Hague, and the Gemeente- and Rijksarchieven in Utrecht. The work in all these places has been a pleasure.

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INTRODUCTION

The classic and still the most influential work on the Earl of Leicester's administration in the Netherlands is Professor Fruin's essay of 1862, an essay that was conceived as a review and criticism of the first two volumes of Motley's History of the United Netherlands, but that developed into a study covering the entire period.¹ Since the publication of this essay other contributions have been made to the Leicester historiography in the Netherlands. The episode was treated in general histories of the Revolt; a number of monographs have appeared on isolated aspects of the era; and a recently published biography of Johan van Oldenbarnevelt gave a detailed account of Leicester's relations with the Advocate and States of Holland.² These later works have added to the information given by Fruin, and modified or corrected a number of his conclusions. As a comprehensive study on the period his work has not been superseded however, and in major outlines his interpretation still stands.

The present study does intend to give a survey of the period as a whole. The time that has elapsed since Fruin wrote his essay was one

¹R. Fruin, "Motley's Geschiedenis der Vereenigde Nederlanden", first published in De Gids, 1862; reprinted in the author's Verspreide Geschriften (The Hague, 1901), III, 118-224. References in the text are to the latter edition.

²Jan de Tex, Oldenbarnevelt (Haarlem, 1960), I.

of the considerations inspiring this attempt. Another was the interpretative aspect of his work. In many ways Fruin's essay added significantly to an understanding of the period. He wrote it, as mentioned, as a corrective to Motley's history. His criticism of the latter work was directed mainly at the following two points: Motley's tendency to overstress the dramatic and picturesque at the expense of the more relevant political and constitutional issues, and the inaccuracies in his account of the political scene in the Netherlands. It was especially the latter inadequacy which Fruin set out to correct, and his signal contribution to the historiography of the period is his attempt to place the story of Leicester's rule against the background of the internal political situation. By analyzing such factors as the domestic divisions and rivalries, and by showing how these affected Leicester's position, he elucidated aspects that had so far been left untouched or largely unexplored.

It is nevertheless true that not all his interpretations in this respect are tenable. Motley had been vague about the origins of the divisions and had left the impression that they were characteristic of Leicester's rule only. Objecting to this presentation, Fruin made it his point to show that the issues dated from earlier years, and that they continued to be present throughout the time of the Republic. On the whole the correction was a valid one, but by stressing this historical continuity Fruin fell into the danger of ignoring factors that were indeed typical of the period, such as the strength of the centralist

movement, or the effect which the military threat and the recent loss of the southern provinces had upon the partisan situation. His failure to take account of these and similar factors was shared by subsequent authors. An attempt will be made later in this study to show that it led to an oversimplified, and in some instances an anachronistic, explanation of the political and constitutional issues between States and opposition.

Another point that must be mentioned concerns Fruin's treatment of Leicester's career. The author considered the Leicester-experiment as a costly failure, which in many respects it was, but he attributed the failure too exclusively to the impracticability and unwisdom of the governor's ideas. This factor did of course assert its influence. Leicester obviously was no politician, and it is probable that even under optimum conditions his achievements would have been small. He was not working under optimum conditions, however, and for a balanced interpretation this fact has to be taken into account. Fruin did this only to a limited extent. He showed how the domestic rivalries complicated matters for Leicester but gave insufficient weight to other circumstances which were no less decisive in prescribing his policies. He ignored, in other words, the emergency character of many of the measures taken, and as a result his explanation of the governor's approach and failure remained inadequate.

In his evaluation of Leicester's career, and in his general presentation of the period, Fruin adhered closely to what has been called

the Holland or States tradition in the Leicester-historiography. That tradition is characterized by a tendency to underestimate the political and military problems encountered by the governor, and by an uncompromisingly negative verdict upon the policies of Leicester and the Leicesterians. Although one recent historian, Mr. A. M. van der Woude, has attacked a number of the assumptions on which the tradition was based, it is still the dominant one. It had already had a long, but again not entirely unchallenged, history when Fruin wrote his essay, and in order to place his work in its proper context some attention must be given to the views held by the most prominent of his predecessors.¹

The tradition dominated the historiography of the Republican era. The pattern was set by the contemporary authors, although on the whole their accounts were more balanced than those given by 17th and 18th century historians. An inclination to consider the arguments of the opposing side characterizes, for example, the approach of the 16th century chronicler Bor, whose highly comprehensive and well-documented account still forms one of the main sources of information on the period.² Bor left no doubt that in the controversies his sympathies were wholly with

¹ Most of the following works have been printed more than once. In so far as they have been cited in the text, they will be listed here according to the edition (usually a later one) that has actually been used; otherwise the date of the first edition will be given.

² P. C. Bor, Nederlandsche Oorlogen ([2nd complete ed.]; Amsterdam, 1680-81), II, III.

the States, but neither did he suppress evidence explaining the position of Leicester and his followers. This applies both to his narrative account and to his selection of documents. As official historiographer to the States of Holland and those of Utrecht he probably received a large part of his documentary material through official channels, but he evidently did not restrict himself to the publication of government-supplied information. A liberal amount of space was given to the pamphlets, remonstrances and apologies of the opposition. Not all of these have survived in other forms, and Bor's work is therefore indispensable for any study that is concerned with the background of the political divisions in the Netherlands during the revolutionary period.

The other contemporary historians of note are Van Reyd,¹ who served as secretary to the stadholder of Friesland, and Van Meteren.² The work of the former is strongly affected by his pro-States attitude, but the spirit of objectivity that influenced Bor's account is again noticeable in Van Meteren's. Like Bor and Van Reyd, Van Meteren was a defender of the States' position. He was also a native of the southern Netherlands and he had spent several years in England; two factors that may account for his comparatively lenient attitude towards Leicester and the opposition.

¹ Everhart van Reyd, Oorspronck ende Voortganck vande Nederlantsche Oorloghen (3rd ed.; Amsterdam, 1644).

² Emanuel van Meteren, Nederlantsche Historien ofte Geschiedenissen ([3rd ed.]; n. p., 1611).

The most influential exposition of Leicester's Dutch career written in the 17th century is that given in Hooft's Historien.¹ Hooft's version, which shows a more pronounced anti-Leicesterian bias than that of any of his predecessors, was not based upon a great amount of independent research. For most of his factual information he depended on the work of earlier authors, and such originality as his story of the Leicester era possesses derives from the inclusion of hearsay and anecdotes. The author's family background (his father had been a member of Amsterdam's magistrate when Leicester was governing the Netherlands) may be one of the factors responsible for his partisan approach. Others are, no doubt, the Republic's increased national consciousness and its deteriorating relations with the former English ally. The account is of interest because it gives an indication of the manner in which Leicester's career and English political intervention were regarded in the 17th century.

Hooft's account had a strong influence upon later histories. There is no need to trace that influence in any detail, but mention must be made of Wagenaar, whose voluminous general history of the Netherlands dominated the 18th century historiographical scene.² Wagenaar was a serious historian, who made diligent use of archival sources, but his

¹ P. C. Hooft, Nederlandsche Historien (3rd ed.; Amsterdam, 1677).

² [Jan Wagenaar], Vaderlandsche Historie (2nd ed.; Amsterdam, 1770), VIII.

researches did not result in a drastically different picture of Leicester's government. His presentation of this episode is little more than a recapitulation, and in some instances a verbal repetition, of Hooft's story.

Around the beginning of the 19th century a re-evaluation of the events of the period was attempted. Foremost among the historians who in certain respects departed from the traditional view was Adriaan Kluit, author of a five-volume history on the government of Holland.¹ Kluit's work, which is still one of the authoritative introductions to Dutch constitutional history, was inspired by the 18th century democratic attack upon the established government. As a conservative, he joined the struggle on the side of the States. By analyzing in his history the development of States power through the centuries, and by showing that this power had been based on their function as representatives of the people, he tried to refute the democrats' contention that the oligarchies had usurped the people's political rights.

Kluit's concern was with constitutional issues, and he considered the Leicester period also primarily from this angle. One of his most important contributions lies in his careful analysis of the constitutional controversies between States and opposition. In his presentation of the conflicts between States and governor his particular approach led, in a few instances, to a somewhat oversimplified picture however. From a

¹ Historie der Hollandsche Staatsregering (Amsterdam, 1803), II.

purely constitutional point of view the right was usually on Leicester's side, but from a practical-political one it was quite as often on that of the States, and Kluit did not always escape the danger of overstressing the legalistic aspect. By drawing attention to the political arrangements inaugurating the Leicester period he nevertheless provided a much needed corrective to some of the earlier accounts, which had presented the governor in the role of usurper of the States' prerogatives.

The revisionist trend was continued by the Calvinist or Anti-Revolutionary school of historiography, which sprang up in the course of the 19th century. Among its earlier members who tried to arrive at a more positive evaluation of Leicester's government, no doubt largely because of the legalistic principle involved, are authors like Bilderdijk and Van der Kemp.¹ Their attempts are interesting primarily from a historiographical point of view. Neither account adds significantly to the arguments given by Kluit, and because of their pronounced anti-States bias they fall considerably below his standard of objectivity. This objection does not apply to the brief but balanced exposition of the Leicester era given by the most prominent 19th century member of this school, Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer.²

The best-known 19th century work on the period and the immediate

¹ W. Bilderdijk, Geschiedenis des Vaderlands (Amsterdam, 1835), VII;
C. M. van der Kemp, Maurits van Nassau (Rotterdam, 1843), I.

² [G.] Groen van Prinsterer, Handboek der Geschiedenis van het Vaderland (Amsterdam, 1846).

forerunner of Fruin's study, John Lothrop Motley's History of the United Netherlands,¹ does not entirely belong to the traditional stream, but it falls also largely outside the revisionist one. It was noticeably influenced by the versions given in the 16th and 17th century histories, and Motley's own inclination made him the whole-hearted champion of the States in their opposition to a governor with absolutist tendencies. His account is nevertheless considerably less onesided than those of Van Reyd, Hooft and Wagenaar. As a result of his wider scope, and also as a result of his fuller acquaintance with Dutch and English archival sources, he pointed to at least some of the practical and political problems that confronted Leicester, even if he did not always notice the extent to which they influenced his policies.

Fruin himself was no more than Motley an uncritical follower of the earlier authors, yet in one significant respect, the general scope of his history, he came closer to them than the American historian did. Motley had treated the Leicester period not only as a political, but also as a military episode, more particularly as an aspect of the combined Anglo-Dutch war effort against Spain. In accordance with the old tradition Fruin underemphasized both its international and its military implications and considered it primarily as an internal-political phenomenon. This had its effect on his interpretation. Attention has already been drawn to the fact that in explaining Leicester's career he

¹References in the text are to the edition printed in London, by John Murray, 1860-67.

failed to show the full relevance of other than party-political factors. It was to a number of these neglected factors that Mr. van der Woude drew attention when he suggested that the events of Leicester's government be explained with reference to the critical military, financial and political situation in which the provinces found themselves in the period immediately following the loss of Brabant and Flanders.¹

The impression is unavoidable that Fruin was too often tempted to consider the situation of the years between Antwerp's surrender and the defeat of the Armada (or Parma's participation in the French civil wars) in the light of the militarily and economically more prosperous and politically more settled decades following that period. As Mr. van der Woude has pointed out, Fruin's too optimistic view is expressed early in his essay, where he ruled out the possibility that Holland could have been desperate enough to consider surrendering its independence in return for English military and political support. It is noticeable throughout his study, and most strikingly so in his treatment of such major sources of controversy as Leicester's commercial and some of his financial measures; policies for which he found no other than party-political explanations.

¹ See his articles "De Goudse Magistraat en de strijd tegen de koning", BGN, XIII (1958-9), 101-107, and especially "De crisis in de opstand na de val van Antwerpen", BGN, XIV (1960), 38-56 and 81-103. His study on the financial aspects of the alliance, "De Staten, Leicester en Elizabeth in financiële verwickelingen", TvG, LXXIV (1961), 64-82, is in some ways a sequel to the second article.

The influence of the English demands upon Leicester is another factor that has received insufficient attention from Fruin. Here again his interpretation has remained largely uncorrected, both by Dutch and by English authors. It is nevertheless true that Leicester was sent to the Netherlands with not only a military, but also a political task. At least some indication why the English government had considered this arrangement necessary was given in the report of the treaty negotiations drawn up by the Dutch legation, while some of the actual duties were listed in the treaty itself. Fruin's dominant concern with the aspects of Leicester's rule proper caused him to pass lightly over the negotiations leading up to the alliance, and he gave equally little attention to the political terms of the treaty. As a result the only standard used by him to determine the legality of Leicester's actions was the commission given him in the Netherlands, and the only touchstone for their acceptability was again that which the States supplied.

Other points might be mentioned, but the foregoing remarks have sufficiently indicated the main trend of his interpretation, together with the views underlying it. These remarks were not intended as a criticism of his exposition as a whole. Fruin gave a valuable analysis of the political aspects of Leicester's rule, and a highly satisfactory account of the States' plight in the face of the English and the Leicesterian threat. His limited scope prevented him from giving an equally adequate explanation of the circumstances which determined the position of Leicester and those which inspired the policies of the

opposition. It was on these points that a re-evaluation seemed possible, and these are among the factors that will be given special consideration in the present work.

NOTE ON THE SOURCES

Although especially in recent decades a large amount of documentary material relevant to the Leicester period has appeared in print, it is still possible to supplement these printed sources with unpublished material. The Algemeen Rijksarchief in The Hague, where the records of the States of Holland, the States General, the Council of State and other central government departments are deposited, and the Manuscript Department of the British Museum proved to be the richest fields. The relevant collections in the British Museum, which contain documents of both English and Dutch origin, were found to be of special importance for the period of Leicester's temporary absence in the winter and spring of 1587 and for the second phase of his governorship.

A third archive containing unpublished material that throws additional light on the Leicester period is the Public Record Office. Some of these documents can be found among the State Papers Holland and the Treaty Papers, another group occurs among the Domestic ones, which have been only briefly calendared for these years and which in a number of instances deal with foreign affairs. Less rewarding was a search for material in a number of other British archives. The Libraries of Lambeth Palace and of the University of Cambridge do not appear to have a great deal of material that is of value for our topic. The Bodleian Library in Oxford has an extensive collection of papers relating to

Anglo-Dutch affairs in the late 16th century, but the larger part of it concerns the period immediately following the year 1587. A check of the indexes kept by the National Register of Archives showed that the unpublished collections listed here contain little that is of relevance for the first years of the alliance and for the events of Leicester's government. With the exception of the Hatfield Manuscripts this is also true for those private archives that have been calendared by the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

Of the many collections of printed documents only those can be mentioned here that were of special importance for this study. The most important of the published governmental records are the fourth and fifth volumes of the Resolutions of the States General (edited by N. Japikse and published in 1919 and 1921) and those of the States of Holland. The publication of the latter series was begun in the 17th century; a second edition was issued between 1772 and 1798. On the English side there are the Acts of the Privy Council, edited by Sir J. R. Dasent, which are, however, incomplete for this period. Among the collections of official correspondence and other State Papers the Calendars of State Papers Foreign Series, and the volume of Leicester-correspondence edited by John Bruce and published in 1844, are indispensable. The second publication, which contains a large amount of material from the British Museum, deals with the first year of the Leicester period only. A valuable supplement is the second part of the Cabala, sive Scrinia Sacra, published in London in 1691, which is of importance for the period of

Lord Buckhurst's embassy in the Netherlands and for the concluding months of Leicester's government. The Cabala also gives many documents preserved in the British Museum, particularly from among the papers of Robert Beale (formerly the Yelverton or Calthorpe Mss., now Additional Mss. 48,000 - 48,196). Other major collections are the carelessly edited but otherwise excellent volumes of Leicester-correspondence collected by H. Brugmans from various Dutch and English archives (3 vols., 1931), and the extensive Hotman-correspondence from the Archives des Affaires Etrangères in Paris, edited by R. Broersma and G. Busken Huet (BMHG, XXXIV, 1913). The first of these deals with the entire Leicester period; the second mainly, although not exclusively, with the months of Leicester's temporary absence when Jean Hotman, his French secretary, remained in the Netherlands as one of his confidential agents. Of importance are further Groen van Prinsterer's Archives ou Correspondance Inédite de la Maison D'Orange-Nassau (II, i, 1857), the first volumes of M. L. van Deventer's and S. P. Haak's editions of Oldenbarnevelt's correspondence (published in 1860 and 1934 respectively) and, on the English side, the Historical Manuscripts Commission's Calendars of the Burghley papers in Hatfield House.

The number of Dutch and English historical studies that have been devoted, in whole or in part, to the period under discussion is again so large that no attempt could be made to list them all. Because several of those that have been used in preparing the present work have been discussed in the

Introduction or will be mentioned in later chapters, it is perhaps unnecessary to review them here. The titles of these works occur among the sources listed at the back of this study. A more complete survey of relevant literary and other printed sources may be had from the published bibliographies on the period. In addition to Conyers Read's Bibliography of English History, Tudor Period (2nd ed.; 1959), attention might be given to the extensive and excellent bibliographical notes in the third volume of the same author's Mr. Secretary Walsingham (Oxford, 1925) and in J. H. Black's The Reign of Elizabeth (2nd ed.; Oxford, 1965). Also useful are the bibliographies in a number of Dutch historical works, such as P. J. Blok, Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Volk (3rd ed.; Leiden, 1924), vol. II; I. H. Gosses and N. Japikse, Handboek tot de Staatkundige Geschiedenis van Nederland (3rd ed.; The Hague, 1949); and J. A. van Houtte a. o., eds., Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden (Utrecht, 1952), vol. V.

CHAPTER I

CONCLUSION OF THE ANGLO-DUTCH TREATY

I

In the early part of July 1585, one year after the death of the Duke of Anjou and the Prince of Orange, six months after the conclusion of the Holy League, and four months after Henry III of France had declined the States' offer of sovereignty and their request for military aid against Spain, a Dutch legation arrived in London to solicit English support. By the middle of August a preliminary treaty had been concluded, inaugurating the two years of the Low Countries' semi-protectorate relationship with England under the Earl of Leicester's governorship.

The present chapter is concerned with the negotiations leading up to this agreement. After Motley's detailed description of the treaty discussions, and after Dr. Conyers Read's painstaking analysis of the Queen's and the Privy Council's views on the question of aid to the Netherlands, this topic is a familiar one. A brief recapitulation of the ideas held by the two partners regarding the scope and ultimate goal of their cooperation is nevertheless necessary, both to explain the character of the treaty and to provide an introduction to the Leicester period.

The aims and intentions of the States appear from the three

sets of instructions with which they had provided their commissioners. In the first of these the legation was ordered to offer Elizabeth the sovereignty of the countries on conditions similar to those that had been drawn up for Henry III. If she should decline the deputies were to ask that she take the countries into "everlasting protection", and if that were also refused a request for mere military assistance was to be made, for the duration of the war.¹ The States wished, in other words, to acquire English aid until Philip had acknowledged their independence or right of self-determination -- for at least since 1581 they had been unable to conceive of a peace on any other terms -- and they intended to suggest to Elizabeth that she anticipate such an acknowledgement by annexing the provinces to the English crown.

The hope that she could be induced to take this step undoubtedly existed. In his review of Motley's study on the Leicester period Professor Fruin, as was mentioned, questioned Holland's sincerity in this respect. He explained the offer as a mere civility, made necessary because of the French precedent but extended in the confidence that Elizabeth, in accordance with her repeated assurances that she would not "enter as a possessor", would reject it.² In view of the strong particularism of the provinces and the reluctance of the States to share their powers with any executive that was not controlled by

¹Resolutien der Staten-Generaal, ed. N. Japikse (The Hague, 1921), V, 56, 57-61.

²Verspr. Geschriften, III, 135f.

them, whether provincial or central and whether native or foreign, this conclusion might seem logical. It is not however supported by the available evidence. The legation, which counted among its members some of the most influential statesmen of Holland and the other provinces, made more attempts and used more arguments to convince Elizabeth of the wisdom of annexation than would appear to have been either necessary or prudent if the offer were meant as a polite gesture only.¹

It should be said that Motley's oft-repeated suggestion that the States' desire for a union with England was inspired as much by natural inclination as by the necessity of the moment,² is probably equally incorrect. The States may by this time not yet have considered it advisable to dispense with a sovereign head altogether, but it was not absolutely necessary that such a sovereign were a foreign prince. Holland's and Zeeland's intention to bestow the honour upon their own stadholder, the Prince of Orange, suggests that they had considered the possibility of establishing their independence. It is probable that the majority of the States agreed with Christopher Roels, the pensionary of Zeeland, who confessed to Walsingham that only the present emergency constrained them to seek foreign overlordship, but that by

¹ According to the report of the negotiations which the Dutch legation submitted to the States General. This report has been printed in part by Bor, II, 635-646, and almost in full by KHG, V, ii (1866), 215-277. For the discussions on the sovereignty see Bor, pp. 635f and KHG, pp. 216-222.

² Motley, United Netherlands, I, 286, 304, 323; II, 61-64, 127, 134.

inclination the provinces were "neither French nor English".¹ It was of course true that a union with a larger power would not only help the provinces solve some of their immediate problems, but might bring them a number of long-term benefits as well. The connections with Spain had never been an unmitigated evil; the political, diplomatic and commercial advantages were still recognized. Some benefits of a similar nature might be derived from England. Commercial privileges were in fact expressly demanded at the time of the negotiations,² and during the first year of Leicester's government various attempts were made to draw a larger part of the English cloth trade to the maritime provinces.³ The chief benefits to be expected were of a political rather than an economic nature however. On the whole Dutch and English commercial interests were competitive, and no such striking economic profits were likely to be derived from a union with England as from the one with Spain.

Although there would be long-term gains, it is questionable whether in the States' opinion these outbalanced the risks involved in a policy of annexation. These risks included the possibility of a Roman Catholic succeeding to the English throne, the anti-Calvinist

¹ Calendar of State Papers Foreign Series, ed. Sophie Crawford Lomas (London, 1916), XIX, 586.

² See the States' Articles of the Sovereignty, no. 14; ARA, Loketkas Engeland 2.

³ Resolutien van Hollandt, 1586, p. 62; Res. St. Gen., V, 324, 375; John Bruce, ed., Correspondence of Robert Dudley (London, 1844), pp. 126-128; Cal. For., ed. Sophie Crawford Lomas (London, 1921), XX, 385, 502f.

sympathies of Elizabeth herself, and her disinclination to allow "popular" influence upon the government. By means of the articles accompanying the offer of sovereignty they attempted, it is true, to guard against the dangers threatening the provinces' political and religious establishment. According to these articles the States envisaged little more than a loose personal union wherein not only the principle of self-government but also the general political status quo would as far as possible be preserved. It was requested, among other things, that the Council of State consist of natives, and that its instructions, to which the Queen's governor would also be bound, be drawn up with the States General's advice. All those officers whom formerly the sovereign used to choose and appoint were to be nominated by the provincial States. The provincial stadholders were to retain their authority, and the Colleges of Deputies of the provincial States, which formed with the stadholder the daily government in most of the provinces, their present function. It was further requested that the provincial States be allowed to assemble whenever they thought it necessary, and that the States General be called at least once a year "to resolve about matters concerning the Queen's and the country's service". No changes were to be made in the existing laws, no new taxes imposed, no innovations made in religious matters, no foreign garrisons introduced and no peace or armistice concluded except with

the consent of either the States provincial or general.¹ Although the legation was allowed to meet the Queen's possible objections to some extent,² the principle of national and provincial self-government was to be retained. If there had been guarantees that these conditions would be accepted and kept inviolate by the Queen and her successors little harm could be done, but any such guarantees were obviously lacking.

The reasons why the States nevertheless preferred annexation over a military alliance must therefore be sought in the special problems confronting them at this time. The most pressing of these was the apparent difficulty of tying England securely to the defence of the Netherlands. The need to retain English aid was greater than it had been before, because the possibility of even limited French help had disappeared, and the chance that that country's government would fall under Spanish control was increasing. Hopes that effective military aid would be given by the protestant princes of Germany were as small as ever, and the King of Denmark also appeared determined to persevere in his attitude of neutrality. England alone was left, and its loyalty

¹See the Articles of the Sovereignty, ARA, Loketkas Engeland 2, and the legation's Secret Instructions, ARA, Loketkas Loopende Engeland 2.

²Mainly with respect to the right of appointment. On condition that she chose natives the Queen would be allowed to appoint the chief officers without nomination, although in the case of provincial stadholders she was bound to follow the States' advice. The deputies were further allowed to agree to the appointment of two English members to the Council of State. Secret Instructions, arts. 8 and 5; ARA, Loketkas Loopende Engeland 2.

was to be secured at any price. Only if Elizabeth made the cause of the Low Countries her own by accepting them in ownership could there be a firm assurance of her full and permanent support.

Other difficulties were of an internal nature and concerned the country's political problems, such as the prevailing discontent with the States' government, the particularism of the provinces, and the related difficulty of establishing an effective central government. In arguing the advisability of annexation the deputies emphasized these governmental problems. The need for reform had long been acknowledged, but the drawbacks of the existing system were realized more clearly than ever since the Prince of Orange's death. Although he also had been constantly hampered by the provinces' particularism, he had at least been able to bring about some measure of cooperation. The Council of State, established after his death under the nominal headship of his sixteen-year old son Count Maurice failed to provide similar leadership. Its formal authority was not inconsiderable, but it was unable to enforce its measures and decrees. The need then for effective leadership to counter the disadvantages of the confederate nature of their government was stressed by the deputies, and the fact of provincial sovereignty was mentioned as the root cause of the difficulties. Only if this sovereignty were surrendered to a common head, something which, according to the legation, all the provinces were willing to do in the Queen's case,

would effective government be possible.¹

II

Elizabeth's views on the issue were, as is well-known, less far-reaching than those of the States. The Queen thought of a solution to the Dutch problem not in terms of an Anglo-Dutch union or even of Dutch independence, but in those of the pre-war situation. Spanish armies were to be withdrawn from the Netherlands and the Dutch granted their autonomy, but they were to remain under Spanish overlordship. Her views and policies precluded smooth cooperation between the future allies and greatly complicated matters for the English governor. By stating this it is not implied that her goal in itself was indefensible. It turned out to be an unrealistic one, but, as recent historians have shown, she had good reasons for her belief that the course contemplated by her was the safest and the only possible one for England.² The problem was not only that either of the approaches suggested by the States would mean an endless war with Spain and that England seemed ill-equipped to wage such a war with any hope of success, but also that a formal conflict

¹KHG, V, 11, 220-222.

²See for example the following works by R. B. Wernham, Before the Armada (London, 1966), "English Policy and the Revolt of the Netherlands", in J. S. Bromley and E. H. Kossmann, eds., Britain and the Netherlands (London, 1960), pp. 29-40, and "Elizabethan War Aims and Strategy", in S. T. Bindoff, J. Hurstfield and C. H. Williams, eds., Elizabethan Government and Society (London, 1961), pp. 340-68; as well as J. E. Neale, Queen Elizabeth (London, 1934), and the same author's "Elizabeth and the Netherlands, 1586-7", in his Essays in Elizabethan History (London, 1958), pp. 170-201.

with Spain would too drastically disturb England's system of continental alliances. Traditionally England had depended on alliances with Spain against the mutual rival France, and Elizabeth considered it essential for England's future peace and quiet that this old system be restored. All she wished to achieve was to stem the present aggression of Spain and to provide safeguards to prevent a recurrence of such aggression in the Low Countries.

The alliance might nevertheless have had a better start if Elizabeth had accepted the fact that the conditions needed for such a composition still had to be created. Spain had failed to honour a similar agreement at a time when the provinces were in a strong bargaining position; the settlement concluded after the Pacification of Ghent had been violated shortly after it had been made. After the fall of Antwerp the Revolt seemed near collapse and Philip could not be expected to accept and execute England's terms unless he was once more driven into the defensive. Under Leicester's government this was never achieved, and England's premature peace negotiations needlessly aggravated the inter-allied disagreements during these years.

The Queen's views on the matter of war and peace were no different after the conclusion of the treaty than they had been before that time. Personally she would have preferred to dispense with a permanent military alliance and to limit herself to informal or temporary aid; the Dutch appear to have owed it to the Privy Council's

intervention that a more comprehensive treaty was concluded.¹ Perhaps they owed it also to the Council, or at least to the interventionists among its members, that help was promised at all. On this point there had been no unanimity among the Councillors, but the weight of conciliar opinion appears to have been in favour of supporting the Dutch. In October 1584 a positive decision was given,² and there is no indication that it was ever reversed. In conformity with that decision the Queen had, through the ambassador William Davison, promised the States that English help would be given if they failed to obtain support elsewhere.³ No further steps had been necessary at this time, because the States were still negotiating in France regarding a transfer of sovereignty to Henry III. It was not until the following March, when Henry refused the Dutch offer and requests, that England was forced into action.

Henry's decision caused more discomfort than relief in England. There had of course been concern about the possibility that a union between France and the Netherlands might become a fact. France was the arch-rival, and one of the reasons why Elizabeth clung to the idea that Spain and the Netherlands were to be reunited was her belief that Spanish help might again be needed to prevent France from acquiring the Dutch provinces.⁴ But although France was considered to be potentially a more

¹Cal. For., XIX, 618.

²Ibid., pp. 97f.

³Ibid., pp. 149-151; Res. St. Gen., IV, 515.

⁴The extent to which fear of France dominated Elizabeth's foreign policy has been clearly shown in the previously cited articles by Professor Wernham.

dangerous enemy than Spain, it was also England's potential ally so long as Anglo-Spanish hostility lasted. Elizabeth had taken that fact into account. She had done so increasingly when the Spanish threat grew more and more formidable and when the situation in the Netherlands began to make large-scale foreign intervention essential. If France took the lion's share of this duty a Franco-Spanish war might ensue, in which case England could reserve to itself the function of arbitrator.

Elizabeth had therefore not objected too strenuously when in the summer of 1584 the Dutch had prepared to offer the sovereignty to Henry. She had tried to gain some influence for England, both by suggestions of joint-intervention to Henry, and by promises of English aid to the Dutch.¹ That aid was offered on condition of territorial cautions, the grant of which would have removed the danger of Henry's becoming "absolute" master of the provinces. The intention had not been to discourage him from espousing the Dutch cause, although this danger was of course inherent in English interference. If no joint-intervention were possible, and if the choice were between Henry's accepting the sovereignty and his total withdrawal, Elizabeth preferred the first alternative. "For although it may be greatly misliked", as in January 1585 one of the Queen's Councillors wrote to the English ambassador in Paris, "to have the French King become an absolute lord of the country,

¹ Cal. For., ed. Sophie Crawford Lomas (London, 1914), XVIII, 598f, 601f.

yet rather than he should now reject them, and so give courage to the Spaniard, it were better that he should accept of the offers and enter into war with the King of Spain for the Low Countries, wherein he must have a long time before he can achieve such an enterprise as to be absolute lord of all the Low Countries, during which time many opportunities may fall out to stop his greatness that way..."¹ If Henry only kept Antwerp and the Flemish coast from falling to Spain a multitude of sins would be covered. Once he was engaged in war he would probably be forced to accept English cooperation, and on England's terms.²

Henry refused to accept the sovereignty, and the negotiations about joint-intervention by England and France also had negative results. In this situation the question was asked in the Privy Council whether England should not follow the French example and maintain an attitude of neutrality. The proposal occurs in an anonymous document that was discussed during a Council meeting held at Lord-Treasurer Burghley's house on March 28th.³ Among the arguments used against intervention was what Queen and Council had always considered to be a problem,

¹ Cal. For., XIX, 236.

² For a more detailed account of England's attitude towards the Franco-Dutch negotiations see Conyers Read, Mr. Secretary Walsingham (Oxford, 1925), III, 75-100, and his Lord Burghley (London, 1960), pp. 306-314.

³ BM, Harleian Mss. 168, fos. 102-105. This document has been given in extenso in the Appendix, no. I.

namely the political disabilities of the Dutch. These were now painted in darker colours than ever. Special emphasis was placed on the disadvantages of the "popular" system of government, the States' habitual failure in fulfilling their financial obligations, the inconstancy and "mutinousness" of and the divisions among the people, and the disinclination of States, people and military leaders to cooperate with foreigners. These factors alone, it was implied, might make all English endeavours to help the States fight their war ineffective. An additional argument against a belligerent course was that an Anglo-Spanish war could never solve the problem for the Dutch. The most probable thing to happen was that England would have to sue for peace and leave the provinces again at the mercy of Spain. Even if Philip could be forced to grant them independence their difficulties would continue. Unwilling to annex them, the Queen would have to leave them to their own resources and it was obvious that they were incapable of maintaining and governing themselves. These matters being so, it was to be considered whether the Queen should not be advised to use all her resources for the strengthening of England's home defences, and to let events on the continent run their course. Once Philip was repossessed of his Burgundian heritage he would probably realize the need of English friendship and refrain from acts of aggression against the former ally.

In the absence of complete records of the Council's resolutions it is not clear how strong anti-interventionist opinion was at this time. Dr. Conyers Read has shown that there was a division in matters

of foreign policy between Walsingham's and Leicester's Puritan party, to which most of the younger Councillors belonged, and the majority of the older members, including Lord-Treasurer Burghley.¹ The former group had advocated intervention for many years. It was convinced that the threat to England and to protestantism in general could only be met by an all-out war against Spain and aggressive Roman Catholicism, and it favoured a close political union between England and the Netherlands, a union that might become the nucleus of a wider protestant confederacy. The other group consisted mainly of men who had served under Queen Mary, at a time therefore when England was at war with France and still allied to Spain. As a result they were less inclined to see Spain as England's implacable enemy, and they were more in agreement with the views underlying the Queen's policy than the younger Councillors.

This remained true for Lord Burghley. It is not certain however that Burghley, as Dr. Read assumed, had in fact been opposed to the conclusion of the alliance.² The increased Spanish threat in recent years had forced him to qualify his views and to consider the need of military intervention in the Netherlands. In a memorandum that seems to have been written not long before the Prince of Orange's death he had warned Elizabeth that suspicions of France should not blind her

¹ Conyers Read, "Walsingham and Burghley in Queen Elizabeth's Privy Council", EHR, XXVIII (1913), 34-58.

² Idem, Lord Burghley, pp. 308f, 311.

to the danger posed by Spain. An Anglo-French alliance might be possible, and if not, France, which was weak and divided, could for the time being be discounted as a serious enemy. Spain posed a more immediate danger, also because of the goodwill its King enjoyed among his co-religionists in England. If a composition with Spain were attempted, Philip might use the opportunity provided by the negotiations to complete the overthrow of the Low Countries, and so deprive England of its "counterscarp". It therefore seemed to Burghley that the Queen would be best advised "thoroughly and manifestly to make war upon him", both in the Indies and in the Low Countries.¹

It is true that Burghley became more hesitant when the time for action came nearer. In the advice submitted to the Council meeting of October 1584 he had strongly emphasized the dangers of intervention and of war with Spain,² but it does not appear that at this time he had counselled against intervention. Nor does there seem to be any conclusive evidence that he did so during the following months. Dr. Read based his contrary opinion on the document discussed by the Council on March 28th, which he attributed to Burghley.³ He failed to indicate the grounds on which he reached this decision, however, and it is

¹ Sommers Tracts, ed. Walter Scott (London, 1809), I, 168-170.

² Calendar Hatfield Mss., III, 67-70. That this was indeed Burghley's advice appears from the copies in BM, Harl. Mss. 4243, fos. 25f, and Cotton Mss., Caligula C IX, fos. 47-49.

³ Lord Burghley, p. 311.

uncertain whether it is tenable. No record has been found of this particular Council meeting, and in what seems to be the only surviving copy of the proposal in question no indication is given which Councillor or Councillors might have submitted or defended it. The fact that Burghley had in October drawn attention to the same risks and dangers as mentioned in the document of March 28th is not sufficient proof that he was the author, for these were standard objections and had been made by others as well.¹

While it is clear that Burghley was no enthusiastic interventionist like Leicester and Walsingham, it seems unlikely that he would have given unequivocal negative advice in March. This would have been in contradiction not only to the opinion he had expressed previously and to the assurances he had given to some Dutch agents in London only one week before the Council meeting,² but also to his subsequent attitude. In July 1585, if not earlier, he was again urging Elizabeth to give aid to the Dutch,³ and his misgivings about an interventionist course did not prevent him from supporting that course once it had been decided upon.

¹ See for example the advice which Sir Walter Mildmay gave at the Privy Council meeting on October 10, 1584. Cal. For., XIX, 96f.

² According to a report by Joachim Ortell and the Seigneur de Gryse, who were negotiating in England, Burghley had on March 21st 1585 informed them that Elizabeth was resolved to take the provinces in protection, suggested that an official legation be sent, and promised that he himself would help to expedite the treaty as much as possible. M. L. van Deventer, ed., Gedenkstukken van Johan van Oldenbarnevelt (The Hague, 1860), I, 67.

³ BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C VIII, fos. 89f. (See Appendix, no. II.)

Suspensions that the Queen would be tempted to proceed with half-way measures may well have been among the causes of his earlier scepticism. That he himself favoured a more comprehensive action than Elizabeth is evident both from his growing opposition to her peace policies,¹ and from his attitude towards the Leicester experiment. As will presently be seen, Burghley appears to have favoured the appointment of an English nobleman with political responsibilities, and although there is no evidence that he had been acquainted with Leicester's decision to accept a formal function in the Netherlands in opposition to Elizabeth's order, he strongly defended him when his acceptance of the governorship was challenged by the Queen.²

The decision taken by the Council on March 28th is not known, but it may be assumed that the interventionists retained the upper hand, for there are no indications that Elizabeth was advised to persevere in a policy of neutrality. Withdrawal was in fact scarcely possible any more. Before the Council meeting the earlier promises of help had been repeated, by Walsingham, Leicester, Burghley and the Queen herself, and an invitation had been extended to the States to send their deputies.³ After considerable delay the legation arrived, and after some weeks of hard bargaining an agreement was concluded whereby England did not only

¹ See below, pp. 326, 340f.

² Bruce, pp. 104, 112f, 143, 161.

³ Cal. For., XIX, 333, 336, 352; Van Deventer, I, 65-68.

promise to give permanent military aid, but also to send a governor who would have political as well as military functions.

The legation's report of the treaty negotiations shows that the idea of a semi-protectorate relationship did not come from the Dutch deputies. They willingly accepted this arrangement as the nearest possible substitute to a formal union with England, but they had not been instructed to ask for the appointment of an English governor if the offer of sovereignty and the request for "perpetual protection" were refused. The idea came, according to the report, from the English commissioners.¹ Presumably in the first place from Leicester and Walsingham. Leicester coveted the governorship, and he and his partisans held the opinion that the extension of mere military aid would not solve the problem for England or the Netherlands. They may also have hoped that by the means contemplated a first step might be taken on the road towards an Anglo-Dutch union, Elizabeth's objections notwithstanding.²

As already mentioned, they had some support from Lord Burghley. From a paper drafted by Burghley on July 23rd it appears that he was one of those who advised Elizabeth to provide for the appointment of an English nobleman, who might help direct Dutch policies.³ Another paper,

¹ KHG, V, ii, 249.

² See in this connection the hypothesis, which will be considered later in this study, in R. C. Strong and J. A. van Dorsten, Leicester's Triumph (Leiden, 1964), pp. 3f and passim.

³ BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C VIII, fos. 89f. (Appendix, no. II.)

written at a somewhat later date, suggests that he had no objections to an arrangement whereby that nobleman assumed the leadership of the Dutch government, if this was in agreement with the States' wishes.¹ It is not clear whether Burghley also thought in terms of a permanent union. The 16th century copyist of one of the annexationist documents written during these months assumed this to be so,² but there are no other indications that Burghley considered a formal union either possible or advisable. He evidently agreed with Leicester and Walsingham, however, that a military alliance alone was insufficient. One reason why he favoured a semi-protectorate relationship was no doubt the governmental chaos in the Netherlands. He had discussed this problem at some length during the Council meeting of the previous October,³ and he used it as his chief argument in his proposal of July 23rd.

He probably also hoped that the arrangement would make it possible for the English government to exert some influence over Dutch domestic policies.⁴ That influence was needed in military affairs, in the question of trade with the enemy, and especially in matters of finance. Burghley had little faith in the soundness of the Dutch monetary system,

¹See below, p. 55 , note 1.

²BM, Add. Mss., 32,379, fos. 73-75.

³According to the "Advice" printed in Cal. Hatf. Mss., III, 67-70.

⁴See for some of Burghley's suggestions in this respect his memorandum in Cal. For., XIX, 705f, which seems to have been written during the treaty discussions.

and during the treaty discussions he expressly demanded that the "order of their monyes current [might] be reduced into one standard" and that no changes be made without official English permission.¹ He was also convinced that the Dutch, if they husbanded their resources properly, could raise more for the war than they did.² Already in October 1584 he had warned that in case of intervention English officers should be appointed to supervise the levy and disposal of the contributions in the Netherlands, and he repeated this demand when the Dutch legation was in London.³ There is reason to believe that the terms of the treaty dealing with financial reform, as well as a later English order to Leicester regarding the centralization of the system by means of a Chamber of Finances,⁴ were inspired by the Lord Treasurer.

III

It was not until the beginning of August that the Dutch legation,

¹PRO, SP 103, XXXIII (Treaty Papers), no. 51.

²ARA, SG 3793, fos. 222, 238f; Bor, II, 875, 929f.

³Cal. For., XIX, 705. Burghley had discussed the topic in another memorandum, which was written on July 13/23. Under the headings "The contributions and levy" and "Chardge of Collection" he wrote: "Item it is necessary to know what soms of money are at this tyme or of late tyme in two or three months levyed, and out of what contries, and what towns do paye the same, and of what natures the same payements are of, and how the same may continew, and rather how the same may increase without offence of the people if cause shall require. Item also to know what are the common chardges in collectyng of those contributions, and what is upon every som of 20 or 40 thousand floryns that is imposed upon the contrey, expended and spent by the collectors, thresorers and payemasters". PRO, SP 103, XXXIII, no. 58, fo. 147.

⁴BM, Add. Mss. 48,129, no fo. number.

in conformity with the Councillors' suggestion, asked Elizabeth for the appointment of an English nobleman, because it was not until this time that there had been any certainty whether she would grant a formal alliance. The States' delays in sending their deputies and their hesitation in granting all the cautions she desired had increased her doubts about the wisdom of formal intervention. International developments had the same effect. Around April 1st the English government had been informed about the conclusion of the Holy League in France.¹ Initially there had been some hope that this combination might draw the French King, the "politiques" and the Huguenots together against Spain and the Guises. Early in July, however, Henry resolved to join the League and thereby placed the French government under the control of the Spanish party. Whatever hopes there had been that France might give some support to England and the Netherlands had, for the time being, disappeared, and the possibility that it would detain Philip from an attack upon England itself had greatly decreased.²

Under these circumstances Elizabeth considered it essential to limit her responsibilities abroad, and as far as the Low Countries were concerned she was initially not prepared to go much further than would be necessary to stem the Spanish threat against Antwerp. During the

¹Cal. For., XIX, 369f.

²Cf. Wernham, Before the Armada, p. 370.

first weeks of the negotiations the legation failed to get more than an offer of a subsidy, and a promise of temporary military aid for the defence of Antwerp. The subsidy amounted to £65,000 per year, but Flushing and De Briel were required as security, and their garrisons were to be paid by the Dutch. The minimum demand of the States was for a permanent force of 5,000 footsoldiers and 1,000 horsemen, in addition to the cautionary garrisons, an army that would cost approximately £126,000 per year. The legation accepted the offer of aid for Antwerp but rejected the conditions tied to the offer of a subsidy, and by the end of July negotiations came close to a collapse.¹ At this point the Privy Council intervened,² and on the last day of July the Queen agreed to send a permanent army of 4,000 footsoldiers. Shortly thereafter she promised to add 400 horsemen to this number.³

This offer was not immediately followed by the conclusion of a treaty, partly because the deputies had not yet been fully authorized by the States of Zeeland regarding the cession of Flushing, and partly because the numbers promised still remained below those required by the States. Because Antwerp was in imminent danger it was decided to proceed with the conclusion of at least a temporary agreement. It was

¹ KHG, V, 11, 233-244.

² According to Walsingham all the Councillors, "howsoever inwardly affected", had cooperated in the attempt to persuade Elizabeth that she grant a formal alliance. Cal. For., XIX, 618.

³ KHG, V, 11, 247f, 249.

signed on August 12th. By the terms of this so-called provisional treaty the Queen promised to send and maintain at her expense, for a period of three months and upon security of Ostend or Sluys, an army of 4,000 footmen. The cost of this force was estimated at approximately fl. 185,000, which amount was to be repaid six months after Antwerp's relief or, if the town should fall, within one year after the expiration of the treaty.¹

A few days later authorization was finally received from Zeeland to grant Flushing. Their attempts to raise Elizabeth's offer having been in vain, the deputies resolved to accept it provisionally, subject to the States General's approval. The treaty was accordingly drawn up and signed on August 20th.² It provided that the payment of the 4,000 foot-soldiers would begin upon the expiration of the provisional treaty, and that of the 400 horsemen one month after the conclusion of the permanent one. The cautionary garrisons of Flushing and De Briel, amounting to 1,150 men, were to be paid by the States. Upon the signature of the agreement the greater part of the legation left to report to their principals and obtain the ratification of the treaty. At the Queen's request four members stayed behind in London, so that negotiations could immediately be resumed in case ratification should be refused.³

Shortly after the conclusion of the alliance news of the fall of

¹ Bor, II, 637f.

² The permanent agreement is also printed in Bor, II, 641-644.

³ KHG, V, II, 251.

Antwerp reached London. The effect of this calamity upon the Queen was such that she resolved to increase her auxiliary to the number of 5,000 footsoldiers and 1,000 horsemen. A supplementary treaty was drawn up on September 14th. The four remaining deputies further appear to have obtained the concession from the Council -- apparently without the Queen's knowledge -- that the numbers needed for the cautionary garrisons would be added to these 6,000 men, and that the Queen would be responsible for their payment.¹

Davison, whom Elizabeth had sent back to The Hague when the fall of Antwerp became known, was ordered to procure the ratification of both the original and the supplementary agreements. Although he had not yet received the special authorization to do so, Davison agreed to the States General's request that the cautionary garrisons would be paid by the Queen. He had taken this step, as he explained to Walsingham, for fear that a refusal might cause the Dutch to reject the entire treaty.² For the same reason he further conceded that the provisional agreement would be converted into the principal one. This meant that the latter would take effect immediately, and that the repayment of the money disbursed for the Antwerp force could be postponed until the end of the war; arrangements that were to give rise to some of the financial problems encountered by Sir John Norris and later by Leicester. It was further

¹Cal. For., XX, 21, 114.

²Ibid., p. 41.

agreed that the one thousand additional soldiers were to be drawn from the English volunteers in the Low Countries. The Act of Ampliation, embodying these provisions, was drawn up by the States General and accepted by Davison on October 2nd.¹

The treaty in its amplified form then provided that Elizabeth would maintain at her expense, until the end of the Low Countries' war, an army of 6,000 men above the garrisons of the cautionary towns. She would return these towns to the States upon repayment of all the money she had disbursed, which repayment would begin after the war had ended. The parties promised that they would not conclude a peace, or enter into negotiations with the enemy, except by mutual consent, and the States agreed that they would refrain from treating with any other foreign power without Elizabeth's knowledge and approval.

Eight of the treaty's thirty articles were concerned with the duties of the Queen's lieutenant, or the governor general, as the treaty called him. These appeared to be extensive, although they remained largely undefined. The governor, who was to be assisted by a Council of State to which two English members would be admitted, was given the comprehensive duty to provide for all that concerned the conservation of the public weal. More particularly, governor and Council were ordered to restore public authority, to reorganize and reform the financial system, and to purge the military establishment of its abuses.

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 74-76.

The manner in which the first of these tasks, the restoration of public authority, was to be carried out was not further explained. Most of the emphasis was placed on the central government's authority in financial and military matters. With respect to the last point governor and Council were ordered to restore military discipline. They further received the right to commission provincial and municipal governors in case of vacancies, and they were made responsible for the levying and payment of foreign soldiers. The appointment of governors was to be made however from a provincial nomination, and for foreign levies the States General's consent was required. It was not indicated whether the supreme direction of the war would fall to the governor, but this was perhaps implied.

In financial affairs the emphasis was also on reform. The governor and his Council were specifically ordered to retrench the number of financial officers, to correct the abuses and imperfections in the system of taxation, and to take measures to ensure that the revenue be employed to the greatest possible advantage with respect to the war by sea and land. An additional task was to reform the mints and to reduce these to a reasonable number.

Vague as the articles were, they conveyed the idea that an effective central government was to be established in which the English governor would have considerable influence. The implementation of the articles appeared to have been left to the States General, in

consultation with the English governor.¹ To this task they set themselves in January of the following year, shortly after Leicester's arrival in the Netherlands.

¹ That this was not only the States' opinion, but, before Elizabeth issued her contrary order, also the Privy Council's, appears from Burghley's advice to Leicester that he was to assume such authority as the States should give him, provided that he exercised it in their names and not in the Queen's. BM, Add. Mss. 48,129, no fo. number.

CHAPTER II

THE PRE-LEICESTERIAN PHASE OF THE ALLIANCE

I

The four months between the conclusion of the alliance and Leicester's arrival in the Netherlands do not, strictly speaking, belong to our topic, but the history of this period does provide an introduction to that of the following two years and some mention must therefore be made of its major trends. This treatment has to be selective; attention can be given only to those aspects that are of direct relevance to the Leicester era, either because they provide an additional explanation of the political arrangements made upon his arrival, or because they introduce situations and problems inherited by him as governor of the Netherlands and as lieutenant-general of the English army. The topics falling within this category include the story of the ratification of the treaty and the surrender of the cautionary towns, the policies of Davison and Norris, chief English agents in the Netherlands, the financial arrangements between the allies, and some of the military and political events taking place during these months.¹

¹For an analysis of the financial, administrative and some of the political problems confronting the States at this time see A. M. van der Woude's article in BGN, XIV, 38-56 and 81-103. The following account of the political situation as it affected the ratification of the treaty owes much to his treatment of the topic.

So long as Leicester was delayed Davison remained in the Low Countries as the Queen's special representative. In cooperation with Sir John Norris, the general of the English army, he was to work out the technical details of the alliance. His first duty had been to procure the ratification of the treaty, a task that was not accomplished until the beginning of October. The matter of the cautionary towns was one of the causes of the delay. Holland and Zeeland had hoped that the Queen would take a town in each of the provinces. The confederacy remained, after all, a confederacy, and it was not impossible that if the inland provinces had no town to redeem they would leave the responsibility of repaying England to Holland and Zeeland alone. Elizabeth however had declined the offer. She had sufficient security in the two strategic towns of the maritime provinces and suggested that Holland and Zeeland solve their problem by demanding assurances from their allies, in the form of towns or by other means.¹

Holland and Zeeland resolved to ask for written "Acts of Indemnity" from the other provinces and intended to postpone acceptance of the treaty until these acts had been received. None of the inland areas, however, was in a hurry to comply. They were in the midst of a more than extraordinarily violent disagreement with Holland regarding the matter of a trade prohibition and appeared disinclined to accommodate

¹KHG, V, 11, 251.

their ally. The warning extended by the members of the legation that delays might cause the Queen to change her mind had no effect; when on September 21st Davison presented the supplementary treaty to the States General the provinces still had not authorized or sent their deputies. Davison shared the suspicion that Elizabeth might indeed use the delay as an excuse to go back on some of her promises. He was not too confident about the steadfastness of the Dutch either, and blamed the problems surrounding the ratification as much on intrigues by pacifists and other anti-English groups as on the particularism of the inland provinces. Fearful that these groups might gain a victory over the States and jeopardize the alliance, he was anxious that at least Holland and Zeeland sign, so that he could take possession of the cautionary towns. The maritime provinces still preferred to wait for the decision of their allies, but when by the end of September the authorization from Utrecht arrived they gave in to Davison's request. The Act of Ampliation was drawn up and submitted to the ambassador. Its conditions were disadvantageous to England and Davison feared that acceptance might arouse the Queen's displeasure, but realizing that a new advice from England and a new convocation of the States General might take another five or six weeks, and "finding no other way for the time to get her Majesty ensured", he decided to accept the States' conditions.¹

¹ Van der Woude, BGN, XIV, 39-45; Cal. For., XX, 41.

In his letters to London, wherein he explained this step, Davison painted a gloomy picture of the political situation in the Netherlands.¹ The influence of the peace party had, according to these letters, greatly increased since the fall of Antwerp, and the arrival of the English troops had not sufficiently counteracted that influence. Some among the Dutch were in fact inclined to use the existence of the alliance as an additional argument to come to a composition with Spain, asserting, as Davison wrote, "that they would never have better conditions than now, if they list to make their profit of her Majesty's assistance, as those of Antwerp had (as they termed it) wisely done, of the only bruit and countenance thereof". The ambassador further thought that there was reason to fear a revival of the French party, which had been particularly strong in Zeeland and which counted among its members several of the Prince of Orange's friends and advisers. The Count of Hohenlohe, senior commander of the Dutch forces, had had the reputation of being pro-French, and the same was true for some of Count Maurice's councillors. Both Maurice and Hohenlohe might, in Davison's opinion, oppose the alliance not only because of their possible French inclinations, but also because of the appointment of an English governor, which threatened "the places and degrees they now occupied in the government". Maurice especially had reason to feel that his interests had been neglected. The treaty contained no provision that he would succeed his

¹ Cal. For., XX, 35-42.

father as stadholder of Holland and Zeeland. The one official function he held at present, his headship of the Council of State, would fall to Leicester. In addition there was the fact that he was Marquis of Flushing, and that the States had granted this town as a caution to the Queen without his prior consent and without a promise of compensation. There were arguments sufficient, Davison thought, which the ill-affected could use to draw Maurice away from the English course.¹

The ambassador's reports on the two Counts were, as it turned out, too pessimistic. There is no indication that Maurice, after he had received some satisfaction in the matter of Flushing, in any way opposed the conclusion of the treaty. Hohenlohe was at this time quite in favour of the alliance.² Davison's assessment of the strength of the peace party may also have been exaggerated; it is probable that he painted the situation in the darkest possible colours in order to induce the Queen, who was anxious to prevent the Dutch from concluding a separate peace, to a greater effort. There is no doubt however that pacifism constituted a problem at this time.³ The failure of the attempts to enlist aid from France, Parma's military successes, and the disappointing results of the English negotiations had been having their

¹Ibid., p. 39f.

²Bruce, p. 74.

³Bor, II, 650; Van Reyd, p. 110; Hooft, pp. 989-991.

effects. The strongly Roman Catholic population of the inland provinces especially was war-weary and inclined to a composition. Upon the collapse of the French negotiations Nijmegen and Doesburg had made their peace with Spain, and pro-Spanish plots had been discovered then at Arnhem and Kampen. Parma, who in the autumn of 1585 tried to open negotiations with the States, expected that Gelderland and Overijssel could be brought back to their obedience without too many difficulties, especially if some Spanish armies were dispatched to those areas for the encouragement of the well-affected.¹ In Friesland the situation was not much better.² Even in Holland the Spanish party seemed to be gaining ground. In the summer of 1585 the town of Gouda had refused to grant an extraordinary contribution for Antwerp unless an attempt were made to procure an acceptable composition. While most of the other town magistrates, supported by the Calvinists and other anti-Spanish groups, refused to contemplate such a step, part of the population sympathized with Gouda. It was expected also in Dutch circles that an offer of peace, if it included some guarantees for religious toleration, would receive strong popular support throughout the country.³

¹ Leon van der Essen, Alexandre Farnèse (Brussels, 1937), V, 17.

² Van Reydt, p. 110.

³ Res. Ho. 1585, pp. 387f; Van der Woude, BGN, XIV, 53.

The pro-Spanish groups received little or no official encouragement. The States, whose position had been strengthened by the arrival of the English troops, ignored Parma's peace proposals and tried to counteract the influence of the defeatists. They were entitled, Davison had to admit, to better support from England. To combat the pacifists Elizabeth had upon the fall of Antwerp agreed to increase her aid, but at the same time she herself began to investigate the possibilities of entering into negotiations with Spain. On September 10th instructions were drawn up for a certain Sir John Smyth, who was ordered to inform Parma of England's willingness to promote a composition between Spain and the Dutch provinces and to suggest that Parma prepare the road for negotiations by granting an armistice.¹ Apparently Smyth's embassy was cancelled,² but rumours about the intended mission reached the Netherlands, much to Davison's embarrassment. The cautionary towns had not yet been transferred by this time, and Davison warned Walsingham that the States might now refuse to surrender those "keys of their estate".³

But the States kept to their bargain. Early in October Hohenlohe was ordered to withdraw the Dutch companies from Flushing and De Briel, and before many days had passed three English companies entered the

¹Cal. For., XIX, 671f.

²Van der Essen, V, 86.

³Cal. For., XX, 7f.

latter town. The English general placed them under the command of his brother Sir Henry Norris, who was some months later to be replaced by Sir Thomas Cecil, Lord Burghley's son. In the meantime Count Maurice, after some pressure by Hohenlohe¹ and in return for an act of indemnity from the States, had given his approval for the cession of Flushing. On October 29th this town also passed into English hands. Until the arrival of Flushing's governor, Sir Philip Sidney, the command of this garrison was entrusted to Edward Norris, another of Sir John's brothers.²

Davison, who on a number of other points disagreed with Norris's policy,³ was critical of the arrangements made concerning the cautionary towns. He objected to the general's choice of governors; in his opinion they were too inexperienced for the task. The companies destined for the garrisons were, moreover, incomplete, ill-furnished, and generally in a miserable condition. Those sent to Flushing had been on board their ship for ten days without protection against the weather and without sufficient food. Several had succumbed to the privations, others were too ill to be transported from Middelburg, their place of landing, to Flushing and had to be left behind in the former town. Instead of 750 men, as had been agreed by the treaty, the garrison of Flushing was

¹ Bruce, p. 74.

² Bor, II, 649; Cal. For., XX, 47f, 96.

³ Such as his insistence upon offensive warfare at a time when, in Davison's opinion, a defensive course was the only feasible one. Cal. For., XX, 157, 159f.

only 550 men strong, and this was felt to be an insufficient number to keep the inhabitants under control if they should have a mind to revolt. There were also serious financial difficulties. The treasurer was not supplied with money to pay the cautionary garrisons and Davison was forced, time and again, to drive his "poor credit to rack" to provide some loans for the soldiers. It hardly sufficed to keep them from starvation, and complaints were heard in Zeeland that the poverty of the companies might cause the towns to refuse further English garrisons.¹

Although Davison had managed to get the alliance under way and to provide England with its "securities" his cares had evidently not ended, and by the middle of November he was more than anxious for his recall and for the arrival of the English governor. Sir John Norris, although less pessimistic than Davison, also pressed for Leicester's appointment.² He was faced with a number of problems of his own, for the settlement of which the governor's aid was needed. One of these concerned, again, the monetary situation. Because the financial difficulties with respect to the English army will be treated at some length in one of the following chapters, the present discussion can be confined to an enumeration of the main factors responsible for the shortages. To a large extent the problem was a result of disagreements on the question when the English soldiers who had been allowed in

¹Cal. For., XX, 81f, 91, 108, 156, 247.

²Ibid., pp. 33f, 180.

addition to the 4,000 men of the provisional treaty, and who were to be recruited from the English volunteers in the States' pay, would come at the Queen's charge. According to the original agreement, and according to Norris, this was not to take place until the middle of November, that is after the expiration of the provisional treaty. According to the Act of Ampliation however, and according to the States, the Queen was responsible for these payments from October 2nd, the day that Davison had accepted their act. Davison agreed with the States, but because the English treasurer was provided with money for the Antwerp force only he asked them to advance the money (an amount of fl. 18,000¹) for the payment of the extra 1,000 troops.² But before long it appeared that Elizabeth was highly displeased about the provisions of the Act of Ampliation. She might, as Walsingham informed Davison, consider accepting financial responsibility for the soldiers of the cautionary garrisons from the day they had left the camp, October 7th, but she had no intention to pay the other 1,000 soldiers before the expiration of the Antwerp treaty.³ The States were equally persistent in their refusal to pay them, and eventually Norris advanced the money.⁴

¹ARA, SG 3793, fo. 18.

²Cal. For., XX, 94.

³Ibid., p. 114.

⁴See on these questions A. M. van der Woude, "De Staten, Leicester en Elizabeth in financiële verwickelingen", TvG, LXXIV (1961), 65-67.

Another cause of the army treasurer's lack of funds was the disadvantageous rate of exchange. Officially one pound sterling was considered to equal ten Dutch guilders, but as a result of England's unfavourable balance of trade with the Netherlands the actual rate was often lower.¹ Norris made at least some payments according to a rate of nine guilders per pound.² The monthly charge per company rose thereby from £170 (the pay was established at fl. 1,700) to almost £189.³ There was also the fact that certain amounts of money -- imprests or lendings, made to the soldiers before their muster, and sums advanced to them for the purchase of their furnishings, which had to be deducted from their pay -- were not immediately received. Because of the high cost of living in the Low Countries, which made it difficult for the soldiers to manage on a reduced rate of pay, Norris made these defalcations in small instalments and consequently a larger amount of money was needed for a monthly payment than had been estimated in England. The English government had further counted on the States' promise that they would repay an amount of £3,000, which had been advanced by the Queen for the levy, furnishing and transportation of English volunteers in the States' pay, soon after the arrival of these

¹ Ibid., p. 66, note 6.

² Cal. For., XX, 47.

³ Apparently the rate fluctuated. According to a financial statement of October 1585 the monthly pay per company amounted to £184.3.4. Ibid., p. 129.

forces, a promise that was not fulfilled.¹

The settlement of these problems and of questions of a similar nature was referred to the governor general. Norris further felt that Leicester's presence was necessary to coordinate the allied forces and create some unity of command. While Hohenlohe would probably refuse to follow the English general's orders, Norris himself hesitated to entrust the disposal of the English forces wholly to Hohenlohe. The German Count was a gallant enough soldier but, perhaps as a result of the fact that he was hardly ever sober -- a circumstance that had induced Parma to nickname him "le Conte à bouteille"² -- an unreliable military leader. He certainly was no match for Parma; his prestige in the enemy camp was low, and it is not unlikely that the States themselves were relieved at the prospect that he would lose his leading position to the English governor. The States as well as Norris nevertheless realized that Hohenlohe was to be treated with respect. "A right Almayn in manner and fashion, free of his purse and of his drynk", as Leicester was to describe him,³ he was popular with his soldiers, and many of the garrisons in Holland and Brabant were at his devotion. It would be dangerous to alienate him.

¹Van der Woude, TvG, LXXIV, 66.

²According to an inhabitant of Middelburg, who objected to Leicester's appointment of Hohenlohe as his lieutenant-general. BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C IX, fo. 88.

³Bruce, p. 75.

The difficulty was that not all the Dutch generals were willing to follow his direction. Among his opponents was the Count of Neuenahr and Meurs, one of his compatriots. Meurs, who as stadholder of Utrecht, Gelderland and Overijsel controlled most of the frontier regions, also was to be satisfied and Norris had, as he informed Walsingham, "much ado to carry an indifferent hand" between the two men.¹ Davison already detected some dangers in regard to Meurs. The stadholder was not only at odds with Hohenlohe, but also with the former Archbishop-Elector of Cologne, Gebhard Truchsess, who now lived as an exile in the Low Countries. Upon his conversion to protestantism Truchsess had been deposed in favour of the Spanish-supported Ernest of Bavaria. Although the ensuing "Bishops' War" had not yet been officially concluded, Ernest had succeeded in gaining control of the larger part of the Electorate. Truchsess however still held a few places, including Rheinberg and Neuss, both of which were situated on the Rhine. The last-mentioned town had been reconquered for him by Meurs in the spring of 1585. The disagreement was not about this conquest but about the fact that Meurs, whom Truchsess had appointed as his "Guardian" for the Lower Diocese, had begun to disregard Truchsess' rights in Rheinberg and elsewhere and to use the revenue of the ex-Archbishop's possessions for his own purposes.² The two men had

¹Cal. For., XX, 33.

²Ibid., pp. 266f.

agreed to submit the question to the arbitration of Elizabeth or her governor, but in the meantime attempts were made by certain German princes to persuade Meurs that he leave the Dutch side and lend his support to the new Elector. Davison was afraid that under the circumstances Meurs might be tempted to consider the suggestion and ordered Norris to keep an eye on the stadholder.¹ The precaution was no doubt unnecessary, but the fact remained that the disagreements between the German nobles constituted a source of embarrassment and might have an adverse effect upon the military efforts.

II

One redeeming factor was that the military situation did not drastically deteriorate during these months. The fear that Parma would follow his success at Antwerp with a large-scale offensive in the northern provinces was not realized, partly because of his own financial and supply difficulties, partly also as a result of the timely arrival of the English army. To what extent these two factors affected his striking powers will presently be seen; it is necessary first of all to give a picture of the general military situation and of the positions occupied by the States and by Parma at this time.

The line of demarcation between Spanish-occupied and States' territory was made up, roughly speaking, of the southern and eastern boundaries of Zeeland in the west, and the southernmost of the great

¹Ibid., p. 37.

rivers, the Maas between Gorcum and Venlo, in the east. South of this line the States' possessions were limited to a few strongholds, of which Ostend and Sluys on the Flemish coast, and Bergen op Zoom, Willemstad and the Maastown of Grave in Brabant were the most important. Parma's holdings north of the line were far more extensive. The three western provinces and Utrecht were free from Spanish occupation, but the eastern ones were all partly enemy-controlled.

Most of the North-East was in Spanish hands. The town of Groningen was held by Philip's stadholder Verdugo, who from that position controlled the province of that name, the territory of Drenthe to the south, and much of Overijssel. The enemy had gained possession of Groningen in 1580, as a result of the defection of Rennenberg, then stadholder of the three northern provinces. Although far removed from the centre of Spanish power in the Netherlands, Verdugo had well been able to maintain his position, largely because by way of Delfzijl he retained some contact with the Baltic regions and especially with the town of Emden, which provided him with victuals and other supplies. The navies of Friesland and Holland attempted to cut down this commercial intercourse by blockading Emden's harbour, but because the fleet had to retire at the approach of winter the blockade was never entirely successful; Verdugo usually succeeded in providing himself with the necessary supplies during the winter months.

In the North-East therefore the States' position was particularly weak. Further south the parties were more evenly balanced. Most of the

countryside of Overijssel was enemy-controlled, but the chief towns of that province, Deventer, Kampen and Zwolle, were on the side of the States. The States' position in the most important of these, the Hansa town of Deventer on the IJssel, was not however unchallenged. It had been largely because of Deventer's opposition that Overijssel had been unwilling to join the other provinces in their negotiations with England and to accept the treaty once it had been concluded.¹ Unlike Kampen and Zwolle, it refused to admit a States' garrison, attempting instead to maintain a precarious but economically not unprofitable neutrality between the contending forces. The problem created by Deventer's political aloofness was one of those which stadholder Meurs attempted to solve, initially with some measure of success, after Leicester's arrival.²

Politically and strategically the most important of the western provinces was Gelderland. It was the region of the great rivers, the Rhine, Waal and Maas, which formed the major highways from Holland into the German hinterland, and the IJssel, which connected Arnhem on the Rhine with the towns of western Overijssel and the Zuiderzee. The last two were partially controlled by the enemy. On the IJssel, some distance south of Deventer, Verdugo's lieutenant De Tassis held Zutphen. The strength of his position here lay especially in his possession of the

¹J. C. H. de Pater, "Leicester en Overijssel", *TvG*, LXIV (1951), 271.

²See p. 157 below.

Veluwe forts, situated across the river from Zutphen and considered "invincible"¹ since the time that the States' army under Hohenlohe had in vain besieged them for several months.² From these strongholds De Tassis controlled the Veluwe -- the Northern Quarter of Gelderland -- and from there he organized his raiding parties northward into Overijsel and westward into Utrecht. Until recently the Waal had been held by the States, but in the spring of 1585 Nijmegen, situated on the south bank, had made its peace with Spain. On the north bank Parma held a number of smaller strongholds and much of the Betuwe, the territory between Waal and Rhine, was enemy-infested. By their possession of Grave in Brabant and Venlo in the Upper Quarter of Gelderland, the States controlled the Maasriver as far south as Roermond. The Rhine, from the point where it entered Dutch territory, was also completely held by them. East of the boundary the river went through the territory of the Electorate of Cologne, now a Spanish client-state, but so long as Neuss and Rheinberg remained in the hands of Truchsess the Dutch connections with the German hinterland as far as the city of Cologne could be kept open.

These towns were of course constantly threatened. Since the outbreak of the Bishops' War the Electorate and neighbouring areas had been exposed to raids by Dutch forces, which plundered the territory as

¹Bor, II, 754.

²Van Meteren, fo. 359, 359b.

far south as the town of Cologne itself. Ernest of Bavaria, who was powerless to end these excursions, expected Parma to protect him against the Dutch brigands and to help him in the conquest of Truchsess' holdings. Because the States' control of Rhine and Maas cut his connections with Germany Parma himself was interested in clearing the Electorate. The possibility had been contemplated by the Dutch that, once Antwerp was put in security, he would direct his forces against Grave, Venlo and the Rhine towns. There had been other possibilities. He might have attempted to reduce the States' strongholds in Brabant and Flanders. He might have drawn his forces into Gelderland and, using Zutphen as a base, begun an offensive against Utrecht. There were opportunities for an offensive along any section of the extended frontier. If they had been utilized immediately after the reduction of Antwerp and before the arrival of the English troops, the Dutch position would have been hazardous.

Parma had hoped to begin such an offensive but had been unable to execute his plans. For more than a month he was occupied in settling Antwerp's affairs and putting the town in a state of defence. When that was achieved a mutiny broke out among his Walloon soldiers. Lack of money and provisions prevented him, also after the Walloons had been appeased, to organize his armies for a major campaign. For the time being he remained in the Antwerp area, hoping to achieve something against the States' possessions in the neighbourhood. Plans were made for attacks on Bergen op Zoom, some of the Dutch Scheldt forts, and the town of Ostend, but before the forces for the exploits could be organized

the States had succeeded in strengthening the defences of the threatened places and in increasing their garrisons with new English companies, precautions which caused the enemy to abandon his plans.¹

During the autumn Parma further organized a few excursions into Gelderland. These were mainly of a defensive nature, having been provoked by Norris' and Meurs' attempts against some of the Spanish strongholds in the Betuwe. They left the situation as it had been before the allied attack.² Shortly after, in January 1586, the Spanish commander Charles Mansfelt settled down before Grave. Sir John Norris, who had all along thought in terms of an offensive type of warfare but who had been unable to convert either the Queen or the States to his views,³ believed that this was the beginning of the long-expected enemy offensive. Once Grave was taken, he predicted, the Spanish armies would enter Gelderland and, finding no resistance there, succeed in recovering that province before the end of the winter.⁴ His prediction proved wrong. Mansfelt was to lose five months before Grave, and no major enemy offensive was to take place in the territory north of the Maas, in spite of the fact that a Spanish army remained in the neighbourhood. Parma's financial difficulties continued, and the shortage of victuals, which had plagued him throughout the autumn, was becoming serious.

¹Van der Essen, V, 21-23.

²Bor., II, 650f; Van Meteren, fos. 393, 393b; Cal. For., XX, 157, 219.

³Cal. For., XX, 31, 76, 180, 219.

⁴Ibid., p. 203.

One of the causes of this scarcity was that the Walloon provinces of Artois and Hainault, which normally supplied the country with part of its provisions of grain and other victuals, were suffering from depredations by army bands and as a result unable to spare food for the other provinces. The harvest had, moreover, been bad in 1585, not only in the southern Netherlands but in large areas of western Europe. The countryside of Brabant and Flanders, and before long that of Cleves and other neighbouring areas in Germany, were eaten bare by Spanish or devastated by Dutch forces. Because of their control of Rhine and Maas the Dutch were able to prevent Parma from drawing supplies from central Germany. The States themselves, as well as their English ally, had forbidden the export of victuals to the enemy. They were guarding the passages between France and the obedient provinces, while the navy of Zeeland blockaded the Scheldt mouth and the Flemish coast. Every passage was closed, and unless the Dutch lifted the blockade or unless Philip paid heed to Parma's request that provisions be sent for at least the army, so that an attempt could be made to force open some of the supply lines, there would be little prospect of relief until the following harvest.¹

III

The Dutch blockade, which contributed to Parma's distress and to the near-famine in the urban centres of Brabant and Flanders, had

¹Van der Essen, V, 24f.

created difficulties in the United Provinces as well. Here they were of a political and financial nature. The political problem was caused by the States General's issue of a highly comprehensive prohibition of trade with the enemy and by Holland's refusal to enforce that decree. The division on this issue was not a new one. The southern provinces and the inland regions, supported by the non-mercantile section of the population elsewhere, had long argued that the surest means to force Philip to a composition was by a cessation of exports to the enemy, combined with a strict blockade of the obedient provinces. The States of the maritime provinces were usually reluctant to go that far. They had to content their merchants who were loath to lose their profitable southern markets, and they needed the revenue of the licents, a special tax levied on trade with the enemy, for the maintenance of their navies. Nor did they accept the argument of the prohibitionists that a cessation of Dutch exports would cause more than temporary distress in the southern provinces. A fool-proof blockade was, they asserted, impossible; Parma could always get some of his supplies by land from Germany and France, and by sea from English, Scandinavian and Hanseatic merchants. In the long run a trade prohibition would therefore only profit foreign competitors, while depriving the Dutch treasury of an important source of revenue.¹

¹One of the most complete memorandums containing the arguments for and against a prohibition of trade with the enemy is that submitted to Leicester in April 1586. It is printed by Van Deventer, I, 118-127.

Because Holland carried the purse (since the loss of Brabant and Flanders it paid close to two-thirds of the cost of defence), its will was usually law, and the normal policy was one of partial free trade with the enemy. At times however it gave in to allied, popular and military pressure by agreeing to a more comprehensive prohibition. This had been the case during the siege of Antwerp, when the export of all merchandise to the obedient provinces and that of victuals and munitions to various neutral places in the neighbourhood had been forbidden. The decree had not been enforced very strictly. Several towns in Holland had never favoured it and had, long before Antwerp's fate was decided, asked for a re-introduction of licents. When Antwerp fell the request was repeated and on August 26th the States General put the demand on its agenda.¹

This time the opposition was led by the Zeelanders. Zeeland was no less interested in the southern trade than Holland, but it happened to be nearer the enemy, lived in daily fear of invasion of its own territory, and felt that if such an invasion could be bought off for some loss in licent revenue the price would not be too high. When therefore the Council of State on August 28th asked the States General that in view of the "apparent and certain dearth" in the obedient provinces it continue the prohibition of licents, the request had Zeeland's support. The deputies of Holland were absent at the meeting

¹J. H. Kernkamp, De Handel op den Vijand (Utrecht, 1931), I, 148f, 168; Res St. Gen., V, 199.

and the resolution was passed with perfect unanimity. The States General added, for good measure, that the export of victuals to neutral areas would also be forbidden.¹ This additional restraint was probably partly a result of the wish to prevent scarcity and an increase in prices at home, but especially of the fear that otherwise the decree could not be enforced. If any exports were allowed control would be difficult; once the fleet was at sea there was little to prevent it from changing its destination. It was also to be expected that part of the victuals sent to neutral areas would be re-exported to the southern provinces so long as the scarcity and high prices continued there.

At first Holland seemed to acquiesce. Some towns, such as Dordrecht, favoured the measure. Dordrecht was especially interested in the river trade. It nevertheless opposed a reopening of Rhine, Waal and Maas,² and it saw no reason why the towns that depended on maritime commerce should not show a similar spirit of patriotism. There was of course also the question of Elizabeth's wishes. She herself had upon the conclusion of the alliance re-issued her decree against English trade with the southern provinces and she had made it clear to the Dutch legation that Holland and Zeeland were expected to follow suit.³ The Queen's apparent determination provided in Zeeland's view a good

¹Kernkamp, I, 168f.

²ARA, SG 3780, fo. 369.

³ARA, SG 3792, fo. 221^{verso}; Van Deventer, I, 114.

opportunity to distress the enemy: England and the Netherlands could together issue and enforce a decree forbidding not only native but also foreign merchants to send victuals and war materials to Spain, the obedient provinces, and such neutral places as might supply the enemy.¹ With England's cooperation a strict blockade would be possible, and the danger that Dutch trade with the obedient provinces and Spain would be diverted to other countries, eliminated. Several towns in Holland however, with Amsterdam in the lead, objected to such drastic measures. Amsterdam was willing to agree that the export of grains and munitions of war to the southern provinces be forbidden, but felt that trade in other merchandise could well be allowed, and it was quite persistent in its demands that the export of victuals to neutral places should remain free. Its Baltic fleet was ready to leave port when the States General's prohibition was issued. If no victuals could be sent to the northern countries no grain could be had, the town argued, and if the annual grain cargo did not arrive famine would threaten even the northern provinces.²

The majority of the States of Holland agreed with Amsterdam. On September 7th and 8th they passed a resolution that the export of victuals except grain (which was not usually sent to the Baltic) and

¹H. Brugmans, ed., Correspondentie van Robert Dudley (Utrecht, 1931), I, 12-14, 25.

²Kernkamp, I, 169; ARA, SG 3780, fo. 369-371.

dairy products would be permitted to all areas east of Emden. For the rest they promised to adhere to the decision of August 28th, and they also expressed their willingness to end trade with Spain and Portugal until the Queen's decision should be known.¹ The latter concession was an important one, for Holland's prosperity depended very largely on the carrying trade between North and South, and in this trade the Iberian peninsula formed an essential link. At a time when Europe was starved for silver Spain was, moreover, the great supplier of this commodity. A prolonged disruption of commerce with the enemy would therefore create a serious shortage of revenue; the decrease in the Spanish trade in recent years, and especially after Philip's embargo in the early summer of 1585, had contributed to the monetary problems the States were facing at this time.² One of the reasons why Holland nevertheless considered forbidding this navigation may have been Elizabeth's request that the supply of contraband to Spain be ended. Another was undoubtedly the fear of a new embargo. The Dutch merchants were willing to take the risk of confiscation rather than end their lucrative trade with Spain, but the States trembled at the prospect of another seizure which, if well-timed, might seriously weaken their fleet.

Although common prudence seemed to make a cessation of navigation on Spain advisable, Holland's suggestion did not immediately result in

¹ Kernkamp, I, 169.

² J. G. van Dillen, "De opstand en het Amerikaanse zilver", TvG, LXXIII (1960), 28.

an edict forbidding the Spanish trade. The causes of the delay are not clear. Perhaps opposition from North-Holland was too strong; perhaps the States General refused to agree to the condition that export to neutral places be allowed. Holland meanwhile did enforce its resolution regarding the trade with the northern countries; with the consent of the provincial States, and in spite of opposition by the Council of State, Amsterdam's fleet left port. Before long some among the States began to demand the introduction of licents for exports to the southern provinces as well.¹ Zeeland replied by strengthening its guard on the Scheldt and along the Flemish coast, and by attempting to enlist the support of Davison and the Queen in its opposition to Holland's policies.² It had some success. By the middle of November a letter arrived from Leicester wherein he asked that the prohibition of trade with the enemy remain in force until his arrival.³

Licents were not introduced, but the disagreements between Holland and the other provinces continued. Holland refused to annul its resolution of September, and the States General refused to adopt it. Nor was the conflict confined to the States only. Early in November the leaders of the burgher militia of Utrecht joined the battle by sending a legation to the States' assembly in The Hague.

¹Brugmans, I, 24.

²Ibid., pp. 10, 23.

³ARA, SG 3792, fo. 283.

Having issued a strong-worded protest against what they called Amsterdam's insubordination and war-profiteering, they required the States General to proceed against the trespassers of its decrees and suggested that it ask the Queen to send her governor without delay. The intervention was followed by a busy exchange of accusations and counter-accusations between Amsterdam and the Utrecht group. Maurice and the Council of State, anxious to prevent a widespread political upheaval, tried to mediate but were unable to stem the stream of remonstrances.¹ The incident apparently convinced States and Council that something should be done to settle the trade issue at least at the governmental level. Late in November Holland repeated its compromise suggestion and now the States General accepted it: trade with the northern countries would be allowed and that with Spain and Portugal forbidden. This did not mean that the Spanish trade would cease altogether. Exports to Calais, Rouen, La Rochelle and other French ports were, with certain restrictions, permitted, and part of the merchandise sent there would find its way to the enemy. The danger of confiscation was avoided, however.²

With this new decree, which was issued on November 29th, unity in the country's commercial policies had been restored. At least so it seemed. In fact, Amsterdam and other towns in North Holland refused to

¹Bor, II, 652-663.

²Kernkamp, I, 173.

accept the prohibition of trade with Spain, while Middelburg in Zeeland also left the decree unpublished.¹ Amsterdam's opposition had been expected. The objections of Middelburg must perhaps be explained by its wish to reach a prior agreement with England regarding the prohibition of English and neutral trade with Spain, by its fear that Amsterdam would monopolize Dutch trade with the enemy, or by its disinclination to approve of the provision regarding the export of victuals to neutral countries.

It had become clear by this time that neither the States General for the country as a whole, nor the States of Holland and Zeeland for their own provinces, were able to enforce their decisions. The English governor would indeed, as the burgher captains of Utrecht had already suggested, have to bring the solution. On December 6th the States General sent a letter to Leicester with the request that he hasten his coming so that by his authority and "*suiwant la bonne volonté de sa Majesté*" the trade question might be definitely settled.² In view of what was known regarding the Queen's good pleasure there was reason to expect that Leicester's sympathies would be with the prohibitionists. The States of Holland, faced with recalcitrant Amsterdam and with divisions among their towns, had no choice but to take this risk.

¹ Ibid., pp. 173f.

² ARA, SG 3792, fo. 296. Brugmans, I, 7, erroneously dated this letter October 6th.

CHAPTER III

LEICESTER'S APPOINTMENT AS GOVERNOR GENERAL

I

Since Professor Fruin extended the warning that an understanding of the Leicester period is impossible unless regard is had to the political divisions within the country - which divisions in his opinion almost forced the governor to embark upon his fateful course of opposition to Holland¹ -- this aspect has been given its due share of attention in histories of the period. One factor, that of the influence of the interprovincial rivalries,² received perhaps more than its due share. These rivalries did exist. The quarrel on the trade issue, which has just been discussed, reflected a deepseated resentment which the inland provinces nourished against Holland, a resentment that is perhaps partly to be explained by historical factors, but largely by the other provinces' weariness of Holland's leading position in the present confederacy and their distrust of its policies. There was a widespread feeling that Holland, itself safe from enemy invasions, tended to close its eyes to the problems of the frontier areas, neglected to use all its resources for an offensive war, and was indeed content to risk the loss of allied territory to strengthen its

¹Verspr. Geschr., III, 141.

²Ibid., p. 149.

own economic position.

These animosities no doubt affected the inland provinces' attitude towards Leicester, the man who might be able to "ride the States of Holland on the curb".¹ It must be pointed out however that there was another and equally obvious reason why they were prepared to go to greater lengths than Holland in attempting to retain his goodwill and English aid; namely the fact that an English withdrawal would have far more immediate and drastic consequences for them than it would have for the maritime provinces. As far as Leicester's policies are concerned, it is true that they were influenced by the support he received from the inland provinces, but it is also clear that their promptings did not determine his approach. His own conception of his task was to organize the countries' resources for a maximum war effort, and this implied an attempt to subordinate regional interests to those of the generality. That course would have been followed by him regardless of the inland provinces' approval, and it would inevitably have produced a clash with the States of Holland. These would not be alone in their opposition, however. The States of the other areas had themselves reason to fear, both in financial and in political matters, the effect of a powerful central government, and it is to be noticed that there is no evidence that in

¹ P. Geyl, The Revolt of the Netherlands (2nd ed.; London, 1962), p. 209.

January 1586 they exerted themselves in favour of a highly centralized system.¹ In his bid for additional powers Leicester was to receive more support from the States of Holland than, for example, from those of Utrecht.² The desire to maintain the political status quo was general; the States of both the maritime and the inland provinces agreed that however great the benefits of a strong central government might be, they were not to be had, if it could be helped, at the price of a drastic reduction in their own powers and a serious weakening of provincial autonomy. There was, in other words, a strong political interest uniting them against a governor who might be tempted to take their injunctions about the need of centralization too seriously.

Another bond of union among the States was the one against the domestic opposition, a factor that is of particular importance in explaining the relationship between Holland and Utrecht at this time. Misunderstandings about Utrecht's attitude regarding its union with Holland under one stadholder have caused Fruin to over-

¹As has been suggested for example by L. J. Rogier in his Paulus Buys en Leicester (Nijmegen, 1948), pp. 10f, where he portrays the Regents of Utrecht and Gelderland as the upholders of the "generality idea", and by P. L. Muller in De Staat der Vereenigde Nederlanden (Haarlem, 1872), p. 359, where it is asserted that they were willing even to consider a dictatorial form of government if thereby Holland's supremacy might be ended.

²Fruin, op. cit., p. 157.

emphasize especially the antagonisms between these two provinces.¹ The union in question had been instituted in 1534, shortly after Charles V had added the Bishopric of Utrecht to his Burgundian possessions. It had ended in 1572, when Holland and Zeeland began their revolt against Spain, but was restored one year after the Pacification of Ghent by Utrecht's reacceptance of William of Orange as governor. Fruin's suggestion that this decision was delayed for twelve months because of Utrecht's reluctance to join Holland² has been shown to be incorrect.³ There was opposition in Utrecht to the Prince's appointment, but a dominant party within the States, as well as the city population, favoured it and the delay was largely a result of the central government's refusal to approve of their choice. Although there were indeed political and military reasons urging a closer cooperation with the eastern provinces, Utrecht did in this period not consider exchanging its union with Holland and Zeeland for one with Gelderland and Overijsel. When in 1581 attempts were made to join it with the last-mentioned provinces, either under a lieutenant-governor to be appointed by the Prince of Orange or under a separate stadholder,⁴ the States of Utrecht showed little

¹Fruin, op. cit., pp. 141f, 145.

²Ibid., p. 141.

³Arthur le Cosquino de Bussy, Het ontstaan der satisfactie van Utrecht (Amsterdam, 1910), pp. 4f and passim.

⁴Van Deventer, I, 33f.

enthusiasm for the first proposal and they altogether refused to consider the second.¹

There also seems to be insufficient ground for Fruin's assumption that after the Prince's death they were anxious to end their union with the maritime provinces. The statement made by his opponents that Floris Thin, Advocate of Utrecht, was determined to restore Utrecht's "independence"² gives no indication of the attitude of the States as a whole. It is true that in 1584 these refused to wait until Holland and Zeeland had chosen another stadholder and proceeded to install the Seigneur de Villiers as governor, but this does not necessarily indicate a separatist tendency. Holland and Zeeland were to leave Maurice's installation in abeyance for more than a year, and neither the political nor the military situation made it possible for Utrecht to postpone the appointment of a governor for any length of time. It is unlikely, moreover, that the arrangement made with Villiers was intended to be a permanent one. His instructions indicated that his appointment was made provisionally and that it did not prejudice the States' rights to make a settlement with Maurice and the States of Holland and Zeeland regarding Utrecht's future government.³

The instructions of the Count of Meurs, who replaced Villiers

¹ See the States' reply in Kluit, Hollandsche Staatregering, I, 422-5.

² Bor, III, 165. Cf. Fruin, op. cit., p. 145.

³ Johan van de Water, ed., Groot Placaatboek (Utrecht, 1729), I, 160.

in 1585 when the latter was taken prisoner of war, did not contain this proviso. Meurs however was originally appointed for the duration of Villiers' imprisonment only.¹ He moreover appears to have been the choice of the burgher captains, leaders of the opposition groups in the city of Utrecht, who had put pressure on the States to appoint him.² The burgher captains and their allies had at first strongly supported the union with the maritime provinces, but they were now drawing away from Holland and in favour of a closer bond with Gelderland and Overijssel, the two provinces which Meurs already served as stadholder. It is not clear whether in September 1585 the opposition leaders had attempted to institute safeguards preventing a union with Holland, but a year or so later they were to oppose the proposal of the States that the clause regarding Utrecht's right to treat with Maurice be incorporated in Meurs' commission.³ The aspirations of this opposition group will be discussed in some detail in a following chapter. At this point it is sufficient to mention that in the 1580's its political influence was great enough to pose a danger to the Regents and to force these to rely more strongly on Holland than they may have been inclined to do otherwise.

Although there were aspects on which governor and inland areas

¹ Johan van de Water, Groot Placaatboek, I, 160.

² Bor, II, 627f.

³ Ibid., p. 869.

could and would combine against Holland -- the matter of the trade prohibition is a case in point -- there were also reasons to force the States of the other provinces to cooperate with their maritime ally. The chief threat to the government of that province, and indeed to the States as a whole, came from Leicester's alliance with the "disunited" provinces of Brabant and Flanders (a matter that will be considered later in this chapter) and with the domestic opposition. The problem of internal political divisions was not confined to Utrecht. There were influential groups also in the western provinces that were, for a variety of reasons, dissatisfied with the existing system and consequently inclined to unite with the central government against the States. Because after that of Utrecht the opposition groups of Holland and Friesland played the most notable part in the political history of the period, some attention will be given to their composition and aims.

The centralists of Friesland belonged to a group that stood under the leadership of Dr. Hessel Aysma, president of the provincial Council. In Burgundian times the Council, which had political as well as judicial functions and which was appointed by the central government, formed with the stadholder the provincial executive. In Gelderland it still performed this office, but in Utrecht, Zeeland and Holland the Council had been reduced to a judicial college; its political functions had been taken over by the College of States' Deputies, a body formed by a limited number of members of the provincial States.¹ The change

¹R. Fruin, Geschiedenis der Staatsinstellingen in Nederland, edited by H. T. Colenbrander (2nd ed., The Hague, 1922), pp. 218f, 224.

was a result of the States' determination to consolidate their power and preserve the newly established provincial independence. The Council had always been the representative of royal authority and as such the opponent of States' influence upon the government. If it retained its political functions it was likely to continue its habit of ruling in opposition to the States and in close cooperation with the central government. By entrusting the "daily government" to their own deputies the States eliminated this threat.

Unlike those of Utrecht and the maritime provinces, the States of Friesland had met with strong resistance in their attempts to replace the Council by their College of Deputies. Although by the mid-eighties they had succeeded in establishing the College's predominance, opposition to its rule continued. This opposition came not only from the provincial Council itself. During the time of Leicester's government the Council members were in close cooperation with a number of rural noblemen. Most of these came from the Quarter of Oostergoo, where the president's brother, Doeco Aysma, was one of the leaders of the centralist movement. The Council was further supported by the eleven towns of Friesland. While in Holland the urban magistrates were among the upholders of the system of government as it had been developing since the outbreak of the Revolt, those of Friesland objected to an unlimited increase in States' power. The main reason was that in the latter province the urban element held a minority position in the States; three of the four votes in the diet were held by the rural areas, that is by the Quarters of

Oostergoo, Westergoo and Zevenwolden. The towns, with only one vote between them, had little to gain from a States' monopoly in the provincial government. For the grant and maintenance of their urban privileges they had in former times depended on the central authority,¹ and they preferred to keep the powers of the provincial Council, once the representative of that authority, intact. All these opponents of the College fixed their hopes on the federal government as it was to be established under Leicester. The College group on the other hand prepared measures to safeguard States' rights and powers under his governorship. The strongest opposition to the States General's offer of "absolute" authority to the English governor was to come from the Friesian States under the leadership of Carel Roorda, the soul of the College group and the chief antagonist of Hessel Aysma and his associates.

The States of Holland were not threatened by a hostile combination of dissatisfied towns and a politically ambitious Council. Nor was there much reason to fear active opposition from the minority group in the States, the nobility, which represented the rural areas. The nobles might be more interested in a restoration of the old system than the burgher politicians, but as a class they were too few in number and too uninfluential to present a serious menace. In Holland the opposition came in the first place from a dissatisfied Calvinist clergy, whose objections to the Regents were shared by an important part of the native

¹ J. S. Theissen, Centraal Gezag en Friesche Vrijheid: Friesland onder Karel V (Groningen, 1907), pp. 302-311.

population and by many of the southern exiles living there.

It is not possible to give more than a summary of the factors causing the antagonisms between church and government.¹ The problem centred around the States' refusal to accept the provisions of the synodical Church Orders and so to grant the church its full doctrinal and organizational independence. One of the controversial points had to do with the right of appointment of consistory members, another with the question whether the church should be allowed freedom of meeting in provincial and national synods, while a third was concerned with the church's demand that it be permitted to take the disciplinary and other measures necessary for the maintenance of religious orthodoxy.

The States' reluctance to agree to this last demand was a result of their wish to counteract the church's doctrinal exclusiveness. Political considerations made it advisable to allow only one religion, and it was the government's concern to make that religion acceptable to the largest possible section of the population. It was felt that with a broad confession, one that could accommodate protestant and perhaps even some Roman Catholic dissenters, the church's proselytizing power would increase; exclusiveness and precision in matters of doctrine and a too strict enforcement of the rules against unorthodoxy might have

¹For a more detailed account of the church-state relationship at this time see R. Fruin, Tien jaren uit den Tachtigjarigen Oorlog (6th ed.; The Hague, 1904), pp. 213-258, or J. Reitsma, Geschiedenis van de Hervorming (5th ed.; The Hague, 1949), Chapter VI.

the opposite effect and increase the existing disunity in religion. The States' opposition to the demands for organizational freedom was caused by their fear that the church would become too independent a force within the state, one that might interfere with the government's freedom of action, and probably also with what remained of the non-Calvinists' religious liberties, for the church leaders demanded a stricter enforcement of the laws against dissenters than the civil authorities considered advisable. The problem was that the great majority of the people, especially in the earlier years of the Revolt, either remained loyal to the old faith or belonged to other protestant denominations, while several members of the municipal governing groups were also opposed to the Reformed church. The States could not afford to alienate these people, and they might well do this if they allowed too much influence to the Calvinist leaders. To keep the church in check it was considered advisable not only to retain some control over consistorial policies and appointments, but also to restrict the possibilities of cooperation between the various congregations and classes and, especially, to prevent the church from organizing itself on a national basis. Although some national synods had been held in past years, the States were disinclined to allow the church to continue this practice.

There was a third reason why the government was anxious to keep the church in a subservient position. This was the fear that the ministers might become the organizers of a "popular opposition". Popular discontent with States' rule was increasing, and the people came

more and more to look to the ministers, who never hesitated to voice their objections to the government's policies, as their spokesmen in political matters. By drawing attention to this factor it is not suggested that attempts were made to pave the way for popular control over the government. Professor Geyl's statement that the struggle between church and state coincided with one between democracy and oligarchy¹ may be correct for a later period but does not apply to the pre-Leicesterian and Leicesterian years. There is no evidence that at this time the people demanded democratic reforms in the system of government, or that they tried by other means to advance their own political rights. Whatever influence they had possessed in affairs of state had been procured for them by the Prince of Orange, who probably hoped by this means both to counteract the exclusiveness of the Regents and to ensure a more general support for his policies, and who had on a number of occasions succeeded in persuading the States that they consult the heads of militia companies, guilds, and other burgher organizations.² When in 1581 the States put an end to this practice by passing a decree forbidding magistrates to discuss provincial matters with these groups they encountered no popular resistance.³ Nor does it appear that in following years, either before or during the Leicester period, attempts

¹The Revolt of the Netherlands, p. 208.

²See Kluit, I, 132-137.

³Ibid., pp. 263f, 270.

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were made by the people to have the decision reversed. As far as the Leicester era is concerned, it would perhaps be more appropriate to speak of a struggle between the confederate system on the one hand, and a semi-monarchical and federal one on the other. There were undoubtedly other than political reasons to explain the support given to Leicester by the church, the Calvinists and other sections of the population, but it is evident that the dissatisfying state of affairs in recent years had caused widespread political discontent with the States' system and awakened, or perhaps re-awakened, a movement in favour of centralization.

II

The aims and aspirations of the opposition groups help to explain many of the political disagreements of the Leicester period, but they had little or no influence on his appointment or on the extent of the authority given to him. These matters were controlled by the States only, and for this topic attention has to be focussed once more upon them. Because the initiative, in this question as in most other matters, came from Holland, and also because Leicester's future relations with Holland dominate the story of his rule, the emphasis will be placed on the proposals and general attitude of the States of that province.

In connection with the problem of the internal divisions it is to be noted that the States, if they contemplated the possibility of a hostile alliance between governor, church and people, took few precautions to counteract this particular threat. The restrictions placed upon Leicester's authority tended almost without exception to guarantee the

continuation of States' influence upon the central government and to safeguard, to some extent, the independence of the provinces. The decision to appoint Maurice as governor over Holland and Zeeland before Leicester's arrival -- a matter that caused some controversy largely because of its timing and because the installation took place without Leicester's knowledge -- was inspired by the same considerations. Maurice would undoubtedly have been chosen regardless of Leicester's appointment. He had earlier been considered for the function, and the reason why the dignity had not been conferred immediately after his father's death appears to have been the fear that this step would interfere with the success of the foreign negotiations; both France and England might hesitate to accept the sovereignty if it appeared that the maritime provinces would remain under the Orange "dynasty". The States' right to appoint him had consequently not been among the conditions on which they offered the sovereignty to Elizabeth, but the fact that they did demand the continuation of the present stadholders and that they had instructed the legation to mention Maurice in case the names of these governors were asked, indicates that it was intended eventually to install him.¹ Their anxiety to do so was undoubtedly increased by the prospect that an independent or semi-independent central government would be established; a separate provincial governor provided some safeguards against undue encroachments by the central authority upon the provincial government.

¹ Res. Ho. 1585, p. 306.

The reason why they proceeded with the installation without Leicester's knowledge seems to have been the fear that the latter might himself covet the position. This at any rate was the argument of Oldenbarnevelt, who was the driving force behind the decision to settle the matter before Leicester arrived. As pensionary of Rotterdam (his definitive appointment as States' Advocate was delayed until March 1586) Oldenbarnevelt had been a member of the Dutch legation in London. According to him it had been suggested there that Holland should perhaps dispense with a governor of its own, such in conformity with the Burgundian tradition according to which the most important province (Brabant at that time) had as the governor general's residence been without a separate stadholder.¹ If in the case of Holland and Leicester a similar arrangement had been made the effects might have been beneficial. As head of Holland's government Leicester would perhaps have associated himself more closely with that province's interests than he actually did, and it is possible that this consideration was one of the reasons why some among the States considered following the procedure and objected to Oldenbarnevelt's proposal. Another reason appears to have been the fear that a hasty appointment might create a wrong impression in England.² The States of Zeeland, who had earlier pressed for Maurice's installation, now also drew back.³ Oldenbarnevelt nevertheless found a majority for

¹ Van Deventer, I, pp. 11f.

² Den Tex, I, 243.

³ BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C VIII, fo. 182.

his suggestion, and on November 1st Maurice was installed as stadholder of the maritime provinces.

Holland postponed discussions on the governor general's authority until his arrival. On the 23rd of December, a few days after Leicester had landed in Zeeland, the States of Holland commissioned Josse de Menin, pensionary of Dordrecht, François Maelson, pensionary of Enkhuizen, and Johan van Oldenbarnevelt to study the question and draft an Act of Authority. The three men suggested that Leicester should be given title and commission as governor- and captain general of the United Provinces. In military affairs he was to have supreme authority; in civil matters he and his Council were to receive the powers outlined by the treaty, but if the States of the other provinces felt that he should have "such further authority as the governors of the Netherlands possessed under Charles V", the deputies of Holland were to give their consent. In December the nobility and most of the towns accepted this proposal, but Amsterdam, Haarlem, Gouda and Alkmaar declared that they were insufficiently authorized.¹ Two weeks later the matter was again discussed and on January 9th Holland's resolution was submitted to the States General. It was similar to the proposal of the three pensionaries. Leicester was to have absolute powers in military affairs, while in other matters he would receive the same authority as his Habsburg predecessors had, except that in conferring the principal civil offices, which had

¹ARA, Coll. Van Wijn, no. 11; Res. Ho. 1585, pp. 778f.

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formerly stood at the governor general's disposition, he would be bound by a nomination submitted by the provincial States concerned.¹

It does not appear that in the January discussions there was much disagreement on these points among the States of Holland. Not even Amsterdam vetoed the suggestion that governor and Council would be free to issue decrees affecting the affairs of the confederacy, although this implied their right to settle the trade issue without the States' advice. The only dissenting voice that has been recorded concerned the decision that the central government would have power in religious matters. It came from the town of Gouda, whose strongly Erastian government wished to leave the control over matters ecclesiastical with the municipal magistrates.² Gouda's objections were however overruled.

At the assembly of the States General it appeared that all the provinces except Friesland subscribed to Holland's resolution. The Friesian deputies agreed that Leicester should have supreme military power, but they had not been authorized to grant him full authority in political affairs or to cede the domains to the central government as the other provinces intended to do.³ But at the national assembly also the opinion of the majority prevailed. The so-called Act of Authority was drawn up according to the suggestions made by Holland.⁴ On

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 392.

² Res. Ho. 1586, p. 9.

³ Res. St. Gen., V, 392f, 394f, 396.

⁴ The Act is printed by Bor, II, 685f.

January 11th it was submitted to Leicester who, after some changes had been made in the conditions, accepted the function.

This arrangement did not contradict the treaty regulations, but it was contrary to a later order by the Queen: some time before his departure to the Netherlands Elizabeth had forbidden Leicester to accept a formal function from the States.¹ The Queen shared the opinion of her Councillors and of the States that the existing system of government in the Netherlands was chaotic and that an effective central government was necessary if her aid was to have the desired effect. Experience and the States' own confessions having convinced her that the Dutch themselves were unable to introduce the needed improvements, she was not unwilling to give them some support. Her wish to counteract the inadequacies in the present system explains why she had approved of the political terms of the treaty and why she had decided to send Leicester. She could not, however, agree to the latter's appointment as head of the Dutch government and so create the impression that she had accepted the provinces as a protectorate, because this might draw her too deeply into their war, and because it could interfere with her attempts to reach an understanding with Spain. Although the de facto authority of her lieutenant was to be extensive (an authority

¹ Cal. For., XX, 192f; Bruce, p. 100.

which the Dutch were to be obliged by treaty to acknowledge), it was to remain unofficial. Leicester's only formal function was to be his generalship of the English army. The term governor general, which she had allowed to be used in the treaty, no longer occurred in his instructions.¹

It is unlikely that the States knew of this decision. The authors of a recent study on the first phase of the Leicester era have suggested that the States' offer and Leicester's acceptance was the outcome of an intrigue staged by English and Dutch advocates of an Anglo-Dutch union, that is by Leicester himself, his political supporters at home, and the Dutch deputies.² By investing the Queen's lieutenant with the authority he would have possessed if she had agreed to a political union it was attempted, according to this thesis, to override the Queen's negative decision on the States' offers. Leicester's almost regal reception, which established his image as governor general and therefore made it more difficult for the Queen to persevere in her refusal, should have been an integral element in the intrigue.

The theory is not unattractive. It is very probable that English and Dutch advocates of a protectorate relationship or annexation hoped to realize their plans through Leicester, and there possibly was more than a tacit agreement on this point. But this does not necessarily mean that

¹ The instructions are in Bruce, pp. 12-15.

² Strong and Van Dorsten, pp. 3, 23, 50-56.

the States realized that in appointing Leicester they acted against Elizabeth's express command. Neither they nor their deputies had officially been informed of the prohibition and it was in Leicester's interest to keep them ignorant. The States knew of Elizabeth's reluctance to give the impression that Leicester had been appointed governor at her request, but may well have believed that she would favour the appointment so long as it could be justified to the world as coming from them alone. In the other case they would no doubt have tried to cushion the initial shock by representing his authority as less formal or less extensive than it was. Such an attempt was not made. The States General informed the Queen that they had granted him "l'autorité suprême et commandement absolu au faict de la guerre" and in matters of civil government "tel pouvoir et auctorité comme parci devant ont eu les gouverneurs généraux des Pays Bas...saulff les droicts et privilèges du Pays..."¹ The States of Holland defined, even more enthusiastically, his military powers as an "autorité & Puissance Souveraine & absolue...", while again they compared his civil authority to that which the governors of Charles V had possessed.² The notion seems to have been (and it was one that Leicester's advisers encouraged)³ that the more extensive his powers were the more agreeable it would, under the circumstances, be to the Queen.

¹ Brugmans, I, 71.

² Res. Ho. 1586, p. 66.

³ Brugmans, I, 55, 57.

As far as Leicester himself is concerned, his decision to accept the governorship was not inspired merely by his desire for an Anglo-Dutch union, or even by the consideration that refusal to comply with the Dutch demands would exacerbate the political instability in the Netherlands. The treaty had ordered him to provide for the introduction of certain reforms in the financial and military establishments, and his instructions had not relieved him of these responsibilities. It would be difficult to discharge them unless he received the position that the treaty had reserved for him. He further believed that by assuming control over Dutch affairs he might be able to ensure Elizabeth's continued support for the war; it was and remained his primary concern to try and prevent her withdrawal. The success of these attempts seemed to depend largely on the extent to which he should be able to control the government of the provinces, and to direct their financial and military means to an all-out war effort. Apart from a downright military disaster nothing would incline the Queen more to a peace than the probability of a lengthy, indecisive and above all costly war; nothing on the other hand seemed better calculated to reconcile her to the alliance than the prospect that before long the Dutch would be able to relieve her of part of the expenditure.

To achieve these purposes he thought that he needed more freedom of action than not only the Queen was willing to allow him, but also than the States had offered. One of his objections to their Act of Authority concerned the appointment of his advisers. The Act provided

that the Councillors of State were to be nominated by the provinces which they represented, and that they were to be appointed by the States General. The States further asserted it to be their prerogative to provide both Council and governor with a set of instructions according to which they would have to rule. These rights had traditionally been the sovereign's, and the sovereignty now rested with the States. Their insistence on these points was therefore logical, but no less valid was Leicester's contention that the restrictions interfered with the "absolute" powers offered him and threatened to perpetuate States' and provincial control over the central government. Although on the point of provincial nominations he was willing to compromise, he continued to oppose the States General's right to appoint the Council, refused the demand that he as governor should be bound by States' instructions, and asserted that he himself should supply those which would define the Council's duties.¹

A little over a week was spent in negotiations on these issues by deputies of the States General on one side and Leicester, Davison, and Sir Philip Sidney on the other. Eventually Leicester received the right to appoint his own Councillors, provided that he chose them from the provincial nominations. This at least appears from the Act of Delation of February 1st, which superseded the Act of Authority.² The

¹See the report of the negotiations in Brugmans, I, 34f, 42, 49; Bor, II, 686.

²Bor, II, 686f.

States had been ready to grant him a free election,¹ and no objections were made when by the end of January he proceeded to appoint some Councillors on his own authority, while agreeing to choose the others from the nominations so soon as these should be submitted. The members thus appointed were the Seignieur de Brederode for Holland, Jacques Valcke for Zeeland, Dr. Elbertus Leoninus for Gelderland, Paul Buys, formerly Advocate of Holland, for Utrecht, and Adolf van Meetkerke for Flanders.² It was further agreed that the States General would issue the Council's instructions, but that they would not apply to the governor, that he or else the Council would be allowed to revise them, and that he would not be bound by the Council's decisions.³ Not all these concessions were quite so substantial as they seemed. Leicester's later complaints about the limitations imposed upon him by the instructions suggest that either the revision did not take place, or else that his suggestions were rejected. The States' promise that the Council's functions would be advisory only and that Leicester was not bound by its instructions was qualified by a number of provisions in the instructions themselves. Articles 11 and 22, for example, established that all ordinances of payment were to be approved by three Councillors

¹Res. St. Gen., V, 402.

²Bor, II, 690. Meetkerke however had already been nominated; ARA, SG 4866, Bundel Staten Generaal.

³Brugmans, I, 54, 58.

⁴Bor, II, 721; EM, Cotton Mss., Galba D III, fo. 22.

from different provinces and that all letters were to be signed by the Councillors present and then, if these agreed, by the governor, while article 20 provided that no resolutions could be taken except in the presence of the majority of the Council members.¹

III

Although by no means absolute, Leicester's powers were considerable. If he had been fortunate enough to procure Elizabeth's sanction, if he had received more material support from England and the States, and if he himself had possessed the necessary skill in political navigation, some success might have followed. The first month, before Elizabeth's reaction to the appointment became known and before the monetary shortages tempted him to embark upon his controversial financial and economic policies, the situation did not seem unpromising. His relations with the States of Holland had not perceptibly suffered as a result of the disagreements on the Act of Authority. Holland had been accommodating during these discussions. The suggestions that Leicester, if he insisted, should receive the right to elect his own Councillors and that he would not be bound by the instructions, came from the States of that province. Earlier, when Leicester remarked that he objected to merchants as Councillors they had agreed that he should be humoured in that respect also, on condition that some members of the mercantile class were allowed "in the Finances".² The province's nomination for Councillors -- it was

¹The instructions are in Bor, II, 688-690.

²Res. St. Gen., V, 398, 401; Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 23, 24f.

entitled to three, and Leicester had chosen only one without nomination -- gave him indeed the opportunity to elect the non-mercantile people he had said to prefer as advisers; the States submitted the names of Adriaan van der Mijle and Sebastiaan van Loozen, two lawyers who were president and member respectively of the High Court of Holland, Dr. François Maelson, pensionary of Enkhuizen, and Willem Bardesius, one of the burgomasters of Amsterdam.¹

In selecting Van Loozen and the merchant-burgomaster of Amsterdam Leicester had, in turn, not too severely disappointed the States. The choice of his five "free" Councillors also was, on the whole, acceptable. Valcke had earlier served on the Council and would probably have been nominated again by Zeeland, while the Seigneur de Brederode seems to have been considered as a nominee by the States of Holland.² Leoninus, the Chancellor of Gelderland and one of the Prince of Orange's circle of advisers, was equally acceptable. He was a politician of moderate views and one who on the whole sympathized with the religious and internal political establishment maintained by the States of Holland. So did Paul Buys, the representative for Utrecht. According to Leicester there had been opposition to Buys' appointment.³ This may have come from the States of Holland. Buys' relations with his former employers were

¹Res. Ho. 1586, p. 39.

²R. Broersma and G. Busken Huet, eds., "Brieven over het Leycestersche tijdvak uit de papieren van Jean Hotman", EMHG, XXXIV (1913) [henceforth cited as BMHG, XXXIV], 35.

³Bruce, p. 33.

strained,¹ and the States may have considered it dangerous if he became too influential with the governor. It is also possible however that the objections came from the opposition group in Utrecht, which was, as in Holland, Calvinist in sympathies and which disapproved of Buys both because of his outspoken anti-Calvinist attitude and because of his association with the Regents of Utrecht.

Another Councillor whose election appears to have aroused opposition was Adolf van Meetkerke, the ex-president of the Council of Flanders.² Again the objections may not have come from Holland, although presumably the States of that province were not enthusiastic about the appointment. Anti-southern feelings, resulting in measures which intended to limit the influence of the southerners, were strong among the northern Regents. The problem posed by the politically turbulent exiles was partly responsible for this attitude, but there was also a growing conviction that the loss of Brabant and Flanders, while militarily a disaster, was not in all respects an evil. Holland and Zeeland were beginning to benefit from the blockade of Antwerp and other southern towns, and also from the influx of a wealthy or industrially competent army of exiles. Holland's political dominance in the confederacy was now, moreover, assured. If Brabant and Flanders should be regained it hoped to retain these advantages. For the time being the

¹ Rogier, Paulus Buys en Leicester, p. 8.

² Bruce, p. 74.

States made it their policy to set bounds to the influence of both exiles and of those southerners who represented areas that still supported the Revolt.

It had not at first been intended to deprive these regions of their right of representation in the Council or in the States General. When after the fall of Antwerp the deputies of Brabant declared that their province would cease to send representatives to the national assembly, attempts had been made to dissuade them from this step.¹ Flanders continued its representation. In October 1585, when discussions were held about the number of members each province was to have in the Council of State it had been decided, although "without prejudice", that Brabant and Flanders would be represented by one Councillor each. In the case of Flanders this member would be nominated by the areas that still remained unconquered, that is Het Vrije of Ghent, Ostend and Sluys; in the case of Brabant the States General would choose him.²

The following January, when similar discussions were held,³ it was still agreed that Flanders would have its member, but Brabant was now no longer mentioned, and the request of the "remaining towns and nobles" of that province for readmission to the States General was ignored. At about the same time the deputies of Sluys and Ostend were,

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 11.

² Ibid., p. 183.

³ Bor, II, part II (Authentieke Stukken), p. 61.

at Holland's suggestion, also refused admission to the national assembly.¹ Only Het Vrije continued for some time to send its deputy to the States General, but in the course of 1586 this too was ended.² Before another year had passed the northern States were to give an indication that they had written off Brabant and Flanders even as potential members of the confederacy. In the Articles of the Sovereignty submitted to Elizabeth it was asked, both in 1585 and in 1587, that those among the provinces that had not joined the negotiations should, if they expressed this wish, be accepted by the Queen on the same conditions as the contracting ones.³ The Secret Instructions of 1585 explained that this article pointed to the Ommelanden of Groningen, Overijssel, Drenthe, Brabant and Mechlin (Flanders was one of the contracting provinces), but in 1587, when neither Brabant or Flanders had joined in the offer of sovereignty, the Instructions mentioned only the three northern provinces.⁴

Leicester's attitude towards the South and the southerners was not the determining factor in this change of policy; Holland's measures would have been basically the same regardless of Leicester's temporary presence in the Netherlands. The governor's close cooperation with the natives of Brabant and Flanders nevertheless strengthened the States'

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, p. ix.

² Ibid.

³ ARA, Loketkas Engeland 2, Art. 22.

⁴ See Art. 22 Secret Instructions in ARA, Loketkas Loopende Engeland 2 (for 1585) and Loketkas Loopende 56 (for 1587).

determination to exclude the representatives of these two areas. The rift between North and South and Leicester's decision to take the side of the latter region at the same time produced, as is well known, one of the main stumbling blocks in Leicester's own career. It is less generally recognized that in embarking upon this course he attempted not merely to strengthen his own "party". This consideration was undoubtedly present. From Leicester's point of view the exiles formed a highly compatible circle of advisers. For their political advancement they relied on him, and for the reconquest of their own provinces they had fixed all their hopes on the English alliance. They nourished their resentment against the States with their exclusive political system and were anxious to see the English governor invested with the "absolute" powers which the northern Regents had denied him. This community of interest would in itself suffice to explain the sympathy between governor and exiles. There was however also the fact that Leicester considered the suppression of southern influence politically inopportune. The English government, more so perhaps than the States of the United Provinces, still thought in terms of the old Burgundian state and did not yet consider the breach between North and South as permanent. The southern nobles' jealousy of the Prince of Orange was recognized as one of the factors responsible for the rupture.¹ With the Prince's death this obstacle to a union was removed. Another cause

¹ Cal. For., XIX, 240; BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 577^{verso}.

had been the military exhaustion of the southern provinces, which for years had been forced to bear the brunt of the war. Part of the South, and this applied especially to the non-Walloon regions, had returned to its obedience not by inclination, but by force and by despair of adequate foreign support. Now that England had extended aid there was a chance that it would attempt to rejoin the North.

That England considered this possibility appears from suggestions made by both Burghley and Walsingham, shortly before the alliance was granted, that the extension of English aid to the Dutch should be followed by attempts to draw the southern provinces back into the war.¹ In the spring of 1585 plans were indeed made -- it does not appear whether they were executed -- to send an English agent to the obedient provinces whose duty it would be, among other things, to gauge the attitude of the southern nobles towards the Queen's intervention and find out whether there was hope of a favourable reaction.² To dissuade Elizabeth from continuing her peace negotiations Leicester himself tried for a time to keep the hope of a southern revolt alive in England.³ There was perhaps little ground for his expectation that the Walloon areas were ready to

¹Cal. Hatfield Mss., III, 70; PRO, SP Dom. XII, 176, no. 5, fo. 236.

²BM, Harleian Mss. 287, fo. 9.

³Bruce, pp. 247, 251. Leicester's hopes to regain the South affected his military plans. From a memorandum submitted to the Privy Council after the loss of Sluys it appears that in 1586 he had intended to draw his forces into Flanders but that the States had counselled an offensive in Gelderland, an advice which Leicester followed. Cal. For., ed. Sophie Crawford Lomas and Allen B. Hinds (London, 1929), XXI, iii, p. 258.

throw off the Spanish yoke, but it was less unrealistic to contemplate the possibility that places like Antwerp, Brugge or Ghent might be induced to make another attempt if military affairs went well under the alliance. The economic depression plaguing the South at this time increased that possibility. The unaccommodating attitude of the northern provinces towards their former confederates threatened to interfere with it.

As it happened Leicester was drawn into the North-South controversy almost as soon as he had entered the country. In January and February representatives of the "remaining towns and nobles of Brabant", a group that included Count Maurice of Nassau as Marquis of Bergen op Zoom, sent him two remonstrances to complain about their exclusion and about the States General's attack upon the autonomy of their region, especially in financial matters.¹ Leicester then tried to give them some satisfaction by proposing that natives of Brabant should be present at the States General's auditing of their province's accounts.² He also brought the remonstrants' requests for representation in Council and national assembly to the States General's attention,³ but his mediation was unsuccessful. In May the States of Holland came with their formal, and as it appeared final, veto in the form of a

¹Brugmans, I, 64-70, 74-77.

²Res. St. Gen., V, 329.

³Brugmans, I, 47; Res. St. Gen., V, 216f.

resolution stating that Holland's deputies to the States General were to refuse Brabant's requests, even if this should be against the combined opinion of the other provinces.¹

The question of the South then was already beginning to constitute a point of disagreement between States and governor. It did not however lead to immediate conflicts, and no other matters of serious discord arose during the first months of Leicester's presence in the Netherlands. Whether this period of good feelings would have continued much longer if Elizabeth had agreed to his appointment is difficult to say. That her refusal to accept the arrangement decreased his usefulness in the States' eyes is obvious, and that it at the same time affected their attitude towards the English ally is equally clear. Old fears and new rumours about the Queen's pacific intentions were confirmed both by her violent denunciation of the governorship and by her subsequent suspension of payments to the English army. Her ultimate decision to resign herself to the situation did not allay these suspicions. The threat of an English scheme of forcing the provinces to a peace with Spain remained present throughout the period of Leicester's governorship. The extent to which this situation affected the States' relations with the English governor and with England itself, and the manner in which Leicester reacted to the challenge, forms one of the themes of the following chapters.

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 188.

CHAPTER IV

LEICESTER'S GOVERNMENT IN 1586:

FINANCIAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY POLICIES

I

The previous chapter has suggested some of the reasons why Leicester was to lose the support of the States, and particularly of those of the maritime provinces, namely the Queen's pacifism, his own alliance with the native opposition groups and the southern exiles, and his commercial and monetary policies. The last two aspects of his government form the topic of the present chapter, where they are considered against the background of the general military and financial situation. The interconnection between these factors is usually disregarded or only cursorily mentioned in the accounts of his career but is nevertheless obvious. His financial needs and his consequent inability to organize the army for either offensive or defensive purposes explain his economic and financial policies, and even many of his political measures.

Attention will first be given to the financial arrangements made with the States. These had agreed that a monthly grant of fl. 200,000 would be paid by the four "contributing" provinces of Holland, Zeeland, Friesland and Utrecht, to which would be added the imposts and other

revenue derived from the frontier regions.¹ They had further promised the income of the domains, after the deduction of the "charges" assigned on them, such as the interest on loans made on the security of these properties, the salaries of judicial officers, and other expenses. Except in the case of Friesland, the only province that had not yet decided to cede them, the net-revenue of the domains appears to have been negligible; the States promised at any rate that possible deficits would be borne by them.² Convoy and licent duties, which were also ceded to the central government, were to be used for the maintenance of the navy.

The States asserted that the ordinary contributions for the land war should be sufficient for the payment and provisioning of garrisons, the cost of munitions, and other normal defence expenditure. They agreed that for the formation of a field army extraordinary grants would be necessary.³ Precisely how great this additional sum would have to be is difficult to estimate. According to a "State of War" of 1587, which was drawn up, in Leicester's absence, by the States and the Council with the advice of Lord Buckhurst, Sir John Norris and some of the Dutch generals, the financial requirements for offensive warfare amounted to approximately five million florins. This would cover the

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 318f.

² Ibid., pp. 377f; Brugmans, I, 42.

³ Bor, II, 691.

cost of the normal garrisons and of a field army that operated for four to five months and that consisted of 12,000 footsoldiers, 5,000 horsemen and 1,000 pioneers. In addition to the English subsidy of fl. 1,260,000 and the States' grant of fl. 2,400,000 (the revenue derived from the "non-contributing" provinces was disregarded and may have been destined for the maintenance of the forces that were to be kept in the frontier areas throughout the year) an extraordinary grant of fl. 1,500,000 was estimated to be necessary. At that time the States promised to contribute two-thirds of this sum, on condition that the Queen paid the additional fl. 500,000.¹

No such "State of War" was drawn up for 1586 and the amount of the extraordinary grant Leicester might expect remained, for the time being, a secret. He did from the beginning attempt to induce the States to increase their contributions. Additional money was required not only for the formation of a field army, but also to cover the expected deficit in the normal budget, for the States' estimate of the ordinary cost of defence had, in Leicester's opinion and in that of the Council of State,² been too optimistic. Whether this would have been so under normal circumstances is not certain. The present deficit may have been caused largely by the extraordinary increases in expenditure: stores and magazines, depleted after the exertions of the previous year, had

¹Bor, II, 957.

²ARA, SG 3782, fo. 27.

to be replenished, the threatened towns in the Electorate of Cologne victualled and garrisoned, and even the navy asked for subsidies from the normal contributions.¹ Another cause of the deficiency seems to have been that the income derived from the frontier provinces remained below the States' expectations. Only that from Brabant had, according to a report by Thomas Wilkes, still constituted a considerable sum, but it had nevertheless been insufficient to pay the forces needed for that area.²

On February 7th, three days after his installation, Leicester asked the States to cede him the income of a special tax on salt, soap and beer, the so-called "three species".³ Earlier this tax had been at the disposal of the central government, but in 1585 it had been returned to the provinces.⁴ In order to provide for the establishment of a field army he also asked permission to borrow, in case of need, fl. 100,000 at the country's charge, and he suggested that the provinces further grant an extraordinary contribution of fl. 400,000, to be paid in equal instalments during the months of March to June inclusive.⁵ On February 15th, the States General decided, in conformity with a resolution taken by Holland a few days earlier, that the request for

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 299.

² Brugmans, II, 423.

³ Res. St. Gen., V, 323.

⁴ Van der Woude, TvG, LXXIV, p. 70.

⁵ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 100.

the three species would have to be refused.¹ In March Holland agreed in principle, however, to grant the fl. 400,000 and it further allowed the central government to borrow the additional fl. 100,000.² The States General also approved of this loan,³ but no decision was taken regarding the fl. 400,000, and in order to provide for some of the more pressing needs Leicester was forced to have recourse to new loans and to anticipations upon the general means destined for the following months.

Other attempts made by him to augment his revenue brought him into conflict with the States. The first of these concerned his rosenoble project. This English coin was popular in the Netherlands and was issued at a rate that exceeded its intrinsic value by more than ten per cent.⁴ A certain mintmaster by the name of Hans Vleminck had suggested that some profit could be made if the noble were minted in the Netherlands.⁵ Leicester passed the suggestion on to Burghley,⁶

¹Bor, II, 691; Res. Ho. 1586, p. 61.

²Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 101f.

³Van der Woude (op. cit., p. 70) states that this approval had been withheld. It appears from the States General's resolutions of June 28th however that consent had been given; the States' indignation concerned the fact the Leicester had taken it directly from the "general means", instead of borrowing it elsewhere on security of these means. Res. St. Gen., V, 479. See also ibid., p. 383.

⁴Res. Ho. 1586, p. 109.

⁵BM, Harleian Mss. 251, fos. 57^{verso}, 58.

⁶Cal. For., XX, 348.

who tried to dissuade him by explaining that the coin's inflated value was a result of the fact that it was still scarce, and that a sudden increase in its supply would before long bring it down to its just value.¹ Leicester did not await Burghley's reply but went ahead with his plans. Although Holland's mint was established at Dordrecht, he resolved to have his nobles coined at Amsterdam. This decision was taken after consultation with his Councillor Willem Bardesius, former burgomaster of Amsterdam, whose advice he had asked regarding the privileges governing the creation of mints, and also regarding Vleminck's reputation as a minter. Bardesius, who may not have been acquainted with all the details of the project but who appears to have been anxious to have a mint established in his own town, gave encouraging replies. Vleminck was recommended, and Leicester was assured that he was free to establish mints in whatever place he wished, because the treaty had reserved the disposition in monetary matters to the Queen and her lieutenant.²

The plans aroused immediate opposition from Dordrecht and the States of Holland, and it is not certain whether they were ever executed. In March, after he had been acquainted with the States' objections, Leicester promised that he would keep the matter in abeyance.³ Somewhat later Dordrecht complained that Vleminck's preparations in Amsterdam

¹Bruce, p. 153.

²BM, Add. Mss. 48, 083, fos. 77f.

³Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 108f.

continued,¹ and the States were to assert the following year that by the minting of rosenobles Leicester had deprived the country of several thousands of guilders.² Leicester himself, who shortly after he had made his promise to the States received a letter from Burghley informing him that the Queen also opposed the project,³ said that it had not been put into effect.⁴ He may well have spoken the truth. English coins continued to be minted in the Netherlands, but this was not necessarily done with his approval. The provinces formed an illegal minters' paradise, and rosenobles had already been produced, without the government's approbation, before Leicester introduced his project.⁵

Another point of disagreement concerned the disposal of Brabant's revenue. That province's current imposts had been ceded to the central government, but the States General had assumed control over the remainder of its income, including that derived from confiscations and ecclesiastical goods. It also claimed the "rests" of Brabant, that is those contributions which had become due before Leicester's administration began but which had not yet been paid. Brabant's representatives opposed these claims and had promised Leicester that

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 109f.

² Bor, II, 943.

³ Bruce, p. 153.

⁴ Cal. For., ed. Sophie Crawford Lomas and Allen B. Hinds. (London, 1927), XXI, ii, pp. 25, 120.

⁵ Ibid., pp. 25, 40, 120.

they would cede all their revenue to the central government so soon as their province was represented in the Council of State.¹ Although this condition had not been fulfilled Leicester proceeded to collect the money, apparently with Brabant's approval.²

The States General issued its first protest in April. One of its arguments was that because the States had assumed responsibility for the payment of the old debts, the "rests" of the contributions, in Brabant as elsewhere, belonged to them. Their claim to Brabant's confiscations and ecclesiastical goods was explained with the remark that in deferring the government to Leicester these goods had been reserved "to the generality and the sovereignty".³ The assertion was only partly true; the means in question had not been granted to the States General but had been retained by the individual provinces.⁴ Each of these consequently had the right to cede them to the central government. Whether Brabant also had this right depended on the question whether or not it was still entitled to full membership in the

¹Brugmans, I, 76.

²This at any rate was asserted on Leicester's behalf; *ibid.*, p. 203. This letter and the one immediately preceding it were obviously not written by the States General, as the editor thought. The drafts in ARA, Loketkas Loopende 50, do not indicate the sender, but presumably it was Leicester's Chamber of Finances.

³Res. St. Gen., V, 331.

⁴Brugmans, I, 45f.

confederacy. Leicester preferred to think it was, and for the better part of the year he continued his attempts to collect the revenue,¹ although eventually he was forced to resign himself to the States' wishes also in this respect.

These disagreements, and the suspicions engendered by Leicester's political and commercial measures, inevitably affected the States' attitude to his demand for an increased subsidy. Discussions on the extraordinary grant of fl. 400,000 dragged on during the spring and early summer months. On May 3rd the national assembly had begun to consider the request, but it was not until July 7th that the formal Act of Consent was drawn up,² and it was to take another month or more before the first instalment was paid. This grant, which brought the States' contributions to fl. 2,900,000, did not solve the financial problem. During the summer Leicester had accumulated a debt that approached, and perhaps exceeded, the amount of the extraordinary aid,³ and his deficit was to increase over the following months.⁴ The money did however help to relieve the military situation, which had been seriously deteriorating during the summer. The achievements of September and October were significant enough to warrant the assumption

¹Cf. Brugmans, I, 201-204 (see for the probable sender of these letters note 2 on the previous page) and Res. St. Gen., V. 377.

²Res. St. Gen., V, 335f, 366f.

³ARA, SG 3781, st. 142.

⁴See below, pp. 222-5 for a discussion of the States' accounts.

that part of the earlier losses might have been prevented if the additional contributions had been granted, as he had requested, in the spring.

II

To complete the monetary picture attention must be given to the difficulties encountered in the financing of the English army. This matter has received a detailed treatment from Professor J. E. Neale,¹ whose study is indispensable for an understanding of the monetary aspects of the alliance, although subsequent research has shown that not all the conclusions drawn by him can be accepted without qualifications. Professor Neale regarded the question primarily from Elizabeth's point of view and blamed the shortages almost exclusively on what he called the States' "parasytic financing" (that is their reliance on English loans and their delays in repaying them), and on Leicester's incapacity and possible dishonesty as an administrator. This interpretation has been challenged by the Dutch historian A. M. van der Woude,² who suggested that Elizabeth's own financial policies were at least in part to blame for the shortages under Leicester's government. He mentioned in this respect the delays in the shipments of money from England,³ and thereby put his finger on a factor

¹"Elizabeth and the Netherlands, 1586-7", in his Essays in Elizabethan History, pp. 170-201.

²In his previously cited article in TvG, LXXIV, 64-82.

³Ibid., pp. 75f.

to which Professor Neale gave indeed insufficient attention. In defending the Queen against the accusations of ill-payment, Professor Neale based his case largely on the fact that over the entire Norris and Leicester period she paid what she owed, but neglected to point out that on most occasions the payments were made long after they had become due. As his own discussion of the matter has shown, this procedure removed Leicester's chances of introducing the needed reforms into the army's financial administration. It also prevented him from using the army for offensive purposes during the larger part of the campaign season.

In order to clarify the situation it is necessary first of all to give an indication of the Queen's total commitments and of the sums she made available to the army at various periods. As already mentioned, Professor Neale has shown that over the first two and a half years of the alliance she fulfilled her financial obligations. According to his figures she had by December 1587 paid an amount of £283,760, exclusive of an extraordinary grant which she advanced in 1587 for the relief of Sluys.¹ Her commitments for this period amounted to approximately £281,360. This sum is made up of £29,000 for the four months of 1585 when Norris administered the army and of twice the annual subsidy of £126,180 for the two years of the Leicester period proper. The £29,000 for the first four months consists of the charge for the provisional

¹Neale, pp. 172f.

army which the treaty had established at £18,500,¹ and of an additional £10,500 for the period of November 22nd, when the permanent treaty went into effect, until December 21st.

Norris received a total of £32,000,² an amount which exceeded the subsidy for these months. One of the reasons why he nevertheless left a deficit was, as has been mentioned earlier, the fact that certain amounts of money had been advanced to the Dutch.³ Part of his deficit was therefore to be recovered upon the settlement of his accounts with the States. In January 1586 Norris claimed that of the fl. 125,363 that had been lent to the States an amount of fl. 44,023 was still to be repaid. The States asserted that the amount was too high and Leicester, whose arbitration was asked, reduced it to fl. 28,864. That sum included the fl. 18,000 which had been paid for the additional 1,000 footsoldiers between October 2nd, when Davison accepted the Act of Ampliation, and November 21st. On this point therefore the Act of Ampliation was rejected, but in order to relieve the States' burden it was agreed that the money would be paid in instalments over a three-month period.⁴

The size of Norris' total deficit is not clear, but apparently it exceeded the amount of the settlement. Leicester used part of the

¹Bor, II, 638.

²Neale, p. 184.

³See p.65-7 above.

⁴Van der Woude, TvG, LXXIV, 68.

£20,000 he had brought with him to complete payments until December 21st, and appears to have lacked the money for a full pay in January. Only imprests were given, and by the end of January the treasurer reported that little more than £ 5,000 remained in cash.¹ Requests for additional funds were made but remained without avail until April, when £24,000 was sent.² Again the money had to cover too long a period; it was not until July that the next payment, an amount of £10,000, was made available to Leicester.³ Until August therefore he received £54,000 instead of the £73,600 to which he had been entitled. During the second part of the year the situation improved: a sum of £35,000 was sent in August and another £30,000 in October,⁴ bringing the total for the year to £119,000.

One of the reasons moving Elizabeth to postpone payments was her disgust with Leicester's acceptance of the governorship.⁵ Another was of course her "dislike of charges"; the decision to resume payments in April and the temporary improvement of her attitude towards Leicester at this time seem to have been due, at least in part, to premature reports about the financial success of Drake's expedition to the Indies.⁶ In

¹ Neale, pp. 185f.

² Ibid., p. 187; Cal. For., XX, 531.

³ Bruce, p. 338.

⁴ Neale, pp. 188f. The author gives £45,000 for August, but presumably this sum includes the July payment which he did not mention.

⁵ Van der Woude, TvG, LXXIV, 75.

⁶ Read, Walsingham, III, 142-144.

addition there was the uncertainty about Philip II's intentions. There were, on the one hand, the persistent rumours about Spanish naval preparations against England, which rumours strengthened the Queen's inclination to save the available military and financial resources for home defence;¹ while on the other hand there were the equally persistent reports about Spain's anxiety to enter into peace negotiations with England. Both Philip and Parma believed that by withholding payments the English government intended to prevent Leicester from embarking upon an offensive and thereby jeopardizing England's chances of reaching an agreement with Spain.² Whether or not this assumption was correct, there was a definite connection between Elizabeth's assessment of the possibilities of a composition and her financial policies with respect to the army in the Netherlands. During the first part of 1586 it was considered possible in England that the negotiations held by Andrea de Loo and other agents would lead to a formal peace conference.³ Early in July these preliminary talks collapsed, apparently as a result of Walsingham's disclosure of certain indiscretions committed by the English agents.⁴ A few weeks later Walsingham discovered the Babington

¹Read, Walsingham, III, pp. 140f.

²Joseph Lefevre, ed., Correspondance de Philippe II sur les affaires des Pays Bas (Brussels, 1956), II, iii, pp. 133, 138, 141; Van der Essen, V, 101, 103.

³Read, Walsingham, III, 142; Van der Essen, V, 89f.

⁴Read, Lord Burghley, p. 337; Idem, Walsingham, III, 150-153.

plot. This discovery did not weaken the Queen's desire for a peace but it convinced her that preparations for war should be continued, and for a time her interest in the affairs of Leicester and of the alliance increased. This appears not only from the greater regularity of her payments, but also from the fact that she granted her lieutenant's oft-repeated demand to allow his future field marshal Sir William Pelham to come to the Netherlands,¹ and that, again at Leicester's request, she sent Thomas Wilkes on an embassy to the Low Countries.²

After this digression about the political aspects of Elizabeth's financial policy attention must be given to the factors which Professor Neale has shown to have aggravated the monetary problem and to have been responsible for the debt which Leicester accumulated in 1586.³ One of these was that under Leicester, as under Norris, English money was diverted to the States' forces,⁴

¹ Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 12; Bruce, pp. 55, 132, 136, 250, 346.

² Bruce, pp. 291, 305.

³ Professor Neale (p. 190), estimates the total expenditure and debts for the first ten months of Leicester's government at £135,000. This suggests that Leicester had exceeded the amount of the Queen's subsidy for this period by £30,000, minus the money used to complete payments for the Norris era.

⁴ Neale, pp. 175-177.

and a second that under Leicester's administration the monthly charge of the English army increased. This was partly a result of the fact that the responsibility for the payment of certain English military chiefs and other officials devolved on him.¹ The treaty had failed to indicate whether these salaries were to be paid by the Queen or by the States, and no account had been taken of them when the amount needed for the maintenance of the English army was established.²

Another cause was Leicester's policy of raising his own salary from £6 to £10.13.4 per day, and of increasing the pay of the infantry companies from £170 to an amount that is variously reported as £173.5 and £176.5 per month.³ Leicester justified the first step with a reference to precedent: the Earl of Pembroke, who had as general of the English forces at St. Quentin occupied a position similar to that which Leicester held in the Netherlands, had been paid the higher rate.⁴ The decision to raise the pay of the English infantry companies appears to have been taken

¹Neale, pp. 171f.

²Ibid.; Cal. Hatfield Mss., XIII (Addenda), 293.

³Neale, p. 185.

⁴BM, Harl. Mss. 6994, fo. 42.

according to official directions. Burghley had ordered Leicester to bring the rates in accordance with those paid in Ireland, which were higher than the Dutch ones. Professor Neale suggested that this order was probably inspired by a financial statement of the Norris period which listed the pay per company as £184.¹ The author's censure of Leicester's decision to obey the order seems overly severe. He implies that he should have disregarded the direction and shows that Norris, who had also been told to introduce the new rate, had informed the Council that this would increase the Queen's charge.² This proves however that the government was aware of the difference when it sent its orders to Leicester. The calculation of £184 was, as has been seen, a result of the fact that the pound sterling was valued at less than ten Dutch guilders.³ It is probable therefore that the change was suggested in order to escape the even more disastrous consequences resulting from the disadvantageous rate of exchange.

Leicester's failure to correct some of the most striking abuses in the administration of the army and thereby to relieve the Queen's charges was, as has been suggested, partly due to Elizabeth's habit of postponing payments. Professor Neale has shown that one of the chief causes of these abuses was the system employed in paying the army.

¹Neale, p. 186, note 1.

²Ibid., note 2.

³Above, p. 66, note 3.

Although some attempts had been made to pay the wages by poll, that is directly to the soldiers, the normal procedure was to hand the money over to the captains. The system invited corruption, not only at the expense of the soldier to whom the captain might or might not pay his full wages, but also at that of the Queen herself. This was so because it was difficult to prevent the captains from claiming money for a larger number of soldiers than was actually in their bands. Only if regular musters were held could such frauds to some extent be prevented, but it had become an established practice that musters were accompanied by a full pay. When there was no money for a complete payment -- and under Leicester this was the rule rather than the exception -- the soldiers were relieved by means of imprests and these were given according to the captains' rolls. For months on end therefore companies could be and were presented and imprested as full while in reality they had wasted down to half their strength or less. When the muster master eventually passed his muster he had no means to verify the captains' old rolls and the amount of the "checks" -- that is the sum which was to be deducted for the number of soldiers lacking in each company -- was consequently smaller than it should have been.¹

¹Neale, pp. 180-183, 190-192. The checks were still further reduced because they were in large part refunded to the captains for the repletion of their bands. It does not appear that Leicester was more generous in this respect than for example Norris and Buckhurst; see Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 33.

These were among the factors causing Leicester's financial embarrassments. It is evident that the responsibility for the situation can indeed not be placed on the Queen's shoulders alone. The main cause of the difficulties must no doubt be sought in a number of fundamental weaknesses in the general system of army administration, weaknesses which affected most of the military expeditions into foreign countries and for which the government had not yet been able to find an adequate solution.¹ It is also clear however that the situation under Leicester was aggravated not only by his own or the States' financial policies, but also by those of the Queen. There were no doubt extenuating circumstances; it is possible to understand her concern and irritation about the manner in which her money was being administered, and particularly about the fact that debts and charges far exceeded her estimate, that no checks were returned in spite of the complaints about the incompleteness of her army, and that no accounts could be had to show her how her money had been and was being spent. Similar excuses might be brought forward, however, on behalf of the States. These did not cooperate in the attempts to keep the Queen's charges within the limits of her budget, but this attitude could be explained by their own financial problems and by the fact that they also had grievances concerning the administration of the English army, some of which were

¹See in this connection C. G. Cruickshank, Elizabeth's Army (2nd ed.; Oxford, 1966), passim.

no less legitimate than the Queen's. The incompleteness of her forces, the increase in the companies' pay, and the absence of checks might be mentioned as examples. The first concerned them directly; the last two increased for the time being Elizabeth's problems rather than theirs, but eventually they would be the losers. As far as Elizabeth's lieutenant, the third actor in the drama, is concerned, the preceding discussion has made it clear that he was by no means responsible for all the financial problems. There is no evidence that Leicester, who mortgaged his own possessions to help finance the expedition,¹ tried to defraud either the Queen or the army. Nor does the fact that he was unable to make ends meet establish his utter incapacity as an administrator. He probably failed to make the best of the situation, but it should be remembered that he was not the only one to be baffled by the difficulties confronting an Elizabethan army leader.

III

The monetary shortages had their effect on Leicester's commercial policy. His first serious disagreement with the States of Holland was caused by his decision to issue a highly comprehensive edict against trade with the enemy. Although that decision may have been influenced by political considerations, it was in the first place a result of the apparent impossibility of waging war by military means. The States'

¹ Lawrence Stone, An Elizabethan: Sir Horatio Palavicino (Oxford, 1956), pp. 191f. See also Cal. Dom., Addenda 1580-1625 (London, 1872), p. 208.

replies to his requests for money had been discouraging, and it is unlikely that by April 4th, when the decree was issued, he had received the tidings that Elizabeth intended to resume payments.¹ His own resources and his credit with the Merchants Adventurers had been insufficient to keep the army from starvation and mutiny;² they certainly would not stretch to equip and pay a force for military duty for any length of time. Under these circumstances the temptation was too great not to attempt the prohibitionists' panacea. A further increase in Parma's supply difficulties would at the very least weaken his offensive. At best it would force him to postpone it altogether, particularly if the perennial hope of a revolt in the southern provinces should be realized.

The assumption that this might happen was perhaps not so unrealistic as the freetraders had maintained, and as the majority of later historians have supposed. It depended in the first place on the question whether the Dutch were in a position to institute an effective blockade. The freetraders had often proclaimed this to be impossible. Although their contention may have been valid for the earlier years of the Revolt, it is unlikely that it applied to the period following Antwerp's surrender; Holland's and Zeeland's commercial relations with the obedient provinces after the closing of the Scheldt suggest that

¹ Shirley's letter informing him that the £24,000 would be sent was dated March 21/31. Bruce, p. 180. A letter written by Leicester to Burghley on March 29/April 8 (Cal. For., XX, 496-498) gives the impression that even at this time the news had not yet reached him.

² Cal. For., XX, 496-498.

they were in a position to enforce their monopoly there.¹ The situation in the South during the spring and summer of 1586 invited, moreover, the kind of economic warfare which Leicester was contemplating. The scarcity of victuals continued unabated, but it was not the only problem Parma faced. The departure of various merchants and artisans after the reduction of their towns, and the fact that the Dutch controlled the major trade routes, had caused a general economic depression in the southern Netherlands, where the population suffered severe unemployment and poverty. Expectations had been high that the conquest of Antwerp would cause a revival of trade and industry, but these hopes had been frustrated, and many were Parma's complaints in his letters to the King about the unemployment, misery and general discouragement of the people in the reconciled areas.²

¹Dr. Kernkamp, who made a detailed study of Dutch trade with the enemy during the Spanish war, admitted this. In the introduction to his work he had asserted that an effective blockade of the southern Netherlands was physically impossible (Handel met den Vijand, I, 3), but in the concluding section of his first volume, which closed with the year 1587, he stated that by that time the Dutch were well able to prevent foreign merchants from competing with them in their southern trade. Ibid., p. 219. The author failed to take this factor into account in his evaluation of Leicester's trade policies (ibid., p. 189), which he felt to have been inspired more by political considerations, such as Leicester's wish to gain prestige among the people, than by military ones.

²Van der Essen, V, 33, 34, 38f, 43f; Corresp. Philippe II, II, iii, p. xii.

These were among the factors accounting for the unprecedented severity of the decree, which aimed at a total cessation of Dutch and foreign trade with enemy territory and at a far-reaching curtailment of that with neutral countries. It was this severity which aroused Holland's, and eventually also Zeeland's opposition, not the fact that Leicester should attempt to regulate their trade with the enemy. Although at this time they still disagreed about the nature of the measures to be taken, both the maritime provinces desired the introduction of a uniform regulation, for so long as the existing decrees were not mutually accepted, it was inevitable that the interpretation by the judges of the Admiralty Colleges of Holland should be different from that by those of Zeeland. There was even less agreement between the merchants on the one hand and the captains and privateers on the other. The privateers of Zeeland especially applied the strictest decrees existing, and mercantile complaints about their activities were many. The States of Zeeland, who were inopportuned by irritated merchants and "perplexed" Admiralty judges pressed Leicester on February 21st, and again on April 11th (by which time they seem to have been unaware of his edict) to settle the issue once and for all.¹ They did not ask for a new decree against trade with the occupied provinces because this, they explained, had by the States General's edict of June 1584 been forbidden

¹Brugmans, I, 80, 108-110.

to merchants of all nations. No such general regulation existed however with respect to the Spanish trade, for the prohibition of November 1585 had not been published in North Holland and at Middelburg, and it did not apply to foreigners. It was on this point that the difficulties arose and it was here that they desired a definite regulation, both for natives and neutrals. The latter point was stressed. If Dutch trade only were forbidden it would result in a diversion of their commerce to other countries and cause "the ruin and total downfall of these united provinces".¹

Zeeland probably continued to hope that Elizabeth would cooperate in the enforcement of a fairly comprehensive interdiction applying to all nations. For the time being it was particularly anxious, and so was Holland, that there should be uniformity in the regulations applying to Dutch and English shipping. In December or January the States had ordered Joachim Ortell, their agent in London, to discuss the matter of trade with the obedient provinces, France and Spain, with the English government.² It appeared that England was still in favour of an inclusive prohibition. Elizabeth believed that the southern Netherlands might soon be forced to demand a "reasonable peace" if the

¹Brugmans, I, p. 110. The editor's note on p. 108 is incorrect. He seems to confuse the edict of 1584, which was in force during Antwerp's siege, with the prohibition of August 28th 1585. See for this latter decree p. 77f above.

²Cal. For., XX, 236f.

blockade were tightened,¹ and she also desired a continuation of the restraints on the Spanish trade. In December 1585 there were rumours that Philip was preparing an Armada against England, and the English government was consequently more anxious than ever to prevent Philip from acquiring the necessary naval supplies.² The Privy Council then suggested a comprehensive prohibition. It informed Ortell that no trade whatsoever should be allowed with the southern Netherlands and with the French ports north of the Seine, that direct trade with Spain and Portugal was to cease, and that the indirect export of contraband -- that is ships' materials and victuals -- to those countries was also to be forbidden.³ On January 27th Burghley asked Leicester to inform the States of this decision and to assure them that, if they introduced these measures, English commerce would be regulated accordingly.⁴

In the course of March Leicester and the Council of State took the matter of a new trade regulation in hand. The discussion appears to have been started by a request for a moderation of the existing decrees which Amsterdam and the Northern Quarter of Holland submitted to the provincial States on March 3rd. The remonstrance, which was concerned with the harmful consequences of the export prohibition of dairy products and of the restraints on the Spanish trade, was sent on to Leicester, who

¹ Cal. For., XX, p. 227.

² Bruce, pp. 41f.

³ Cal. For., XX, 294.

⁴ Bruce, pp. 66f.

around the middle of March resubmitted it to the States of Holland for advice.¹ Rather than prescribe a definite course the States decided to present the arguments for and against an inclusive prohibition of trade with Spain and the southern provinces, and to leave the ultimate decision to Leicester. The task of drafting the advice was entrusted to Oldenbarnevelt, who had recently been installed as Advocate of Holland. He had completed the work by April 11th, on which date the States appointed delegates to submit the document to Leicester.²

The latter had not considered it necessary to wait for Holland's advice, however, but had proceeded on his own authority. The new edict had been drafted and issued on April 4th, and it was to be published on the 14th of that month.³ Already before the day of publication a "certified copy" had been sent to the Privy Council with the request that it be introduced in England.⁴ Its provisions were in conformity with the ideas of the prohibitionists. All trade whatsoever with the southern provinces, Spain and Portugal was forbidden to native and foreign merchants, and so was the export of victuals, munitions of war and ships' materials from the United Provinces, or the transportation of these wares via the Dutch coasts, except by Leicester's consent.

¹ Kernkamp, I, 184f; Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 81, 121.

² Res. Ho. 1586, p. 121; Van Deventer, I, 117. Oldenbarnevelt's advice is printed by Van Deventer, pp. 118-127.

³ ARA, Res. Raad van State 5, fos. 18, 32.

⁴ Cal. For., XX, 470.

Merchants who wished to export non-contraband from the Dutch provinces or to ship these wares past the Dutch coasts were obliged, for the prevention of fraud, to declare their merchandize in one of the Dutch ports and to pay convoy duties. Sentence against trespassers of the decree was to be passed by the judges of the Admiralty Colleges of Holland and Zeeland. For foreigners the penalty would consist, in most cases, of confiscation of ships and goods, for natives of confiscation and death. Intention to transgress the decree would be considered in the same light as the transgression itself.¹

Although there was an understandable tendency to overstress prohibitions and penalties in any decree against trade with the enemy, Leicester's was undoubtedly too inclusive to be practicable. If he had limited himself to a general interdiction of trade with the Spanish Netherlands and neighbouring neutral places, and to a prohibition of direct Dutch navigation on Spain, the decree might have been acceptable as a compromise measure to both the maritime provinces and to England. More cooperation would have been given in the attempt to enforce it and its effectiveness as a military measure would have increased. The present decree became an almost unqualified failure. Its political consequences at home were disastrous, its military benefits negligible, and its financial effects entirely negative. The prohibition had been issued in the hope that the loss in normal customs revenue would be balanced by the

¹ See for the edict Bor, II, 703f.

income derived from the additional convoys to be paid by foreigners, from the licences Leicester might grant, and from fines, confiscations and prizes. Only in case of a strict enforcement could these hopes have been realized. As it was, the prohibition merely aggravated the financial problem.

It is true, however, that Leicester was not alone in disregarding or minimizing the political obstacles to an enforcement of the decree. At first the measure aroused few or no objections outside Holland and, apparently, Friesland.¹ Leicester himself declared later that the Council of State had favoured it,² and there is indeed no evidence of any strenuous opposition by the Councillors.³ The English government approved of it and promised to introduce it at home;⁴ it was not until Elizabeth had been informed of the fact that France and other foreign countries objected to the measure that she required Leicester to moderate it.⁵ Although Zeeland's practice was once more at variance with its theory -- as late as June 5th Leicester had to warn that province to proceed with the publication⁶ -- the provisions of the decree were in

¹Van Reyd, p. 122.

²Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 196.

³Bardesius, who as burgomaster of Amsterdam would probably have opposed it, was absent on April 4th. Den Tex, I. 276.

⁴Cal. For., XX, 585.

⁵Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 40. For Henry III's objections see ibid., pp. 69-71.

⁶ARA, Res. R. v. St., 5, fo. 124.

close conformity with the suggestions Zeeland had been making since the fall of Antwerp.¹

Holland did not immediately attack. An attempt was made via the States General to move Leicester to postpone publication of the decree,² and the provincial States decided to submit Oldenbarnevelt's advice. But they also issued the warning that all endeavours "to prevent the expedition or maintenance of the edict, or to diminish his Excellency's legal authority in any other way" were strictly forbidden.³ Although they were undoubtedly pressed to renew the attempts for a moderation of the decree they resolved to wait,⁴ in the hope that Leicester might be forced to introduce the necessary changes as a result not of political but of financial pressure, which could be applied by Holland's withholding its consent for the extraordinary contribution. Holland employed this device, but it had to exercise its patience for four months. It was not until the end of July that Leicester, faced with the danger of an overall military disaster, agreed to a substantial moderation of the prohibition.

The military situation had begun to deteriorate long before this time. The first setback had been suffered early in June, when Parma

¹ See Chapter II, pp. 78f.

² Res. St. Gen., V, 462f.

³ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 174.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 188f.

succeeded in taking the Maas town of Grave which had been under siege since the previous January. He had encountered no allied resistance. The news that Parma himself was taking the field had induced Leicester to collect such forces as were available for a campaign and to move into Gelderland, but the intention was probably not so much to divert Parma from Grave as to put heart into the garrison of that town. Preparations for the recruitment of English, Irish and German soldiers had begun, and Leicester hoped that until these arrived Grave would hold out under the siege. He had been too optimistic. On June 7th the governor of Grave, moved by the entreaties of some civilians rather than by military necessity, yielded the town. Immediately afterwards neighbouring Megen and the House of Batenburgh fell. The way into Gelderland lay open to Parma and an attack on Bommelerwaard, a region enclosed by Maas and Waal and one from which an invasion into Holland could be launched, was expected. Leicester removed part of his army to that area and employed the rest to strengthen the garrisons of Arnhem and other neighbouring towns. When it appeared that the enemy was moving against Venlo, Martin Schenk and Sir Roger Williams tried to enter it with additional forces. They failed, and on June 28th Venlo also surrendered.¹

In a campaign that had lasted little more than a month Parma had succeeded in wresting control of the Maasriver from the Dutch. Without

¹ Bor, II, 707f, 713; BM, Briefe Report of the Militarie Services done by the Erie of Leicester (London, 1587), pp. 7-11.

loss of time he prepared to challenge their hold on the middle Rhine; early in July his army settled down before Neuss. Rheinberg was to be the next goal. Both towns were strong and well provided, but they were situated in the heart of enemy country and it was to be expected that eventually they would be forced to follow the example of the two Maas towns if no relief was sent. Leicester made a number of attempts to come to the support of Neuss. Twice he assembled an army, but both times he was forced by lack of money to disband it.¹ Part of it was sent back into garrison, another part put under Norris' command for the defence of Gelderland and Utrecht, while a number of companies were employed in minor attempts to divert the enemy. Hohenlohe and others were sent into Brabant, Count Maurice and Sir Philip Sidney went into Flanders. The forces in Brabant confined themselves to isolated raiding parties, but Maurice and Sidney were able to surprise the Flemish town of Axel.² The reduction of Axel, which remained the only notable achievement of the summer, did not cause Parma to interrupt the siege of Neuss. An attempt against one of the more important of the enemy's holdings might have done so, but no such attempt could be made. The Dutch garrisons had been without pay for three months,³ and it did not appear that the States would give any extraordinary aid unless the governor accepted their

¹ Cal. For., XXI, 11, p. 106.

² Briefe Report, pp. 11f.

³ ARA, SG 3781, st. 142.

conditions. The English army was no better provided. The soldiers starved or deserted in great numbers and Leicester wondered, as he confessed to Walsingham on July 17th, why they did not mutiny "and rather kill...all then runn away".¹

By the end of that month Leicester found the situation serious enough to reconsider his policies and attend to the States' grievances in return for their monetary grant. The decision was taken upon the failure of his most recent and most drastic attempt to solve the financial problem without recourse to the States, namely through his newly organized Chamber of Finances. The Chamber had been established in the last week of June, according to the advice and under the direction of Jacques Reingout, whom Leicester subsequently appointed treasurer general. Reingout's appointment alone would have sufficed to explain the States' objections to this innovation. He was a native of Brabant and a man of questionable political antecedents,² who was strongly distrusted by the States. He was at the same time, however, an experienced administrator, who had served three successive Spanish governors, as well as the Prince of Orange and the Duke of Anjou, in important financial functions.³ He knew the financial setup and its shortcomings, and many of his counsels

¹ Bruce, pp. 338f.

² See on this point the list of accusations which the States of Holland sent to Leicester in the autumn of 1586. Kluit, II, 525-535.

³ Fruin, Verspr. Geschr., III, 167; P. L. Muller, p. 374; Cal. For., XIX, 701.

to Leicester were financially sound, even if politically they were utterly impracticable. The Dutch themselves acknowledged his ability, as is evident by the fact that a member of the legation in London, probably Valcke, had suggested him to the Privy Council as a possible financial adviser for Leicester.¹

Reingout then was the presiding genius over the discussions leading to the organization of the Chamber of Finances. The idea itself was not an original or a highly revolutionary one. The need for a central auditing office had often been recognized. Financial matters, insofar as they were under the central government's control, were now in the hands of the Council of State. The Councillors were anxious to be relieved of their responsibilities in this respect and not opposed to a further centralization of the financial administration.² The English government also desired this and had ordered Leicester to provide for the establishment of a Chamber of Finances.³ The matter had first been broached on Leicester's behalf during the discussions on the Act of Authority. At that time the States had not applauded the idea, but neither had they completely rejected it.⁴ If Leicester had insisted they would probably have given their consent. He preferred however to

¹Cal. For., XIX, 701.

²See the Council's requests and suggestions in ARA, Loketkas Loopende 68.

³BM, Add. Mss. 48, 129, no fo. number.

⁴Brugmans, I, 40.

proceed without their advice. A Chamber of Finances established by the States would have implied States' control, States' nominations and a States' instruction. This meant that Leicester would have been prevented from implementing most of Reingout's suggestions about the Chamber's functions, for these tended to a drastic increase in the central government's financial independence and to a proportionate decrease in the provinces' control over their means.

It was not only Holland that could be expected to object to such a reorganization. The strongest opposition would come from that province, but its allies were likely to back its protests. Proposals to replace the system of farming the imposts by one of direct levies, or to bring the administration of domains and church goods under the central government's control,¹ were quite as objectionable to the States of the inland provinces as to those of Holland. It is doubtful even whether the former group applauded what in the opinion of the maritime provinces were the most objectionable of Reingout's ideas, those that were concerned with the Chamber's enforcement of the trade prohibition. It is to be noted that not only Buys criticized this scheme of Reingout's -- Buys' attitude must perhaps be explained by personal reasons -- but that Leoninus also expressed his doubts about the practicability of the experiment.²

¹p. L. Muller, pp. 388f.

²Van Deventer, I, 139.

The chief controversy raged around the proposals regarding the execution of Leicester's trade decree. It had long been evident that neither the States of Holland nor those of Zeeland were cooperating in the enforcement of the prohibition. The manner in which they protected their merchants appears from a remonstrance submitted to Leicester by sea-captains and privateers. These complained that whenever they had seized a ship and transported it to one of the ports of Holland or Zeeland they faced a virtually hopeless battle with the judges of the Admiralty Colleges and members of the provincial States. Almost without exception these officials, so the captains asserted, rendered their efforts fruitless by declaring ships and goods free on the pretext that the States had not yet published Leicester's decree, or that the merchant in question had received a special passport. When the captains tried to appeal to the central government the judges either refused to send the relevant documents or, if they did forward them and the merchant was convicted, they refused to execute the sentence. Those who tried to obey the central government's decision were threatened with imprisonment. Privateers and captains had been threatened in the same way; some had actually been thrown into prison.¹

If under these circumstances Leicester intended to maintain his edict and enjoy its financial fruits it should be executed, Reingout

¹ BM, Add. Mss. 29, 302, fos. 33f.

suggested, by the central government and by means of officials who were independent of the provincial States. To make their work more worthwhile from a financial point of view these officials would have to inquire also into transgressions of earlier prohibitions, that is those passed since the summer of 1584. The procedure he had in mind was that the commissioners would travel around the country and examine the accounts of the receivers and controllers of convoys and licents over the past two years, as well as the books of those merchants who were suspected of having transgressed the decrees.¹ By means of the fines imposed upon the guilty, and by the recovery of cautionary sums that should appear to have been unjustly reimbursed to merchants, the central government might be able to realize, according to Reingout's calculations, some millions of florins.²

Apparently Leicester expected opposition not only from the States, but also from his Councillors, for not even their advice was asked. On June 26th the Council was surprised with the information that the Chamber had been established. Its personnel had already been chosen. Leicester had appointed as heads the Count of Meurs, Sir Henry Killigrew, English member of the Council of State, and the Seigneur van Brakel, an Utrecht nobleman of strong Leicesterian sympathies; as treasurer general Reingout, and as auditor Daniel de Burchgrave, formerly attorney general

¹Kernkamp, I, 195.

²Bor, II, 722.

of Flanders, who was now employed by Leicester as secretary. It would have been difficult to select a group that was more "independent" of the States, although the balance was to some extent restored by the inclusion of three Councillors who were to serve as clerks: the Hollander Van Loozen, the Zeelander Teelinck, and Paul Buys, the Councillor for Utrecht.¹

The Council, or at least some of its members with Paul Buys and Willem Bardsius in the forefront, indeed attacked the measure as both unconstitutional and impracticable, and the three men chosen as clerks refused to accept the function. They were unable to dissuade Leicester, however. The only satisfaction which Bardsius received was that the intended measures against smugglers would apply only to actual lorrendraaiers, that is to people who had directly supplied the enemy, not to those who had otherwise transgressed the various prohibitions.² More effective than the Council's opposition was that by the States of Holland. On July 17th these had resolved that for the time being they would ignore the innovation.³ A few weeks later, in cooperation with the States of Zeeland, they forced Leicester to agree that the administration of Holland's and Zeeland's contributions would remain with the Council of State.⁴ By that time the matter was still to be discussed by the States

¹ Bor, II, 721.

² Ibid., pp. 721f.

³ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 265.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 292f.

General,¹ but whatever verdict the other provinces would give, the refusal of Holland and Zeeland to cooperate had as early as August made it clear that the Chamber's effectiveness would be limited.

Reingout's attempts against the lorrendraaiers were also ending in failure. The sixteen travelling commissaries who had been appointed received no more cooperation than the privateers, and they found their occupation among the Hollanders and Zeelanders just as hazardous. One of them, who tried to execute his commission in Gouda against the magistrate's orders, was banished by the States of Holland.² Others who escaped a similar fate nevertheless found it necessary to request the governor general's special protection.³ In September Holland was able to strike its final blow at Reingout. Somewhat earlier his partner Steven Peret had been arrested on the charge that he had publicly denounced the States. An examination of his papers produced incriminating material not only against himself but also against Reingout. Provided with these documents delegates of the States of Holland travelled to Leicester, who was in the camp before Zutphen. They requested him to arrest Reingout on the double charge that he had tried to enrich himself at the country's expense and that he had attempted to promote disagreement

¹ On August 10th the question was referred to the States General, which resolved in November, after Reingout's fall, against the re-establishment of an "independent" Chamber of Finances. Res. St. Gen., V, 231, 434, 437.

² Bor, II, 759.

³ ARA, SG 11,072, fos. 285-287.

between governor and States. Leicester, who had just received the first instalment of his extraordinary grant and considered it inopportune to cross the States of Holland at this particular time, complied. Reingout was arrested and lost his function.¹

The Chamber of Finances did not long survive his fall. With respect to its other major grievance, the trade prohibition, Holland had earlier scored a victory, again in cooperation with Zeeland. Although the States of the latter province maintained a more cautious attitude towards the question than those of Holland, they had by this time come close enough to Holland's point of view to back its protests. This change of attitude was no doubt partly a result of their distrust of Leicester's political and financial measures, partly also of the fact that he had been unable to procure England's cooperation in the enforcement of the trade prohibition against neutrals. The fact that Parma was concentrating upon an offensive in the South-East rather than in Flanders or north-western Brabant may have been an additional reason.

In July the two provinces prepared a remonstrance and drew up a number of suggestions for a new decree. They did not ask that trade with the Spanish Netherlands be permitted to either natives or foreigners, and they were further willing to retain the prohibition of trade with Spain and Portugal, but on condition that it applied also to English

¹ Bor, II, 755, 758f.

merchants. Foreigners however were to be excluded. The Queen had not enforced it against these; neutrals had proceeded with the trade and the only effect of the prohibition had been that the Dutch provinces, which had always formed an important link in this commerce, were bypassed. Neutrals engaged in the Spanish trade should therefore again be allowed to buy and sell their wares in Dutch ports, although Dutch exports of grain and munitions to Spain could remain forbidden. The States further requested that the restrictions on the export to neutral countries, again with the possible exception of grain and munitions, should be removed.¹

The remonstrance was submitted on July 23rd.² On that day Leicester had invited the States of Holland and the deputies of Zeeland for a discussion of the financial situation, in the hope that he could persuade them to grant the extraordinary contribution. He was willing to pay the price and accepted most of the States' suggestions, including their compromise proposal regarding the indirect trade with Spain. The only point on which he insisted was that the general interdiction was to apply not only to the Spanish Netherlands but also to the ports of north-western Germany and north-western France. Holland and Zeeland agreed. Hereupon Bardesius, Valcke, Teelinck and Oldenbarnevelt were commissioned to draft the new decree. It was published on August 4th.³

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 277-280.

² Ibid., p. 272. For the discussions between States and governor on this issue see pp. 280f in this same volume.

³ The edict is printed in Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 282-286.

The financial discussions of July 23rd did not lead to an immediate payment of the grant. There were other grievances to be settled, which had been mentioned in a second remonstrance by Holland and Zeeland.¹ They included complaints about the administration of the English and Dutch armies, about the fact that Leicester had raised the convoy duties on his own authority, and about the Chamber of Finances. Apparently Leicester's replies to these complaints were considered satisfactory. They were dated August 6th.² On August 9th the States General renewed its Act of Consent for the extraordinary grant of fl. 400,000, promising to make the larger part of it, an amount of fl. 250,000, available before the end of the month.³

The first instalment was indeed paid in August. Leicester, who in the course of that month received a substantial sum also from England, was in a position to organize the army. It was too late to save Neuss, which had fallen on August 4th. By means of a campaign in Gelderland he was able however to divert Parma from his siege of Rheinberg and at the same time to make some conquests on the Veluwe. The first fruit of his campaign was the town of Doesburg, situated on the Old IJssel. A number of smaller strongholds were subsequently taken, including the two IJssel forts which defended Zutphen. Attempts against Zutphen itself, the

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 288-295.

² Ibid., pp. 294f.

³ The States General's Act of Consent occurs in Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 307-309.

headquarters of Spanish power in Gelderland and Overijssel, failed, but by the end of the campaign it was completely surrounded by allied strongholds and it was expected that in time it could be starved into surrender.¹

In order to make the blockade foolproof, steps were taken to ensure the IJssel town of Deventer, Zutphen's northern neighbour. This town, as has been seen,² had refused a States' garrison and had kept itself politically aloof from the other provinces by opposing, among other things, Overijssel's adherence to the treaty with England. On the last point stadholder Meurs had been able to bring it to terms in February, when rumours that the town was in correspondence with the enemy gave him an excuse to step in and change the magistrate.³ Deventer thereupon ended its obstruction to the treaty and in May Overijssel put itself under the Queen's protection and under Leicester's governorship.⁴ The town continued to refuse a garrison however, and in October, when the army was conveniently near, it was decided to end its opposition by force. Truchsess, Pelham, Norris and some members of the Council of State went to Deventer, accompanied by Sir William Stanley and his regiment. The magistrate was again changed and a garrison, which

¹Bor, II, 750-752.

²Above, p. 71.

³BMHG, XXXIV, 36; Bruce, p. 140.

⁴De Pater, TvG, LXIV, 272f.

consisted of 1,400 English and Irish soldiers and which was commanded by Stanley, introduced.¹

With the reduction of Deventer the autumn campaign ended. It had not been an unsuccessful one. The earlier losses had not been wiped out, but Parma had for once been forced into the defensive, Rheinberg had been relieved, the IJssel almost freed, and enemy pressure on Utrecht, Overijssel and northern Gelderland greatly weakened. If Leicester had heeded the States' advice regarding the choice of governors for Deventer and the Zutphen forts the gains might have been permanent. He did not heed it, and the treason of his commanders before long restored and extended Spanish power in the eastern provinces. The following year also failed to bring relief to these areas. By that time the relations between the allies in general, and between Leicester and the States of the maritime provinces in particular, had deteriorated to such an extent that cooperation even for purposes of defence had become impossible. The manner in which Leicester's political measures affected this development must now be considered.

¹ Bruce, pp. 478-480; Briefe Report, pp. 26f.

CHAPTER V
LEICESTER AND UTRECHT

I

Most of the political disagreements of 1586 were a result of Leicester's alliance with the opposition groups of Utrecht, the town which, probably for no other reason than its central location and its proximity to the front, he had early in April chosen as the federal government's residence. As in Holland the opposition included the Calvinists, whose attitude was influenced by religious objections to a strongly Erastian and still partly Roman Catholic government, and the southern exiles, many of whom had settled here. The core of the movement however was formed by the heads of the eight militia companies in the city of Utrecht, the so-called burgerhoplieden or burgher captains, who had since their province's entry into the war formed the vanguard of whatever opposition there was against the government at both the municipal and the provincial levels.

In spite of differences in emphasis the alliance between the three groups was a solid one. They had a common foe and cooperated in the execution of each other's programmes. The captains advanced the Calvinists' religious proposals, while Calvinists and exiles subscribed to the political reforms advocated by the militia leaders. The captains' reform programme was the major link uniting the various groups, at least

during the pre-Leicesterian years. Under Leicester almost as much stress was placed on the promotion of his claims against those of the States, and thus on a policy of centralization.

The Utrecht episode occupies a central place in the story of Leicester's rule. The city, and eventually the entire province of Utrecht, became his major bulwark and the chief stronghold of English influence. His partisans in Utrecht did not even limit their activities to their own province. They supported and inspired centralist groups elsewhere. Those in Friesland, Holland and Zeeland were in contact with the Leicesterians of Utrecht. On a number of occasions these succeeded, moreover, in gaining the cooperation of the States of the other inland provinces against those of the maritime regions.

Although natives of Utrecht supported these activities, a number of southern exiles had become the most prominent leaders of the movement during the Leicester period. These exiles owed their influential position in part to Leicester's policy of advancing his southern protégés to political functions, a policy that appears to have had the blessing of the native opposition leaders. Without their approval Leicester would probably not even have succeeded, for the natives continued to form the basis of the movement and to provide it with its main strength. After 1585 there was, moreover, no drastic change in the opposition's policy. While it is true that the emphasis of the new leaders was increasingly placed upon a programme in favour of centralization, they never allowed themselves to lose sight of the

original goals of the domestic opposition; goals which would have to be reached if Utrecht was to become a centralist and Leicesterian stronghold. The endeavour to execute that domestic programme forms therefore one of the threads connecting the events taking place under Leicester's government. In order to disentangle that thread it will be helpful to make some remarks about the captains' aims and previous policies; the manner in which other factors came to affect the situation will become apparent in the account of the Leicester period itself.

Before the captains' programme is discussed attention must be given, however, to the historiographical aspect of the Utrecht episode. Because of the importance of the town's history, not only for the early revolutionary and Leicesterian period but for the Republican era as a whole, the situation in Utrecht during the decades immediately following its entry into the Revolt has been described by various historians. The first systematic analysis was given in Professor Fruin's essay on the Leicester era. Fruin explained the events of these years especially in terms of the democratic tradition of Utrecht's burghers, a tradition which he felt had its origin in pre-Burgundian times.¹ To clarify his thesis a brief outline of the political situation in the Middle Ages and the Burgundian era is necessary at this point.

¹Verspr. Geschr., III, 142f.

One of the distinguishing characteristics of Utrecht's medieval history was the almost continuous political strife within the city. Initially the strife was caused by attacks upon the power of the Bishop, Utrecht's temporal ruler. These attacks were organized by the urban upper classes in cooperation with the members of the chapter clergy, a group that tried to limit the Bishop's powers in order to safeguard the autonomy of their colleges. During this earlier period the middle and lower classes had participated in the contest, but without concluding any permanent alliances. At times they supported the Bishop, but on other occasions they took the side of the opposition. This situation changed during the second half of the 13th century, when the Bishop's political power was declining and the upper classes had gained control of the government. From then on the main struggle was between the burghers, as organized in their guilds, and the patrician families. In this struggle also the opposition was victorious. In 1304 the guilds gained the power to choose the town magistrate from among their own members, a right that was confirmed in 1341. In course of time changes were made in the "constitutions" of 1304 and 1341 but, barring temporary interruptions, the guilds retained their power for over two centuries.¹

¹See I. Vijlbrief, Van Anti-Aristocratie tot Democratie (Amsterdam, 1950), Chapters I and II.

Their regime was discontinued in 1528 when the Bishop resigned his temporal powers over Utrecht to Charles V. The Emperor reduced the guilds to their former function, that is to trade organizations, and deprived them of all political influence. Henceforth the city government was recruited from the urban upper classes and the landed aristocracy. These groups did not receive the right, however, to influence the choice of the government members. The magistrate, which consisted of forty persons (twenty-six Councillors, twelve sheriffs and two burgomasters) was annually chosen and appointed by the royal stadholder or his deputy. The ruling group nevertheless remained a restricted one. During the fifty years of Habsburg rule there were little more than one hundred families whose members served with any regularity on the city Council,¹ and it is probable that several of these were interrelated.

Habsburg dominion over Utrecht ended in 1577. The removal of royal control resulted, here as elsewhere, in a highly unstable political situation. Deprived of the support of a Spanish governor and of the protection of a Spanish garrison, the governing groups once more met with opposition to their rule. This time it did not come from the guilds; these never recovered their former influence. The burgher militia, whose captains now organized the opposition, was a comparatively recent institution. In the Middle Ages the guilds had possessed military

¹ The lists of Utrecht's magistrates from 1528 onward are printed in Johan van de Water, ed., Groot Placaatboek, III, 163ff.

functions, but they had lost these together with their political powers. Under Spanish rule the existence of an armed burgher corps was both unnecessary and undesirable. But when in 1572 the revolt broke out in Holland and Zeeland, the royal stadholder De Bossu found it necessary to strengthen Utrecht's defences and in 1573 he established eight burgher militia companies, each consisting of two hundred men. A few years after Utrecht joined the war it was decided that all able-bodied male citizens between the ages of eighteen and sixty could be called upon to serve.¹ Although by no means every potential militia member favoured the programme advocated by the captains, these clearly were able to enlist a large amount of support from the city population. This fact, combined with their military power, made them a force which both city magistrate and provincial States had to take seriously.

Before the Habsburg monarchs took control no province or town in the northern Netherlands had had a more turbulent history than Utrecht, and at least during the latter part of the medieval period many of the disturbances were a result of the power contest between the burghers of the town and the urban upper classes. These factors account for Professor Fruin's attempts to explain the conflicts in Utrecht during the closing decades of the 16th century with reference to the town's previous history, and for his suggestion that the opposition movement led by the burgher captains must be seen as essentially a popular and democratic revolt. He further pointed out that this democratic tradition continued to influence

¹ Vijlbrief, pp. 48f.

the history of Utrecht, which until the end of the Republican period remained the centre of political agitation; the anti-Orangistic, anti-oligarchic and burgher-democratic movements of the 18th century also had their main basis in this city.¹

It will presently be seen that Fruin's explanation of the late 16th century partisan situation can not be accepted without qualifications. Nevertheless, by drawing attention to the town's late medieval history, he did point to a factor that is of unquestionable importance in explaining the developments in subsequent centuries. Fruin's interpretation has remained the authoritative one. His thesis was worked out in more detail by Dr. I. Vijlbrief, who in a doctoral dissertation traced Utrecht's political history from the early Middle Ages until the end of the Republic.² Dr. Vijlbrief did object to Fruin's use of the indeed anachronistic term "democratic" in describing the political movements led by the aldermen of the medieval guilds and by the burgher captains in the late 16th century. In his opinion the term "anti-aristocratic" would be a more appropriate one to define their attitudes and goals.³ He followed Fruin, however, in

1 "...De geschiedenis van het Sticht, van de oudste tijden tot op den ondergang onzer Republiek, is een gedurige worsteling van de volkspartij tegen de geestelijkheid en den adel. Onder allerlei leuzen wordt die strijd gevoerd, nu eens in vereeniging met de graven van Holland, dan weer in verbond met de hertogen van Gelderland, nu eens onder de vlag der monarchie, voor Leicester tegen de veelhoofdige regeering der Staten, dan weer, in naam der volksvrijheid, voor de patriotsche regenten tegen den tyran Willem V: alles verandert met de omstandigheden der wisselende tijden, alleen de democratische geest blijft door alle tijden onveranderd dezelfde..." Fruin, op. cit., p. 142.

²Vijlbrief, op. cit.

³Ibid., pp. 85f.

stressing the continuity and similarities between the pre-Burgundian and the revolutionary periods, and it is clear from his account that he also considered the 16th century movement primarily in terms of a popular or middle class attempt to gain control of the government.

Other historians have given attention to Utrecht's history before and during Leicester's government. Dr. S. Muller, archivist of Utrecht, wrote a number of monographs on the town's medieval history and on some of the conflicts between magistrate and burgher captains in the late 1570's and the early years of the following decade.¹ Of interest is also Le Cosquino de Bussy's work on the negotiations leading up to Utrecht's union with Holland and Zeeland under the stadholdership of William of Orange.² For the Leicester era proper there are Professor Rogier's inaugural oration on the relations between Leicester and his Councillor of State Paul Buys,³ and the account given by Dr. Broersma of the developments in Utrecht during the period of Leicester's temporary absence in the winter and spring of 1587.⁴ The political history of Utrecht during these years was influenced by the religious changes. Chief among the authors who analyzed the religious scene are

¹S. Muller Fzn., Schetsen uit de Middeleeuwen (Amsterdam, 1900); Schetsen uit de Middeleeuwen, Nieuwe Bundel (Amsterdam, 1914); "Het oprichten eener Vroedschap te Utrecht", BMHG, II (1879), 73-94.

²Arthur le Cosquino de Bussy, Het ontstaan der Satisfactie van Utrecht (Amsterdam, 1910).

³L. J. Rogier, Paulus Buys en Leicester (Nijmegen-Utrecht, 1948).

⁴R. Broersema, Het Tusschenbestuur in het Leycestersche Tijdvak (Goes, 1899), Chapter II.

Professor Royaards and Professor Rogier.¹ The former traced the development of the early Calvinist church, the latter described the process of protestantization in the city and province. Another study containing a description of the religious situation in Utrecht is Dr. van Gelder's book on the first decades of the Reformation in the Netherlands.² A detailed account of the conflicts between church and state, particularly in connection with the disposal of the church and ecclesiastical goods after the prohibition of the Roman Catholic religion, has been given by Professor Rengers Hora Siccama.³

There is little factual information to be added to the accounts given by these and other authors. This is unfortunate, because more than one problem remains unsolved. While a great deal is known about the activities of the pressure group led by the militia leaders -- largely because of the minute descriptions given in Bor's chronicles -- there are few indications regarding the captains' social and economic background. The archives of the city of Utrecht are disappointingly meagre in this respect, and the records of the militia corps itself do

¹H. J. Royaards, "Proeve eener geschiedenis der Hervorming in de Stad en Provincie Utrecht", Archief voor Kerkelijke Geschiedenis, XVI (1845), 349-357; XVII (1846), 145-288; XVIII (1847), 209-292. L. J. Rogier, Geschiedenis van het Katholicisme in Noord-Nederland in de 16e en 17e eeuw (Amsterdam, 1947), I, passim.

²H. A. Enno van Gelder, Revolutionnaire Reformatie (Amsterdam, 1943), passim.

³D. G. Rengers Hora Siccama, Geestelijke en Kerkelijke Goederen onder het Canonieke, het Gereformeerde en het Neutrale Recht (Utrecht, 1905), passim.

not appear to have survived. It has not been possible, for example, to find lists containing the names of all the captains serving after 1576. As a result it remains uncertain what proportion of them was recruited from the old patriciate, that is from the ruling families of Burgundian times. The impression is that at least some were related to these families, but that the majority was of a non-patrician background. It is probable that this majority belonged to those groups which immediately followed the old patriciate in the social scale, but there is no certainty on this point.

Another factor that remains obscure is to what extent the magistrate was able to control the choice of the burgher captains. In the late-Burgundian period it presumably was the royal stadholder who made the appointments, and according to a statement made by the town Council in 1580 the right belonged at that time to the Prince of Orange.¹ The following year it seems to have passed to the magistrate,² but in 1585 it was again the stadholder who appointed the captains, although from a nomination submitted by the town Council.³ It is possible that this nomination was drawn up in consultation with the captains themselves or with their inferior officers. There is evidence that on some occasions these officers did nominate their captains,⁴ but again it is not certain

¹Bor, II, 172.

²GAU, Copieboek K, no. 36.

³GAU, Raadsnotulen Utrecht, October 9, 29, 1585.

⁴Ibid., October 17, 1586; May 1, 1588.

whether this was common procedure. It is clear however that the power of choosing the captains was not, or at least not always, the magistrate's, a factor which no doubt helps to explain its inability to control the movement.

If the conjecture about the captains' social background is correct, this might be considered to constitute a factor in support of a "burgher-democratic" interpretation of their movement. Assuming that in majority they belonged to the politically self-conscious middle classes, which for half a century had been excluded from active participation in political affairs, it would appear logical that they should have tried to procure the burgher element with access to and control over the government, and one of the means to achieve this was the introduction of an elective system. Nevertheless, the available evidence gives no strong support to such an interpretation. Although on one occasion during the pre-Leicesterian decade they appear to have suggested that provision be made for burgher influence upon the magistrate's choice,¹ this device seems to have been considered only as a last resort; there are no indications that the demand was an integral part of their programme in these years. On the whole the captains, whose concern was less with constitutional than with practical political matters, tried to achieve their goals by what might be called centralist means, that is by reliance on the stadholder. When the stadholder (or

¹Vijlbrief, p. 50.

the central government) gave them the desired support they were, as the first year of Meurs' government and the Leicester period show, well content to abide by the existing semi-oligarchic system.

If the opposition does not seem to have displayed any great anxiety to change the system of government, the captains did demand that their opinions in affairs of state be considered by the Regents. They referred to themselves as the tribunes of the people and never ceased their attempts to persuade States and magistrates that these recognize them as such. It will become apparent that in these endeavours they did not refrain from using the forceful approach. In various instances the captains' or their allies' demands for political and religious reforms were preceded and underlined by iconoclastic outbursts or other popular commotions. While it is improbable that all these disturbances were incited by the captains themselves, these often failed to display undue haste in quieting the populace. On many occasions the turmoils did not cease until the government had promised to consider the opposition's requests and proposals.

The militia leaders' political ambitions and evident "popularism" notwithstanding, there are reasons to suggest that at least for the years now under discussion care should be taken not only in qualifying the opposition movement as a democratic revolt, but also as essentially an anti-aristocratic one. Although it derived its main strength from the city population, the movement was supported by native patricians

and noblemen,¹ while most of the southern exiles who under Leicester were among the leaders also belonged to the upper classes. The composition of the magistrates chosen by the Count of Meurs, whose appointment in 1585 inaugurated the three-year period of the opposition's ascendancy, and those established by Leicester, also fails to indicate that there was a drastic levelling process at work; all three Councils contained members of both the nobility and (although to a much smaller degree than previously) the old burgher patrician families.² The chief test then applied in the selection of government members was apparently not whether they belonged to the middle or the upper classes, but whether they were willing to advance the opposition's programme.

Furthermore, while a comparison of the situation existing in the Middle Ages or the late 18th century with that of the early revolutionary years suggests various parallels, the movement as led by the burgher captains must be explained first of all with reference to the special characteristics of their own period. In the years 1586 and 1587 the issue was complicated first of all by the fact that the opposition advanced the governor general's programme. Leicester symbolized English aid and he represented the ideal of an independent

¹ Prominent among this second group were Reynier van Aeswijn, Seigneur van Brakel, Lubbert van Parijs van Suydoort and Johan van Meerle, who were to form the Leicesterian faction within the second estate, which in Utrecht was formed by the rural nobility. ARA, Loketkas Loopende 59; Remonstrance of Utrecht's nobility to the States General, October 17, 1587.

² See for the names of these government members Van de Water, III, 176.

federal government at a time when the inadequacies of the confederate system had become obvious. These two circumstances were of special importance in a frontier province like Utrecht and may well have earned the movement the goodwill and support of people who had maintained a neutral attitude in the domestic conflict. There were other factors, which applied not only to the Leicester period but also to the preceding decade. Among these were the religious changes, and the problems and disagreements resulting from the fact that adherence to the old faith was in the eyes of many non-Catholics synonymous with a pro-Spanish attitude. In addition there were the conflicts between church and state, the differences concerning the liquidation of the political powers and the redistribution of the material possessions of the Roman Catholic clergy, and a variety of other questions. Connected with a number of these was what gave rise to some of the major political conflicts: the strong rivalry between city and rural areas. While it is true that this issue, as well as some of those mentioned before, had earlier affected the political situation and continued to affect it in later years, they were nevertheless of special importance in this transitional period. The accounts of the late 16th century situation in Utrecht leave room for the suggestion that in their attacks upon the municipal and provincial ruling groups the captains were inspired as much by the desire to provide for a government whose members were willing to adopt the opposition's "solution" to these various problems, as by any anti-oligarchic or anti-aristocratic feelings as such.

II

The burgher captains and their associates have not left a systematic programme of their aims, most of which will consequently have to be inferred from their activities. Although the scope of this work makes it impossible to recount these in detail, it is necessary to consider the main trends in Utrecht's history during the first revolutionary decade. This can be done by means of a brief discussion of the religious changes in the city, of the opposition's relations with the magistrate, and of their disagreements with the first two members of the provincial States, the ecclesiastics and the rural nobility. Such a discussion will show, among other things, that one of the opposition's long-term goals was to change the composition of the governments inherited from Burgundian times, to establish a municipal and provincial patriciate in which the urban element was strengthened, the influence of the rural nobility reduced and that of the Roman Catholic clergy ended, and, in the process, to deliver the city from its domination by the rural areas. It might be added that when this goal is kept in mind their revolt invites comparison with that which had taken place in Holland, when in 1572 the latter province had begun to shake off the Spanish yoke. There also it had tended to bring about a change in the personnel of the existing oligarchies to the advantage of the urban (and thus the burgher) and the Reformed element, but it had neither resulted in the complete exclusion of the aristocracy nor had it led to any drastic changes in the system of government.

The first issue to be considered is the religious one. In order to describe the changes in this field it is necessary to go back to the year 1577, when Utrecht joined Holland and Zeeland. The previous year the province had accepted the Pacification of Ghent. One of the provisions of this agreement was that the areas which had formerly belonged to the Prince of Orange's government were to reaccept him as the King's stadholder once they had joined the Pacification. They did not have to surrender unconditionally but were free to state their terms, a safeguard that was necessary especially for religious reasons, because the areas in question were predominantly Roman Catholic. When agreement was reached a contract was to be drawn up and signed by both parties. This document was referred to as a "Satisfaction". The provision appears to have been intended for the towns in Holland and Zeeland which in 1576 were still Spanish, such as Amsterdam, Haarlem and Goes.¹ Some, including the Prince himself, maintained that it applied also to Utrecht, which had been under his government until 1568. This claim aroused a certain amount of opposition in Utrecht and a great deal in Brussels, but eventually the Prince and the Orangists of Utrecht won the day. On October 7th 1577 the province accepted the Satisfaction.²

¹Le Cosquino de Bussy, pp. 45, 87f.

²For the negotiations see ibid., passim.

In 1577 Utrecht was almost solidly Roman Catholic, and its States had no intention to prepare the way, through their union with Calvinist Holland and Zeeland, for the introduction of protestantism. The maintenance of the religious establishment had been one of their conditions for accepting William of Orange as stadholder. The Prince had promised to uphold the rights of the Roman Catholic church, be it in less definite terms than the States required.¹ His promise proved to be no safeguard against the introduction of religious changes, nor did it long prevent the formal victory of the new faith. Three years after the union the public exercise of the Roman Catholic religion had, in spite of the stadholder's endeavours, been forbidden in the city and province of Utrecht.

This development was hastened by organized popular pressure upon the government. The word "popular" must in this connection not be taken in its broadest sense. In Utrecht as in the other provinces the vanguard of the anti-Catholic movement was formed by the Calvinists, who constituted in 1580, and for many years to come, only a very small minority.² But while the Calvinists could not count on the sympathy of the population as a whole, the effectiveness of the popular disturbances in favour of their programme suggests that they must have had the support of numerous non-Calvinists. They also enjoyed the aid of the burgher

¹ Le Cosquino de Bussy, p. 227.

² H. A. Enno van Gelder, pp. 105f.

captains. There is no certainty about the captains' religious affiliation. Their anti-Catholic attitude shows that they must have broken with the old church, but it is not clear whether they had joined the Calvinist one. Their policies would appear to suggest this; yet it does not seem very probable that all or most of the militia leaders should have been recruited from this very restricted religious group. But whether or not the captains subscribed to the Calvinists' religious ideals, they did share their violently anti-Spanish attitude and their distrust of the Roman Catholics' political sympathies, as well as their pronounced anti-clericalism.

This last factor is of importance in explaining the religious changes and many of the political conflicts. Anti-clerical feelings came naturally to a city like Utrecht. It had for centuries been the seat of the Bishop, whose spiritual jurisdiction extended over most of the territory belonging to the northern provinces. Although early in the 16th century the Bishop had lost his temporal powers over Utrecht, the clergy continued to hold a strong position in the province and dominated its political and economic life to a considerable extent. Their influence had increased when in 1577 much of the power formerly exercised by the King passed to the States, for the clergy, represented by the members of the five collegiate or chapter churches in the city, occupied the first place in this assembly. The nobility formed the second estate, and the city with the four smaller towns (Amersfoort, Rhenen, Montfoort and Wijk-bij-Duurstede) the third.

The church's influence in the provincial government formed, for reasons that shall later be discussed, one source of irritation to the city population. The social and economic privileges of the chapter clergy constituted a second. When the Roman Catholic church was still in power the chapters had, for example, their own jurisdiction, their members were free from military duties, and they enjoyed freedom from local taxation. These and similar privileges had already in the Middle Ages begun to arouse opposition.¹ In attacking them the Calvinists and the burgher captains executed a popular programme.

The first effective assault upon the power of the Roman Catholic church took place shortly after the Satisfaction had been accepted. In the course of 1577 Herbert Duifhuis, pastor of the St. Jacob's church, had begun to introduce reformed elements into his services and sermons, without however officially breaking with the Roman Catholic church. He had the approval of the magistrate, but the deans of the five chapters objected to his innovations and asked the government that it order the priest to reconform to the old system. Hereupon Duifhuis left the town. His followers and sympathizers blamed the ecclesiastics' attitude on pressure by the Franciscans or Minorites, an order that was already suspect because of its initial refusal to swear the oath of obedience to stadholder and States General.² Through the burgher captains they

¹S. Muller Fzn., Schetsen uit de Middeleeuwen, pp. 161f.

²Royaards, Archief, XVII, 152-154.

required the magistrate to expel the order. The Council complied and it also decided, shortly later, to recall Duifhuis. In August 1578 the latter returned to his old parish, which henceforth he was to serve as a reformed minister.¹ He did not, however, institute a Calvinist church. For years the Duifhuis group refused the requests of the Calvinists to join them. It was not until 1586 that with Leicester's help the Calvinists finally reached their goal.

In August 1578 the Calvinists had not yet been recognized, nor had they received a church for their meetings. Duifhuis' victory encouraged them to ask the magistrate for the use of a building. When the government delayed its decision they proceeded to seize the now empty church of the Minorites. Their official recognition followed five months later, in January 1579, when the magistrate introduced a Religionsfrieden in Utrecht. It superseded the religious settlement of the Satisfaction and legalized the existing situation; the Reformed were officially allowed the exercise of their religion in the St. Jacob's and Minorite churches. This ordinance, which had not been accepted by the ecclesiastics, failed to bring the desired peace. It took a number of popular demonstrations, the expulsion (at the burgher captains' suggestion) of the Dominican order, and a widespread iconoclastic attack before the five chapters agreed to join discussions about the Religious Peace. These discussions were held in the presence of delegates from

¹Royaards, Archief, XVII, 159-176; Bor, II, 830f.

the burgher militia, a measure that was considered necessary "to prevent all distrust". The new regulation, which was more favourable to the protestants than the previous one had been, was introduced in June 1579.¹

The Catholics' ultimate defeat came less than a year later. One of the immediate causes was the defection of the Roman Catholic Count Rennenberg, stadholder of Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe, an event that caused an anti-Catholic revolt throughout the provinces. In Utrecht the news was greeted with another iconoclastic outburst. Protestants and their sympathizers, organized in militia companies, presented themselves before the magistrate to request, among other things, that the public exercise of the Roman Catholic religion be forbidden. The Council agreed on condition that the stadholder gave his approval. The Prince tried to rescue the Religious Peace, but the Council nevertheless issued the prohibition. Not long thereafter the States of Utrecht made a similar decree with respect to the rest of the province.²

This decision did not end the politico-religious disagreements in Utrecht. Insofar as the attack on the religious establishment had been inspired by the desire to limit the power of the chapter clergy, the results of the revolution of 1580 were disappointing. The reform groups had expected that the Colleges would be dissolved, their members put on a pension, and their goods used for public purposes. This had

¹Rengers Hora Siccama, pp. 217f, 220f, 237-239; Royaards, Archief, XVII, 193f, 210-219.

²Rengers Hora Siccama, pp. 247-252, 262f; Royaards, Archief, XVII, 237-242.

been the ecclesiastics' fate in other provinces. In Utrecht they did lose some of their privileges and they were further forced to contribute an annual sum for the maintenance of the Reformed clergy.¹ They were, however, left in the possession of their estates, continued to exist as a separate group, and retained their political status. As shall later be seen these factors were to give rise to further controversy between government and opposition.

Although there was constant friction between the town Council and the Calvinists, the magistrate does not seem to have been opposed to a gradual process of protestantization; by far the strongest objections to the religious innovations came from the first estate, which was usually supported by the nobility. The more spectacular conflicts between magistrate and opposition took place in the purely political field. Among the causes of disagreement were the captains' requests that they be consulted by the municipal and the provincial governments in matters of state. These demands were made on more than one occasion, but never in more definite terms or with greater persistence than in the summer of 1583. At that time the captains motivated their request by mentioning a number of special grievances. One of these was concerned with the negotiations that were being held with the Prince of Orange regarding his establishment as Count of

¹ Rengers Hora Siccama, pp. 281f.

Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht. According to the captains the provincial States proposed to place severe restrictions upon the Prince's authority, restrictions that were intended to safeguard and extend the privileges of the nobles and ecclesiastics, rather than those of the burghers. The demand that in these and other questions (they also mentioned the States' financial administration and their defence policy) the militia leaders' advice be asked was underlined by what the Council's resolutions referred to as the "Great Commotion",¹ a disturbance that came indeed close to an actual popular revolt. The captains nevertheless failed to achieve their purpose, partly because the magistrate was supported by the first two estates, partly because of the stadholder's and the States General's intervention.²

A second source of conflict between magistrate and captains were the latters' equally persistent attempts to prevent the ruling group from excluding the stadholder's influence upon the establishment of the town Council. To describe these attempts it is again necessary to go back to the year 1577. It has been seen that in Burgundian times the municipal government was recruited from the upper classes, but that these had no direct influence on the choice of the magistrate members. During the negotiations with the Prince of Orange about the Satisfaction the patriciate had not neglected to bargain for an extension of its

¹ GAU, Raadsnotulen, August 20 1583.

² Bor, II, 379-392.

influence. It probably used the situation in the towns of Holland as an example. There the municipal patriciate or vroedschap either chose the magistrate on its own authority, or it had the right to suggest names to the stadholder, who in appointing the government was bound to these nominations. The members of Utrecht's ruling group desired a similar arrangement. They had hoped that the stadholder would allow the introduction of a "Hereditary Council" (that is one whose members sat for life and that kept itself complete by co-optation) or else, if the magistrate was to be renewed each year, that he would at least agree to follow the magistrate's nomination. Neither of these wishes was granted. The Satisfaction provided that the stadholder would annually elect the forty members of the town government from a list of one hundred persons. This list would include the names of the men serving on the existing Council, of forty others nominated by them, and of another twenty whom the stadholder himself would choose. He thus received the power to fill half the government with his own nominees, and there was no guarantee that these would be acceptable to the ruling group. The magistrate hesitated to incur the risk and neglected to submit the nominations when the appropriate time had come.¹

This delay roused the leaders of the militia corps. These had been gaining political influence prior to the negotiations about the union with the maritime provinces. In their attempts to draw Utrecht

¹ S. Muller Fzn., BMHG, II, 75f.

into the war after the Perpetual Edict had been violated the States of Holland had on a number of occasions addressed themselves to the anti-Spanish militia leaders.¹ The captains' influence within the city appears from the fact that the magistrate delegated one of their members, Jan van Leemput, to sign the Satisfaction on the town's behalf. The captains favoured the provision regarding the stadholder's right of nomination, and when the magistrate gave the impression that it planned to boycott the Satisfaction on this point, they stepped in and demanded that the nominations be submitted. The Council then proceeded, but resolved to ask the stadholder that he relinquish his right of adding the twenty names.² Similar attempts to persuade him to change the regulations were made later, but the Prince, who preferred to keep a voice in the establishment of the town's government, refused to give his consent.

After the Prince's death the ruling groups seemed to be more successful, at least for a time. In the autumn of 1584 Josse de Villiers, Seigneur de Soete, became stadholder of Utrecht. His instructions provided that he was to establish the Council with the States' advice and further in the same manner as the Prince had done.³ The magistrate however, supported by Floris Thin, Advocate of the States, persuaded Villiers to allow the introduction of a Hereditary Council.

¹ Bor, I, 696f, 698f, 699f.

² Muller, BMHG, II, 76f.

³ Van de Water, Groot Placaatboek, I, 159f.

The town acquired the College of States' Deputies' approval for this measure on January 8th 1585, when the new Council was established, but the States themselves withheld their sanction. This was not done because they disagreed with the Council's endeavours to consolidate its powers within the city; in its struggle with the opposition the magistrate found its staunchest allies in the first and second estate. The States' objections to the Hereditary Council are to be explained by their wish to retain the influence upon the establishment of the magistrate to which they as sovereigns felt entitled, and for which they had made provisions in Villiers' instructions. Because of States' obstruction, and also because of fear for unrest within the town, the Council agreed the following October to discontinue the new system. The Count of Meurs, who replaced Villiers when in the summer of 1585 the latter was taken prisoner by Spanish troops, established the magistrate in the accustomed manner.¹

Although the old patriciate held the upper hand in the Council throughout the Prince of Orange's stadholdership, the governor's right of nomination no doubt had some influence upon the composition of the government. The changes made by him were not revolutionary, but a few

¹ Muller, BMHG, II, 78-84, 88.

"new men" were chosen as early as 1577.¹ Among these was Jan van Leemput. The burgher captains had been introduced into the magistrate and they were to retain their foothold in following years. While this implied a victory for the opposition, it is not certain that the members of the ruling group objected to the appointment of some captains as Councillors. By having the militia leaders as government members they would be able to control them and their movement at least to some extent. This same consideration may have been one of the reasons why in course of time there came objections to the duplication of functions from the side of the people. In 1580, at the time of one of the popular disturbances, they required that provision be made for the appointment of new captains to replace those who served on the Council,² and the following year it was agreed that the number of captains to be chosen to the magistrate would be limited to two or three, "so that the gemeenten might be better served" by their officers.³ Perhaps this was the real reason

¹Of the forty members appointed in November of that year twelve had served on the previous magistrate and another sixteen or eighteen belonged to the old patrician families (cf. Van de Water, III, 174). The names of the remaining members do not occur on previous magistrates' lists. The majority of this latter group consisted probably of "new men", although it is possible that some were related to the old families. In the following six years the average number of men whose names can be found in pre-revolutionary magistrates' lists was between twenty-two and twenty-four. It would of course be wrong to deduce from these figures the relative strength of the conservative and the reform groups. The fact that the old families had not been completely excluded from the Councils chosen between 1585 and 1588 suggests that at least some members of the Burgundian patriciate favoured the opposition's programme, while some of the new men chosen to the magistrate may well have strengthened the conservative element.

²Bor, II, 172.

³Ibid., p. 281.

for the objections, for even when in 1585 stadholder Meurs appointed a Council that was more acceptable to the opposition than any previous one had been, there is no appearance of a change of policy in this respect; no active captains served on the Council established in October of that year.¹

One concluding remark should be made in connection with the captains' attacks upon the magistrate. It has been suggested earlier in this chapter that their movement was perhaps less strongly opposed to the oligarchic system than is sometimes supposed. Their attempt to prevent the patriciate from introducing a vroedschap or Hereditary Council does suggest an anti-oligarchic tendency, but it is necessary to consider the opportunistic character of their policies. In limiting the powers of the ruling group the opposition tried to increase not only its own, but also the stadholder's influence. This second aim is understandable. Most groups that found themselves on the wrong side of the power fence worked for the strengthening of the stadholder's or the central government's authority, in the hope that it might form a counterbalance against that of their domestic opponents. Utrecht's subsequent history shows, however, that the leaders of the opposition had no strenuous objections to the vroedschap system in itself. Early in the following century, when they had gained a victory over their opponents and when they had come to realize that the fruits of this

¹ He had appointed four, but chose new men to serve in their place as burgher captains. GAU, Raadsnotulen, October 9, 22, 1585.

victory could best be preserved if the magistrate's choice was entrusted wholly to the magistrate, they required the establishment of a Hereditary Council.¹ If the Leicester period had lasted they would probably have demanded it earlier. A preliminary step was in fact taken in February 1588, when Meurs was given a new commission which provided that in establishing the government he was no longer allowed to elect one half of its members on his own authority; the entire Council was to be chosen from the magistrate's nomination.²

The captains' attempts against the magistrate must be seen in connection with their larger programme of destroying the remnants of clerical and Roman Catholic influence in the government, and of reducing that of the rural nobility. The preceding discussion has made it clear that it is not possible to force both these issues entirely into the single category of the rivalry between city and rural areas; yet this factor strongly influenced the opposition's attitude not only towards the nobles, but also towards the clergy. Although the nobility held only one of the three seats in the provincial States, the rural element was stronger than the urban. One of the reasons was that there had always been a close connection between the first two estates. In Utrecht as elsewhere the ecclesiastics were often recruited from the nobility,

¹Muller, BMHG, II, 88-91.

²Van de Water, I, 162, art. XVIII.

and because of the considerable landed wealth possessed by the chapter clergy, the two groups also had a common interest as landowners. The landed aristocracy as representative of the rural areas held, in other words, two votes in the assembly while the towns together possessed only one. In fact the position of the former group was even stronger. During the first years of the Revolt the four smaller towns appear to have been under the control of the nobility or the church; in the conflict that broke out in 1582 about the dismissal of the first estate (about which more will be said presently) they took the side of the nobles and ecclesiastics. These had some influence even in the city government. Since 1584 they had required the stadholder to consider the States' advice in establishing the magistrates,¹ but it appears from earlier magistrates' lists that already before this time it was common procedure to appoint some nobles to the Council. Members of the urban patriciate itself were, moreover, bound by class interests, and in some cases probably by ties of blood, to both the country nobility and the ecclesiastics.

The members of the opposition conceived of two means to bring about a more equitable division of power. The first was to replace those Councillors who wished to maintain, or else tended to acquiesce in, the town's subordinate position. The other was the dismissal of the first estate, which in their opinion had become superfluous after

¹ This provision occurred not only in Villiers' instructions but also in those of Meurs. Van de Water, I, 159, art. XIX.

the dissolution of the Roman Catholic church. The wish to establish the town's independence was, as has been seen, not the only reason for the captains' agitation against the ecclesiastics. Another consideration had to do with the disposal of their property, while still a third argument was that many of the chapter members were Roman Catholic and therefore potentially pro-Spanish. This was one of the points on which some satisfaction was received in 1582 when the captains -- again after the outbreak of a popular disturbance¹ -- tried to force the issue by pressing the city magistrate to pass a decree for the dismissal of the first estate. In that year the stadholder and the four towns joined with the nobles and ecclesiastics, and the first estate continued to exist, but the captains' move resulted in some rearrangements restricting the clergy's influence. The five chapters were no longer allowed to concern themselves with political questions and also lost the right to select their own delegates to the provincial assembly. The members of the first estate were henceforth chosen by the city, the nobles and the towns: the city nominated ten or twelve chapter members, and the nobles with the four towns elected six or eight from this nomination. The chosen ones were obliged to renounce their allegiance to the papacy and to Spain, and they were not allowed to communicate their own or the States' resolutions to the other members of the chapter clergy.²

¹This time it was occasioned by Jean Jaureguy's attempt to assassinate the Prince of Orange. Van de Water, I, pp. 183f.

²Ibid., pp. 182-185.

This arrangement removed some of the objections, but it was no more than a compromise and it failed to satisfy the opposition. The first estate remained the representative of a landed aristocracy and the ecclesiastical goods continued to be at the disposal of a small privileged circle, that is of the Regent group. Endeavours to prepare the way for another and more successful attack upon the first estate were to be renewed under Leicester, and the attack itself was to give rise to the last of the four or five "great controversies" occurring during the first year of his government.

III

When Leicester came to Utrecht his future partisans were in the ascendancy. The previous autumn the burgher captains had succeeded in forcing the States to appoint the Calvinist Count of Meurs to the stadholderate,¹ who chose a magistrate that appears to have contained a substantial number of men agreeable to the reform party and that went to considerable lengths in accommodating the opposition. If Leicester had restrained his own zeal and the impatience of his followers, and if he had not been tempted to use his influence in Utrecht for the execution of his private programmes, he might have managed to consolidate their position. In that case he would have done the province a service. On the whole the opposition's grievances were justified and if they had been redressed in time many of the sources of future conflict would have

¹See above, p. 89.

been removed. As it was, Leicester merely led his partisans through a brief period of victory to an almost total eclipse; the fate that awaited most of his too zealous supporters. In the case of Utrecht this was not so because they were in a minority position. The course and the protractedness of the struggle suggest that the two groups were more or less equally balanced. The main cause of the opposition's ultimate defeat was that their success constituted a danger to the States of the other provinces as well, a factor which induced the Regents of Holland to come to the rescue of their threatened brethren in Utrecht. Once Leicester had left the country this aid was to change the balance of power decisively to the opposition's disadvantage.

Fatal as it was to his partisans, and to his own career, Leicester's alliance with the opposition group was of course not surprising. The failure of his commercial and financial measures had made it clear that he would either have to relinquish his own claims to independent power or put pressure upon the States so that they relinquished theirs. Having decided upon the latter course he had no choice but to rely on whatever anti-States forces there were and to reward them by promoting their policies. In various cases these policies were his own. The system whereby the States retained their powers of government implied a continuation of the "provincialism" which Leicester, with reason, felt to be one of the major obstacles to the execution of a national defence programme. Although the opposition in Utrecht had never been anxious to weaken the autonomy of its own province it was now (in

the case of many of its members no doubt largely for opportunistic reasons) willing to give its support to a programme of centralization. It further sympathized with Leicester's endeavours to counteract, by the promotion of southern exiles to political offices, the States' policy of excluding Brabant and Flanders from the confederacy. States' opposition was soon to prevent him from employing exiles in the Council of State or other central government departments, but so long as the city of Utrecht remained under the control of the Leicesterian faction it allowed the southerners to participate in its government. Still a third aspect of Leicester's administration that can not be explained merely by narrow partisan considerations was his religious policy. As leader of the Puritan-interventionist party he was naturally drawn to the Calvinists, and he never doubted that the strengthening of this strongly anti-Spanish element was a necessary condition for a successful conclusion of the war.

The first instance of his direct involvement in the domestic affairs of Utrecht took place at the request of the Calvinists. In other provinces this church was the only recognized one but in Utrecht, as has been seen, it had been forced to share this position with another reformed church, the Duifhuis or St. Jacob's group. The latter distinguished itself from the Calvinists by a broad confession, the absence of disciplinary rules, and pronounced Erastian sympathies. These characteristics had earned it the goodwill of the Regents, whose support had so far enabled it to resist the Calvinists' demands that it join their fold. The Calvinists, on the other hand, had had some

support from the stadholder. The Prince of Orange probably sympathized with both the doctrinal and the Erastian views of the St. Jacob's group. Nevertheless, when in 1581 Duifhuis died, leaving a successor who seemed less strongly opposed to a union with the Calvinist church, he appears to have suggested to the government of Utrecht that perhaps the time had come to make an agreement acceptable to the Calvinists and so to end the divisions.¹ Unity among the protestants was desirable, and the Calvinists' national strength alone made it inevitable that a union would have to be in accordance with their rules. The magistrate however disagreed, and the Prince's suggestions were ignored. It fell to Leicester to implement them.

He did so on April 26th, a few weeks after his arrival in Utrecht. At the suggestion of stadholder Meurs he invited the ministers of the two churches, as well as representatives of States and magistrate, to a conference at his own residence. This conference produced or was presented with an Act of Union, which was at the same time a Church Order for the city of Utrecht. States and magistrate accepted the act, although not without reluctance. Two of the three ministers serving the St. Jacob's church also agreed to sign the articles, but the majority of its members opposed the union; only a small number joined the Calvinist church.²

¹Royaards, Archief, XVII, 277f; XVIII, 280.

²During 1586 the Calvinist church increased with 226 adult members. The average annual increase in adult membership over the previous five years had been 120. Cf. Royaards, Archief, XVIII, 272f.

The hostility of his former parishoners induced one of the ministers to leave Utrecht. The other remained, to be dismissed in 1589, together with his Calvinist colleagues, at the request of the still revengeful St. Jacobites.¹

The religious division coincided with the political one, and Leicester's decision in favour of the Calvinists probably had the effect of establishing him as early as April in the eyes of both groups as the opposition's ally. Politically the scene remained quiet until the end of June, when the burgher captains, under the impression of Leicester's political and military defeats, began to agitate for a renewal of the offer of sovereignty to the Queen. Their agitation took the form of a request to the States that they offer it on Utrecht's behalf, on less restrictive conditions than those which had accompanied the previous presentation, and that they try to persuade the other provinces to make a similar gesture. The magistrates of the five towns signed their petition, but the first and second estates appear to have ignored it and the captains' attempts to incite towns in other provinces to follow their example were unsuccessful.² These endeavours, which did not fail to annoy the States,³ were probably made in anticipation of Leicester's

¹For the relations between the Calvinists and the St. Jacob's church, and for the procedure followed in uniting the two groups, see Bor, II, 830-840, and Royaards, Archief, XVII and XVIII, passim.

²Bor, II, 723f.

³It was one of the grievances mentioned by the States of the three western provinces in the discussion of their remonstrance of November 11, 1586. See below, p. 239.

wishes. Although he had little enough cause to expect that Elizabeth would accept the sovereignty he continued to urge the course upon her and needed evidence that the country still shared his opinion. The normal procedure, which he followed the next autumn, would of course have been to ask the States General to repeat the offer. It is probable therefore that in June he was inspired first of all by the wish to provide a proof of the people's pro-English attitude and thereby to bolster his own position in the States' eyes.¹

The agitation on the sovereignty issue was an intelligible and a comparatively innocent move. The same can hardly be said of the next "incident" taking place in Utrecht. This was the imprisonment of the Councillor of State Paul Buys, an act which the burgher captains perpetrated, again in conformity with the governor's wishes, in the second half of July. Leicester's relations with this Councillor, and the causes of the conflicts between the two men, have often been described and need not be recounted here at any length.² Buys had been Advocate of the States of Holland from 1572 until 1584, but held no government position when Leicester arrived. He had always been a champion of cooperation with England rather than France, and the decision taken by Holland in the autumn of 1584 to offer the sovereignty to Henry III had been one of the reasons why he resigned his office of

¹ Fruin, Verspr. Geschr., III, 175.

² The most detailed accounts are to be found in W. van Everdingen, Het leven van Mr. Paulus Buys (Leiden, 1895), Chapter IV, and in L. J. Rogier's earlier-mentioned work Paulus Buys en Leicester.

Advocate. It was not the only one, however. In his work on Buys' career under Leicester Professor Rogier has shown that the relations between States and Advocate had long been strained, and that the disagreement on foreign policy in 1584 was perhaps no more than the proverbial last straw.¹

Buys had represented his native province of Utrecht during the treaty negotiations in London in the summer of 1585. As the acknowledged leader of the English party he enjoyed more goodwill in England than any other Dutch statesman. Leicester also had considered him to be one of his main protagonists, and Buys was among the members whom in January 1586 he had appointed to the Council without States' nomination.² Buys apparently seconded his endeavours to induce the States to give him more extensive powers than suggested in the Act of Authority, and for a while Leicester continued to sing his Councillor's praises.³ Before long his reports on him became less enthusiastic, however. One of the reasons of the growing disagreement was no doubt that the personalities of the two men were too similar. Like Leicester, Buys was ambitious, tactless and domineering; a man, according to Leicester himself, "who could not be content unless he ruled all".⁴ Another factor was that Buys' attitude in the domestic conflict in Utrecht, as well as his

¹ Paulus Buys, p. 8.

² See above, p. 106.

³ Bruce, pp. 47, 74.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 311, 372; Cal. For., XXI, 11, p. 38.

religious sympathies, had earned him the hatred of the opposition groups in that city. These undoubtedly did not neglect to warn the governor against the religious aberrations of his Councillor. Leicester's qualifications of Buys as "a villain, an atheist, a friend and bolsterer of papists", were probably a reflection of these accusations.¹

It is unlikely, however, that Leicester's dislike of his Councillor's political and religious leanings alone would have led to Buys' imprisonment. Buys' own policies kindled the governor's discontent, and make it understandable that Leicester desired his riddance. Buys was more outspokenly critical of Leicester's government than befitted a Councillor, and he apparently saw no harm in intriguing against him and his authority both among the Dutch politicians and among army leaders such as Hohenlohe and his followers.² He undoubtedly invited his own fate. It was inevitable that he should have objected to various of Leicester's measures, but there was nothing to be gained by his open opposition and secret intrigue, and it will always remain a question why he did not accept the consequences of his untenable position under Leicester by offering his resignation, the course he had followed when he found himself in disagreement with the States of Holland.

Among the causes of Buys' opposition to the governor was probably his suspicion of the Queen's pacifism. No less important a factor was,

¹ Bruce, pp. 130, 291, 303, 312.

² Rogier, Paulus Buys, p. 18.

as suggested, Leicester's own approach, and especially his choice of advisers. An upholder of the political status quo, an opponent of "popularism" in any shape or form, and an Erastian of strong anti-Calvinist leanings, Buys could have no peace with the governor's reliance on southerners, Calvinists and other opposition groups. He probably also criticized Leicester's endeavours to make the central government entirely independent of the States. It is true that this is no longer the generally accepted opinion. In his study on Paul Buys Professor Rogier has portrayed the ex-Advocate of Holland as an extreme centralist, who in backing Leicester's demands for additional powers had been inspired by the wish to procure for himself a dominant position in the central government, to promote the cause of "the generality" against the particularism of Holland, and by these means to revenge himself upon his former employers.¹ This characteristic does much to clarify Buys' position under the English governor. It is clear that he was both ambitious and revengeful and he may well have intended to establish, with Leicester's help, his superiority over the States of Holland. It is further probable that in order to increase the independence and efficiency of the central government he suggested means to Leicester whereby the executive and supervisory powers of the States would be decreased.

There nevertheless remain a number of questions in connection

¹Rogier, Paulus Buys, pp. 9-11.

with Professor Rogier's thesis regarding Buys' extreme centralist attitude and regarding the manner in which his initial relations with Leicester were influenced by his animosities against the Regents of Holland. It is, first of all, difficult to understand how a man of Buys' experience as Advocate of Holland could have shared Leicester's delusion that a government which tried to rule in opposition to the maritime provinces and relied on the inland regions only (always assuming that these were inclined to endorse a policy of centralization) had a chance of survival. During his imprisonment at least Buys showed that he realized the need of cooperation between central government and States; on two occasions he warned Leicester that if he wished to achieve anything at all he should "toujours tenir bonne correspondance avec les Estas" and refrain from any actions that violated the treaties or even that went "contre ce qui seroit agreable ausdits Estas".¹ Another point is that not all the arguments which Professor Rogier used in proof of Buys' anti-States views seem tenable. The author suggested that the Queen had probably chosen Buys as her chief adviser in drawing up her political counsels to the States, and that Leicester's instructions also were framed in consultation with the representative from Utrecht.² If the latter conjecture is correct this would, contrary to Professor Rogier's opinion,³ prove that Buys' advocacy of cooperation with the

¹BMHG, XXXIV, 48f, 51.

²Paulus Buys, pp. 8f.

³Ibid., p. 9.

States did not date from the period of his imprisonment but that he had from the beginning worked for the retention of States' influence upon the government. Unlike the treaty, these instructions did not provide for Leicester's appointment as governor general, nor did they, in so many words, demand the establishment of an independent Council of State. They merely ordered Leicester to persuade the States that they counteract the inadequacies and confusions of their government by the election of "a lesse number of wise, discreete and well affected persons, to whom the directions of matters of policie [might] be comitted, and for cutting off the tediousness and delaies in matters of councell, to move them that the deputies of the severall provinces [might] have authoritie to consult and conclude, and cutt off the often references to the particular states".¹ The intention may have been to provide for the establishment of a "College of States' Deputies" on a national basis. It was clearly not to deprive the States General (which could not help but be dominated by the States of Holland, whether Buys liked it or not) of its functions of government and to transfer these to Leicester.

If Buys tried to keep the governor general on the narrow path of collaboration with the States, he was not the only Councillor to do so, and these endeavours again would not in themselves have sealed his fate. It was his self-appointed role of opposition leader that cost him his freedom. In adopting this solution Leicester, who was aware of

¹Bruce, p. 13.

Buys' isolated position,¹ may not have expected the strong resistance which his measure did in fact arouse among the States, including those of Holland. He undoubtedly was concerned about the Queen's reactions however, and it was probably in the first place to cover himself against her reproaches that he did not personally dismiss Buys but left it to his partisans to free him of his presence.

They performed this office for him in the early morning of July 19th. Leicester was to leave with his Council to visit the States of Holland in The Hague. Before his departure one of the sheriffs of Utrecht and Leicester's English agent Webbes called the burgher captains to a meeting and ordered them in Leicester's name to apprehend Buys. Without asking for the governor's written command the captains obeyed the order.² Buys' papers were seized and entrusted to Meurs. He himself was taken in custody and remained in prison, in spite of intervention by the Council of State, the States of Holland, the States General and the Queen,³ until the following January when in Leicester's absence the States of Holland and the States General procured his release. He was never brought to trial. Leicester had expected that an examination of his papers would produce enough evidence to support his accusations, but when his delegates came to Utrecht to visit the papers they found

¹Bruce, p. 33.

²Eor, II, 725f.

³ARA, Index Bogaers [on Resoluties Raad van State], III, fo. 409; Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 383, 386; Bruce, p. 436.

that the seal had been broken and the trunk opened.¹ Apparently this was done, at Buys' request, by the Count or the Countess of Meurs, whom Leicester later accused to have dealt "vily" with him in this respect.² No incriminating material could be found with which to procure an indictment by an impartial court, and Buys, understandably, refused to be tried by the judges of Utrecht.

By imprisoning Buys the captains had served their own purpose no less than Leicester's, for he was one of their political opponents. There were others, who were to be removed in a more conventional manner, that is by banishing them as security risks. To exile people who were suspected of Spanish sympathies was accepted procedure, not only in the frontier regions but apparently also in Holland where, as the records of their resolutions show, the States passed acts ordering the removal of "evil patriots" at regular intervals. In Utrecht the burgher captains sometimes took the initiative,³ but not always. In April 1585, the last time that a group of burghers was sent out of the town, it was done at the central government's and stadholder Villiers' request. The procedure then followed was that the magistrate members and the eight burgher captains nominated persons whom they thought might be in correspondence with the enemy, and that those who received ten votes or more were

¹Bor, II, 726.

²Bruce, p. 364.

³GAU, Raadsnotulen, March 23, 1585.

temporarily banished. The people declared ostracized on that occasion included "all the priests who could be found" and sixteen others, several of whom were members of the five chapters.¹

In the summer of 1586, after the fall of Grave, there were again rumours that Parma was in correspondence with citizens of Utrecht; at least so Leicester had been told by the Privy Council,² which in turn had been warned by the English ambassador in Paris.³ Leicester informed Meurs and the burgher captains and concluded with their advice that the situation called for the removal of a goodly number of evil-affected. On the last day of July the stadholder, the burgher captains and the Englishman Lord North presented the magistrate with a list containing the names of forty-one people to be exiled. Nineteen of these had, according to them, been chosen by Leicester himself. The Council added another nineteen to the list, making a grand-total of sixty. The names of most of the people who had been banished the previous year occurred on these lists. Among the remainder there were again several priests and canons who may justly have been suspected of Spanish sympathies, but also six or seven others who owed their inclusion to the hostility borne them by the opposition groups. Chief among these were Nicolaas van Zuylen van Drakenburg, bailiff of Utrecht, Floris van Heermale, one

¹GAU, Raadsnotulen, April 8, 1585.

²Bruce, p. 314.

³Cal. For., ed. Sophie Crawford Lomas (London, 1927), XXI, i, pp. 10f.

of the ge-eligeerden (that is the chapter members who since 1582 formed the first estate) and Floris Thin, Advocate of the States of Utrecht.¹

The fate of Floris Thin, a man who had from the beginning been a determined supporter of the revolt, seems to have been partly a result of his function. He was an enemy of the burgher captains and had incurred their special wrath by promoting the establishment of the Hereditary Council under Villiers. But as will later become apparent there was also a tendency among the centralists to object to the office of States' Advocate itself; objections that applied with equal force to that of town pensionary. The main reason was that their political influence was too great. These officials, who had received a legal training and served on a permanent basis, were far more experienced than most government members, who tended to rely on their advice and directions. Regularly delegated to the States' meetings at both the provincial and the national level, the advocates and pensionaries threatened to dominate these assemblies and so to form the core of a governing group that was almost independent of the States as a whole, and that competed, moreover, with the central government.

As in the case of Buys' arrest the States of Holland were among the first to protest against the measure, and they immediately offered the exiled politicians their protection.² Leicester, who happened to be in The Hague, declared that he had been unaware of the fact that

¹GAU, Raadsnotulen, July 21/31, 1586.

²Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 313f.

"good patriots" were among the exiles.¹ It is of course possible that he spoke the truth; his partisans had probably convinced him that their political opponents were security risks. Taken aback by Holland's violent reaction he made a few attempts to intervene on behalf of Thin and his friends, but when Meurs and the captains ignored his orders he let the matter rest.²

By this procedure he and his followers had sealed the alliance between the Regents of Utrecht and Holland, but Leicester's hold on Utrecht was strengthened. Even the provincial States seemed submissive. When Leicester filled some of the vacancies left by the exiles with his own or his partisans' nominees and afterwards asked the States' approval, it was given in the majority of cases. This was done in spite of the fact that some of the appointees, such as Jacques de Bellinchiere and Dr. Agileus, whom Leicester made president and attorney general of the Provincial Council, were southerners. The States refused only to acknowledge Leicester's choice of the Brabant-born nobleman Charles de Trillo as bailiff, on the ground that the privileges reserved this office to natives. The burgher captains were in favour of him but the magistrate, for once, opposed Leicester and also refused to accept Trillo's appointment. This served as a reminder that the Council, accommodating as it had been, still contained hostile elements. The

¹Bor, II, 732.

²Ibid., pp. 732-736.

month that it was to be renewed, October, was approaching however. Because Meurs was away in Germany Leicester ordered the stadholder's deputy and two of his own advisers, Lord North and the Earl of Culemborch, to establish the magistrate in Meurs' stead.¹

Sixteen members of the previous government were replaced.² Prominent among the new men was another nobleman from Brabant, Gerard Prouninck, called Deventer, who was given the function of second burgomaster. Prouninck came from 's-Hertogenbosch and was closely associated with Agileus, also a former citizen of that town. It had been in cooperation with Agileus and with the help of some armed burghers that in 1579 Prouninck, a Calvinist and a leader of the anti-Spanish group in 's-Hertogenbosch, had forced the municipal government to accept the Union of Utrecht. When shortly later the town became Spanish he had fled to the northern provinces. Here he was in 1581 given the function of treasurer-general of the Landraad East of the Maas, one of the central executive Councils. He appears to have held this position for a number of years, probably until the dissolution of the Landraad upon Leicester's arrival. During the larger part of his exile he had been a resident of the city of Utrecht.³

¹ Bor, II, pp. 736f.

² Van de Water, III, 176.

³ See for Prouninck's career W. C. Ackersdijck, "Leicester in Utrecht", Tijdschr. v. Gesch., Oudheden en Stat. van Utrecht, II (1836), 205-228, as well as Prouninck's own "Apology" which was written in March 1587 and has been printed by Bor, II, 914-918.

Like many of his compatriots Prouninck had fixed his hopes for the eventual reconquest of Brabant and Flanders and for their reunification with the northern provinces on the English alliance and on Leicester's own "great-Netherlandish" sympathies. It became his main goal to promote Leicester's interests and to support him in his struggle against the States and against Holland. Dynamic and resourceful, he was destined to become the undisputed leader not only of the Leicesterian faction of Utrecht, but of the centralist and pro-English movement in the Netherlands as a whole.

He was also destined to become the chief target of attack by the States of Holland. These were as strongly opposed to his appointment as those of Utrecht, and less hesitant to risk a conflict with Leicester on the issue. Their first attack took place on November 11th when Prouninck, as delegate of the city, appeared in the States General to resume Utrecht's pressure for a renewal of the offer of sovereignty. This matter had earlier been broached, to the States of Holland, by Leicester himself.¹ It had already been under discussion in the national assembly on October 15th, at a meeting that was attended by the deputies of the three western provinces only. Holland had then suggested that a legation should be sent to ask supplementary English assistance, but that its members were not to receive any absolute charge with respect to the sovereignty issue. If it appeared that the Queen was prepared

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 446.

to discuss the question they were to inform the States and await further instructions. Friesland adopted Holland's proposal and the deputies of Zeeland provisionally gave their approval.¹ The States of Utrecht however, whose deputies arrived one week later, proposed that the legation should be authorized to make the offer and they further suggested that for this purpose the articles submitted the previous year be changed "in such a manner that the Queen might be induced to accept". They were unable to persuade the other three provinces, and on November 1st the instructions for the legation were drawn up in conformity with Holland's suggestions.²

It was to redress this situation that Prouninck travelled to The Hague. The States of Holland had been informed of his intention and decided to frustrate it by opposing his admission to the States General.³ It was uncommon to refuse delegates who, like Prouninck, were fully accredited by the States of their own province, but Holland felt that the circumstances warranted exceptional measures. The argument to be employed was that his appointment as burgomaster had been unlawful. According to the privileges only citizens of Utrecht could be chosen to that office, and Prouninck apparently had not yet officially become a citizen. He was, moreover, a native of Brabant, and this fact alone was

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 257.

² Ibid., pp. 258f, 260.

³ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 496.

sufficient to disqualify him. Brabant had been in the habit of excluding foreigners from political offices and had thereby invited the other provinces to retaliate in kind. It was not obligatory to do so; Holland itself employed several natives of Brabant in political functions. But in certain instances, when a candidate was objectionable for personal reasons, the privilege could be invoked, and that was what the deputies of Holland did when Prouninck appeared in the assembly. As usual they were able to carry their point. Zeeland and Friesland expressed their agreement, Overijsel did not attend the States' meetings during these years,¹ the deputies from Gelderland had not yet arrived and the legation from Utrecht itself was divided. The members representing the third estate took Prouninck's side and threatened to absent themselves from the meeting if he were not admitted. De Waal van Moersbergen, delegate of the nobility, suggested that Prouninck should be admitted but added that he did not think he was obliged to leave if the other provinces persevered in their refusal.² This they did, and Prouninck had no choice but to leave the meeting.

Both the magistrate and the College of States' Deputies of Utrecht, which since Thin's removal had begun to side with the towns,

¹ Its delegates had been refused admittance by the States General itself. The reason was that in May 1586, when Overijsel had accepted the English treaty and the Act of Authority, it had treated with Leicester alone and had refused to inform the other provinces of the conditions it had asked and the terms that had been granted. Res. St. Gen., V, p. x.

² Ibid., pp. 236f.

wrote on Prouninck's behalf. The College's intervention especially threatened to be embarrassing to the other provinces. Buth, the representative of the first estate, who had been absent on November 11th, and Moersbergen assured them however that the College did not represent the meaning of the States as a whole, so that its arguments could be disregarded, an advice which the assembly followed.¹ Leicester's personal intervention was also ineffective. Late in November he organized a number of meetings between Prouninck and members of the States General to discuss the question, but the States refused to go back on their decision and at the end of the second conference Prouninck was advised to acquiesce and return to Utrecht. He left with a letter signed by Leicester wherein the latter, having declared his intention to maintain Prouninck as burgo-master, asked Utrecht to accept the States General's verdict, or at least to refrain from further agitation.² Acts that might increase the disunity were to be avoided.

The advice was meant to be followed. Leicester was not prepared to alienate his supporters by dismissing their leader, but he felt that the revolution had proceeded far enough. States' opposition was too strong and reports from England showed that the Queen also was irritated about the divisions.³ He was planning to visit England, and if his

¹ Res. St. Gen., pp. 239f.

² Bor., II, 773-775. See also Prouninck's report of his conference with Leicester; ibid., p. 776.

³ Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 194; Bruce, p. 436.

mission there was to succeed it was necessary to desist from kindling further controversy. His partisans in Utrecht thought differently, however. They had established their power in the city and they held a strong position in the College of States Deputies, but in the provincial States nobles and ecclesiastics were, as the Prouninck incident had shown once more, still combining against the towns. Victory would not be complete until the first estate had been dismissed. It seems that Leicester had persistently shied away from tackling this problem in spite of his partisans' requests;¹ it was not until his departure that the burgher captains and the magistrate once again attempted to force the issue. On December 1st, before Prouninck's return from The Hague and without his knowledge, the town Council passed a decree forbidding the members of the first estate who lived in the city to attend the States' meetings. The other towns and the nobility were informed of the resolution and invited to a meeting wherein the measures to be taken in connection with the proposed change could be discussed.²

It appeared that the four towns took the side of the city, but the first two estates received the support of the Council of State, the States of Holland, the States General and stadholder Meurs. It is probable that Meurs' opposition came as a surprise to the magistrate. So long as Leicester was in Utrecht the stadholder had cooperated with

¹ Werken Marnix Vereeniging, III, iv (1880), 61.

² Bor, II, 775. The controversy has been described at length by R. Broersma, Het Tusschenbestuur, Chapter II.

him and his partisans. On the whole this cooperation seems to have been given voluntarily. For the security of the provinces under his charge and for the recovery of his German possessions he had expected more help from England than from Holland,¹ and in extending his power as stadholder he had, like Leicester, less to hope from the States than from the opposition groups. At least so long as these did not request or encourage the governor general to enter into competition with him. Leicester's encroachments on his domains, as for example in the matter of the magistrate's renewal the previous October, may have been one of the reasons why after the governor's departure Meurs began to drift away from him and his supporters. Another cause was outside pressure. Meurs was trying to collect money from the States General for the levy of German mercenaries for the defence of the eastern provinces, and the national assembly had made it clear to him that it expected his cooperation against the magistrate of Utrecht in return for a grant.²

The overwhelming opposition must have convinced the towns that the chances of achieving their goal were small. They were determined however to procure at least a change in the composition of the first estate, and by sheer stubbornness they forced their opponents to the concession that the ecclesiastics would not be reinstated until those members who had shown themselves hostile to the towns, such as Buth, the

¹BM, Lansdowne Mss. 45, no. 25, fo. 58.

²Bor, II, 857; Werken Marnix Ver., III, iv, pp. 64f.

delegate to the States General, had been replaced. This accord, which was drawn up on February 23rd 1587 contained a number of other provisions advantageous to the towns. One of these concerned the removal of States' influence upon the magistrates' choice. The instructions of Villiers and Meurs had provided that the stadholder was to appoint the city and town governments with the advice of the provincial States, but the nobles and ecclesiastics were now forced to renounce their rights in this respect. Another had to do with Utrecht's union with Holland and Zeeland under Maurice's stadholdership. Holland demanded a restoration of this union,¹ and the Regents of Utrecht, who sorely needed Holland's support, backed Maurice's claims. By the agreement of February they were required, however, to put their signatures to an "everlasting resolution" declaring that no accord would be acknowledged which indicated that the maritime provinces and Utrecht should be governed by one stadholder. The agreement further provided that Floris Thin would be officially dismissed, that the office of States' Advocate would never be reintroduced, and that convocations to the States' assembly would be drawn up not by the head of the ecclesiastics, as was customary, but by the College of States Deputies.²

The towns had received more than they had probably expected. If the first estate had been dismissed, power in the States would have

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 376; BMHG, XXXIV, 77.

² Van de Water, I, 188-190.

been divided equally between the urban areas and the nobles. As it was the towns gained the dominant position, for after the rearrangement of February the members of the ecclesiastics tended to cooperate with the third estate, either because they had been cowed into submission or because they themselves belonged to the urban and centralist group.¹ The opposition had been victorious in the domestic conflict and could henceforth devote its energies to the centralization issue. Under Prouninck's leadership this was indeed to be its major concern during the remainder of the Leicester period.

¹ARA, Loketkas Loopende 59 (Remonstrance of October 17, 1587).

CHAPTER VI
LEICESTER'S DEPARTURE

I

In the autumn of 1586 Leicester was asked to return to England to attend the coming parliamentary session. Letters by Burghley and Wilkes suggest that the invitation may have been a cloak for his "honourable revocation",¹ but apparently they desired his presence in London also for domestic reasons. They, as well as Walsingham, had informed him that his support might be needed in connection with the process against Mary Stuart.² That consideration was probably the immediate cause of Leicester's decision to return. There were other reasons however, which had to do with Dutch affairs. The discovery of the Babington plot had, in Walsingham's opinion at least, convinced Elizabeth that a continuation of the war was inevitable.³ Leicester shared Walsingham's hopes that it might induce her to a greater effort, and he intended to forge the iron while it was hot. The least he hoped to achieve was an increase in the English subsidy. The best solution

¹Wm. Murdin, ed., Collection of State Papers (London, 1759), p. 570; PRO, SP Dom. XII, 193, no. 58; Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 164. See also ibid., p. 174.

²BM, Egerton Mss. 1694, fo. 44; Bruce, pp. 404, 421.

³Bruce, p. 341.

remained of course that England annexed the country and assumed a larger share of the responsibility for its defence.

In urging these requests upon Elizabeth he intended to rely particularly on the offices of the English Parliament. That body had been summoned for October 15th. Its first task was to put pressure on the Queen that she execute the sentence against Mary Stuart, but Leicester expected that, this duty performed, it would also be given an opportunity to express its opinions on foreign policy.¹ If the aid to the States was to be increased a parliamentary subsidy would be necessary and Parliament could tie the offer of a grant to the request that the Queen accept the sovereignty over the Netherlands. This was indeed what the strongly Puritan and interventionist assembly proceeded to do in February 1587, when it moved on to the discussion of foreign affairs.²

A third factor urging Leicester to visit England was the need to defend his policy in the Netherlands. Especially in recent months had he become aware of Elizabeth's criticism of his administration, a criticism that was not only concerned with the management of the English army but also reflected the States' objections to his government. The States' complaints to Elizabeth had never been entirely ineffective; she had during the summer already expressed disapproval of some of his

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 430f.

² J. E. Neale, Elizabeth I and her Parliaments (London, 1957), II, Chapter IV.

actions.¹ More influential than these earlier remonstrances had been the information supplied by Thomas Wilkes, who had visited the Netherlands in August and September. His evaluation of Leicester's policies, which differed little from that of the States, created a strong impression in England, and the political and financial reports submitted by him were among the causes of the far more severe disapprobation of Leicester's government expressed by Elizabeth during the latter part of the year.

Leicester himself had asked for the dispatch of an ambassador.² Realizing that his difficulties with the States were aggravated by the lack of "countenance" he and his army received from the Queen, and by the suspicions created by the secret peace negotiations, he had stressed the need that by means of a special envoy she reassure the Dutch regarding her intentions to continue her aid. This was indeed one of Wilkes' tasks; he was ordered to renew the old pledge that under no circumstances England would leave the provinces unaided.³ His second duty was to acquaint himself with the country's financial capacity and to investigate Leicester's complaints about the States' refusal to give him sufficient cooperation in financial matters. He was to find out, among other things, what proportion of the forces needed for defence

¹In the matter of Buys' imprisonment and the trade prohibition. Bruce, p. 386; Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 40.

²Bruce, pp. 291f, 305.

³Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 81f.

could be maintained by the provinces themselves, what the "certainty of the revenue" was, and how much of the ordinary and extraordinary contributions promised by the States had been paid. In connection with these points he was also to inquire into the effects of the trade edict and to give his opinion on the question whether, in order to counteract the decrease in customs revenue, it would be advisable to re-allow the export of victuals and other native products. His instructions suggested a positive answer. According to these it might be best "to suffer a vent and so to continue the taxes", always provided that the export was regulated so that scarcity and high prices at home were prevented.¹

Wilkes arrived in Utrecht on August 11th. He duly delivered the Queen's comforting message and thereby raised the Council, according to his own report, from deep despair.² Having performed this duty he proceeded with his financial investigations. That task occupied him until the middle of September, by which time he had come to reach his conclusions about the ineffectiveness of Leicester's approach and the justice of the States' objections. Wilkes was not an uncritical admirer of the States. He shared the bias of most Englishmen against their system of government and had occasion to notice its disadvantages, both in the course of his embassy and during the time that he served as

¹BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fos. 263f.

²Ibid., fo. 267.

Councillor of State. He became convinced however that power in the Netherlands was in fact concentrated in the hands of the States, that these had no intention to transfer it to Leicester, and that Leicester's endeavours to rule in opposition to them were bound to result in frustration and failure.

That insight was gained during the latter part of his embassy. In the draft of what seems to have been one of his first reports to the Privy Council there was as yet little evidence of disagreement with Leicester on any of the major issues, while the States were criticized.¹ But this letter was probably written before the Dutch politicians had had an opportunity to confer with him. Towards the end of August Leicester himself went to the front, leaving Wilkes in the care of the Council of State, which was to answer his questions regarding the country's financial position. By no means all the Councillors admired Leicester's system, and his critics undoubtedly used the occasion to inform Wilkes of their objections to his government. So did other of his opponents. Not long after Wilkes' arrival the people exiled from Utrecht had asked him to intervene with the governor general on their behalf. The request had not gone unheeded; in a letter to Leicester Wilkes condemned the procedure held with the banished politicians and asked him to procure justice for them.²

¹ Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 135-137.

² BM, Egerton Mss. 1694, fo. 37.

The States of Holland appear to have postponed their interview until September. On the 14th of that month Wilkes informed Leicester that they had invited him to The Hague to acquaint him with "sundry particularities" that might be of value in completing the financial report given him by the Council.¹ The discussions were not concerned with monetary matters only. The States availed themselves of the opportunity to inform Wilkes of the political situation. Much attention was given to the question of Reingout, who at this time had not yet been arrested. The ambassador was given an account of the treasurer general's past and present misdemeanours and asked to give a "true report" of the issue to both the Queen and Leicester. Wilkes complied, although with little enthusiasm. By the middle of September he no longer seems to have relished the role of acting as an intermediary between Leicester's critics and Leicester himself. In informing the latter of the States' disclosures he told him that he had refused to deal in the matter, because it was not on his commission.² This scruple no longer plagued him when he was back in England and made his report to the Privy Council. The instructions given him when, early in November, he was sent back to the Netherlands to serve as Councillor of State, reflect the States' criticism of Reingout and his circle.³

¹BM, Egerton Mss. 1694, fo. 41.

²Ibid.

³See for these instructions Bruce, pp. 433-437.

Wilkes' report on political affairs in the Netherlands does not seem to have survived. Its tone and contents must be inferred from his own correspondence,¹ from the reactions of Queen and Privy Council, and from the change in Leicester's attitude towards him: Leicester's earlier appreciation of the ambassador, on whose "sufficiency and painfulness" he had commented as late as September 9th,² turned into hostility when the effects of the mission became known. Among the documents that show official reactions were, as mentioned, Wilkes' new instructions. Herein he was ordered to inform Leicester that the trade prohibition of April 4th be revoked or modified in accordance with the States' wishes;³ that he pay heed to the States' objections to his financial advisers; that he satisfy them with respect to Paul Buys; and that he provide redress for the exiles of Utrecht. Wilkes was further told to make it his policy, "without feare or dreade of any parson or parsons" to advise Leicester in his government and to make certain that Queen and Privy Council were regularly acquainted with developments in the Netherlands.

The tone of the instructions was mild in comparison with the letter which Elizabeth wrote about the middle of October. The letter

¹Such as his letters to Sir John Norris, Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 163f, and to Sir Edward Norris, PRO, SP Dom. XII, 193, no. 58. The two memorandums in Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 168f and 174f are probably also from Wilkes.

²Ibid., p. 143.

³The fact that this particular decree had already been revoked appears to have escaped the Privy Council's and Wilkes' attention.

itself does not seem to have survived, but its contents appear from Leicester's reply,¹ which opened with a profession of grief and the assurance that he would rather have died than receive such "discomfortable words" from her. In this message Elizabeth had rejected most of the criticism implied in Wilkes' instructions and added the interesting warning that he "should not irritate the States and grow too popular, for that they were wise men", although at the same time he was to make sure that they did their duty. The attack was concentrated on his military and financial policies. Leicester was told, among many other things, that he had insufficiently acquainted himself with the States' financial capacity and called in more soldiers than he or they were able to pay; that it was incomprehensible how he could have received such great contributions from the States (the Queen held the opinion that the extraordinary grant amounted to 400,000 pound sterling²) and consumed it all without order or cause; and that, if he had administered the money properly he would have achieved some military success, while as it was he had accomplished little more than gaining the scorn of the Queen's foes and bringing shame to her army.

These outpourings were inspired, at least in part, by the financial account which the Council of State and the States of Holland

¹In Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 189-197.

²Ibid., p. 191; Bruce, p. 438.

had given to Wilkes. That report, with some of the material used to document it, is extant,¹ and its contents created enough controversy to merit a brief analysis. The statements do not excel in clarity and they sometimes contradict each other, but they all convey the notion that the war was costing more than the provinces were able to pay. In their anxiety to stress this in itself indisputable fact the authors had been tempted to give an exaggerated estimate of debts and expenditure.² In one of the accounts it was asserted that the monthly cost of defence, inclusive of the charges for a field army, amounted to fl. 632,144. It suggested that if this sum were multiplied by thirteen it would bring the annual expenditure to fl. 7,217,870,³ but failed to mention that there was not always a camp, and also that the States were in the habit of paying most of their forces their monthly wages not every twenty-eight but every forty-eight days.

Another account, which purported to give a view of the States' disbursements to Leicester over the first half year of his government, stated that they had already paid fl. 400,000 in extraordinary aid,⁴ as

¹ BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fos. 375-390.

² See in this connection the remarks by the newly appointed treasurer general Joris de Bye in PRO, SP Holland 84, XII, no. 5, and the criticism of the accounts by Jacques Valcke, member of the Dutch legation in London, and Daniel de Burchgrave, in BM, Add. Mss. 48,084, fos. 393f.

³ BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 381. Actually it would have been one million florins more.

⁴ Payment of this grant had in fact not begun until August; see p. 156 above.

well as the fl. 1,200,000 of the normal contributions for this period. Leicester had nevertheless anticipated an amount of fl. 964,637 upon the contributions of the following months, contracted an unspecified debt for victuals and other provisions, and failed to pay the larger part of the garrisons for four months, which debt alone was estimated at fl. 1,447,864.¹ The total expenditure amounted in other words to more than fl. 4,000,000 for a period of six months only. Because Leicester's ordinary and extraordinary income for the year (including the revenue derived from the "non-contributing" provinces) did not quite reach the three-million mark,² the probable annual debt could on the strength of this document be calculated to amount to more than five million guilders.

A third statement gave a more conservative estimate, although the discrepancy with the previous two was not explained. It gave the disbursements and anticipations for seven months as fl. 2,600,000.³ This suggested a yearly charge of fl. 4,457,000 and thus a deficit of just over fl. 1,400,000. That was, in fact, more or less in conformity with the conclusion reached by a later financial account which gave the revenue and the expenditure for the entire year and appears to have been drawn up in December or January, probably for the use of the Dutch legation.⁴ The deficit suggested by this account (a sum of fl. 1,438,056,

¹BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 380.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C IX, fos. 204^{verso}-5; Add. Mss. 48,084, fo. 142.

³BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 383.

⁴BM, Add. Mss. 48,084, fos. 142-144.

of which almost one million consisted of debts to the army) seems to have been challenged by Leicester as still too high.¹ The fact that the list of debts included a sum of fl. 204,000 which the English treasurer maintained he had disbursed for the Dutch army -- a claim which on other occasions the States refused to acknowledge² -- suggests that this calculation also was a liberal one.

It is not certain which of the statements submitted by Wilkes was accepted by Elizabeth. A letter which the former wrote to Norris suggests that it was the one over the six months' period.³ That letter further shows that the information served not only to increase her concern about Leicester's administration, but also to intensify her weariness with the alliance. "Her Majesty and her Council", thus Wilkes, "do greatly stagger at the excessive charge of those wars under his Excellency's government for the six months passed, affirming (as it is true) that the realm of England is not able to supply the moiety of that charge; notwithstanding, the necessity of the defence of these countries is so conjoyned with her Majesty's own safety, as the same is not to be abandoned; but what she will do I know not." What she would do was not to become apparent to anyone until the early months of the following year, when the States submitted their formal request for the continuance and increase of her subsidy.

¹Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 326. It is possible however that he referred to the earlier statements given to Wilkes.

²Neale, Essays, pp. 176f.

³Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 163f.

II

It would be interesting to know whether the States of Holland contemplated the possibility that by their disclosures to Wilkes and by their general opposition to Leicester they overshot their mark and increased Elizabeth's doubts about the practicability of her intervention. Many in the country, including people who would have been happy to dispense with Leicester if it had not been for his central position with respect to the alliance, undoubtedly did, and looked askance at Holland's procedures. Elizabeth had agreed to give aid on condition that she received political influence, and it was considered worthwhile to suffer the inconveniences of this arrangement if the alliance could thus be kept together. If English aid had not yet brought the expected military relief, it had certainly been instrumental in checking Parma's offensive after the capitulation of Antwerp. It was possible that circumstances would convince the Queen of the need to continue her aid regardless of the effectiveness of Leicester's government and of the treatment he received, but the risk that she would leave the provinces was present, and the failure of her political intervention increased it. The Armada was still to come, and guarantees that the peace negotiations would not lead to a conclusion which England would consider acceptable, were lacking. If Philip promised to accept the Queen's terms he might succeed in effectuating her withdrawal, at least temporarily. The military and political consequences would be disastrous.

It is probable that Holland was aware of this risk and realized that by accommodating Leicester it would be diminished. But its States also appear to have felt that his and their endeavours would not in the long run prevent Elizabeth from concluding her peace if she was determined to do so, and that the purchase of a period of grace at the cost of allowing Leicester to continue his government on the old foot constituted too high a price. If Elizabeth should withdraw, the maritime provinces would be able to weather the storm for some time, until international prospects improved. Under Leicester's government it had been difficult to prepare for such a contingency. His policies had tended too much to the preservation of the generality as a whole, and thereby interfered with Holland's own defensive preparations. His emphasis on "national defence" was of course acceptable so long as there was a possibility of withstanding the enemy on every front. Holland knew that its safety depended on that of the inland provinces. Faced however with the possibility that it would have to fall back upon the unaided defence of its own territory it felt the need to make the necessary preparations.

In order to do so it was not absolutely essential that Leicester disappear from the scene, but it was imperative that his independent authority cease and that the settlement of January be changed accordingly. Although Elizabeth's help was indispensable for such a rearrangement, the States of Holland did not rely on the indirect method only. During or shortly after Wilkes' embassy they had begun to prepare an official

remonstrance containing a list of their various complaints.¹ This document was presented to Leicester on November 11th. By that time his intention to leave was known, a fact that probably caused them to hasten the presentation. They planned to use the opportunity provided by his absence to redress, where possible, their own grievances, but it would be preferable if Leicester did it for them. After the Queen's exhortations there was a chance that he would introduce the required reforms, or else authorize the States themselves or the Council of State to do so.

Before submitting the remonstrance Holland had discussed it with Zeeland and Friesland. The States of both provinces agreed to join in the presentation. Zeeland had at least since July formed a united front with Holland, and its adherence had been a foregone conclusion. Friesland's was not surprising either. Its States had been outvoted in January, when the allies had decided to give Leicester his absolute authority in civil affairs.² Irritation about Holland's and Zeeland's attitude at that time, and about their later attempts to force Friesland into ceding its domains to the central government,³ was probably among the reasons why they had kept aloof in July, when the maritime provinces had presented Leicester with their remonstrance against the trade edict. That remonstrance itself had no doubt had their approval,

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, session August 26 - October 11, pp. 472f.

² See above, p. 100.

³ Res. St. Gen., V, 216, 225, 377f, 413f.

for Friesland, which depended on the export of dairy- and other agricultural products, also had objected to Leicester's commercial policies.¹

Economic considerations then made a closer cooperation with Holland and Zeeland advisable. Political developments at home had the same effect, for the centralists were creating difficulties also in Friesland. It has been seen that this group was formed by the provincial Council under president Hessel Aysma's leadership, by the eleven towns, and by a number of delegates from the Quarter of Oostergoo.² The last group appears to have been the most active one in attempting to promote the centralists' programme, both in and outside the provincial diet. Although there were other questions in the course of 1586, the disagreements centred around the amount of authority Leicester was to have over Friesland. The issue had been discussed at a number of provincial assemblies. It seems that by May the States as a whole had been prepared to accept the States General's Act of Authority to Leicester, but that a number of opponents, no doubt in cooperation with the College of States' Deputies, had obstructed the execution of these resolutions and once more succeeded in gaining control of the diet.³ Neither the central government, nor the centralists of Friesland itself,

¹Pierius Winsemius, Chronique van Vrieslant (Franeker, 1622), fo. 776; Van Reyd, p. 122.

²See p. 91f. above.

³Winsemius, fo. 779; BMHG, XXXIV, 40-46, 65-71.

were willing to acquiesce in the province's separatist attitude and the matter served again at the diet of October. At this time the States resolved that Friesland would accept the Act, on condition that it retained control over its domains. However, if Leicester and the States General could not be persuaded to agree to this condition, Friesland's deputies to the national assembly were to accept the Act of Authority "absolutely".¹

The delegates of Oostergoo expected that this resolution also would remain unexecuted. They were further annoyed by the fact that in the States General Friesland's deputies had sided with Holland in the question of the offer of sovereignty to Elizabeth.² Anxious to redress the situation they resolved to take matters into their own hands. Early in November a legation was sent to Leicester, informing him that Oostergoo was willing to accept the Queen as its sovereign on the terms the States General had submitted in 1585, and that it intended to confer upon Leicester himself such powers as the governors of Charles V had possessed. The offer was accompanied by the request that he introduce some reforms in Friesland's government: the influence of the College of States' Deputies was to be ended and executive functions were to be entrusted, instead, to the stadholder and the provincial Council.³

¹Winsemius, fos. 779f.

²See above, p. 208.

³BMHG, XXXIV, 65-71.

Realizing that the instructions of the States General's legation to England would not contain this request, Oostergoo was to decide shortly after Leicester's departure from the Netherlands to send a separate embassy to the Queen. Its instructions, which were drawn up on January 5th, were similar to the November message to Leicester.¹ For a time the towns appear to have kept themselves aloof from this movement,² but on January 10th they also decided, after consultation with the deputies of Oostergoo, to send delegates to London. This embassy was to offer the Queen "the sovereignty of the towns of Friesland", again on the conditions of 1585.³ It does not appear whether the towns planned to suggest a change in the provincial government. They promised that nothing would be attempted that went against previous resolutions, but they also stated that they intended to have their legation's commission and instructions examined by the stadholder and the provincial Council, rather than by the stadholder and the College of States' Deputies.⁴ The stadholder, William Louis of Nassau, tended to cooperate with the College, but the Council undoubtedly agreed with Oostergoo's instructions.

¹Winsemius, fos. 780f.

²BMHG, XXXIV, 69.

³PRO, SP Ho. 84, XI, no. 92; Winsemius, fo. 781.

⁴PRO, SP Ho. 84, XI, no. 92. The rendering of this paper in Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 291, is defective.

By this time Holland and Zeeland had probably begun to appreciate Friesland's hesitation in accepting the Act of Authority, and they sympathized with the States' opposition to the centralist and pro-English group. The difficulties in Friesland could not be blamed on Leicester's direct interference however, and this was probably one of the reasons why the matter was not included in the remonstrance. Another issue that remained undiscussed, although it undoubtedly constituted a grievance against Leicester, was his religious policy. Among the church's complaints against the government were, as will be remembered, the States' hesitation to allow a national synod and their refusal to ratify the synodical Church Order. Leicester, who had no reason to fear the church's political competition and whose attitude towards the Calvinists had from the beginning been more accommodating than that of the States, was prepared to meet their wishes, and in the summer of 1586 a national synod had been called by him.¹ Because he had been given full authority in religious matters, and probably also for fear of cementing the alliance between him and the Calvinists, the States had not opposed the measure. They instead resolved upon a policy of passive resistance; in spite of Leicester's repeated requests the States General never ratified the Church Order, and only three of the six provinces, Zeeland, Gelderland and Overijssel, appear to have introduced it without limitations or conditions in their own territory.²

¹ Bor, II, 718f, 790ff.

² Reitsma, Geschiedenis van de Hervorming, pp. 155-160.

Apart from these two issues the list of complaints submitted on November 11th was an exhaustive one. The remonstrance dealt with Leicester's military administration and some aspects of his military policy, his activities in Utrecht, his financial and economic measures, and his reliance on southerners and other people objectionable to the States. Several of these controversies have earlier been discussed, but the remonstrance and the conferences held with Leicester after its submission throw some additional light on his policies, and their highlights must therefore be mentioned.¹

The first section contained, among other matters, the States' grievances about his "indiscriminate and unlicensed levying of soldiers", one of the complaints that had been repeated by the Queen. The objections were based on constitutional grounds (the treaty forbade the governor to levy foreign soldiers without the States' consent) and on financial considerations. There were more soldiers than could be supported. When in December the Council of State tried to proceed with muster and reduction it appeared that fl. 450,000 was necessary for one month's pay.² The cost of soldiers exceeded, in other words, the normal contributions by fifty per cent,³ and because the extraordinary grants had been more than needed for additional expenditure the numbers were

¹See for the remonstrance and the discussions Bor, II, 760-763 and 763-767. On November 20th and 24th Leicester put his answers in writing. The first set of these "apostilles" occurs in ARA, SG 3781, st. 118; the second has been printed in BMHG, XXXIV, 72-80.

²Res. Ho. 1586, p. 413.

³Considering that pays were made every forty-eight days.

too high from a financial point of view. If the military requirements are taken as the criterion they had, nevertheless, scarcely been adequate. The muster in question appears to have been the first one since the dissolution of the camp. The numbers to be paid consequently represented those employed for the autumn campaign, at which time the size of the States' army had, in comparison with Parma's, not been excessive. The fact remained, however, that for the larger part of the recruitments no special consent had been asked, and the States eventually succeeded in convincing Leicester of the illegality of this procedure. He promised that henceforth he would abide by the treaty and ask their approval for foreign levies.¹

Another grievance was that on a number of occasions Leicester had established military governors without States' nominations or supplied them with a new commission without States' consent. Four specific instances were mentioned.² Three had to do with the commanders of local garrisons, those of Vianen, Oudewater and Gorcum. The fourth case, and the one that aroused the States' gravest objections, concerned Diederik Sonoy. Sonoy, a German nobleman of strong Calvinist leanings, had served the Prince of Orange since the early years of the war and was now employed under Maurice as military governor for the Northern Quarter of Holland. Leicester however appointed him as his own

¹Bor, II, 763.

²Ibid., pp. 763f.

"lieutenant", with political as well as military authority, over the area. He did so by renewing a commission which Sonoy had possessed during the first years of the Revolt when, as a result of the Spanish hold on Haarlem and Amsterdam, North and South Holland had been separated and when Sonoy had been Prince William's deputy-stadholder for the northern parts. After the reunification of the two areas, which took place in 1578 by Amsterdam's entry into the Revolt, his authority appears to have been restricted primarily or exclusively to military matters.

Sonoy's too militant Calvinism was probably one of the reasons why the States objected to his promotion by Leicester. Another concerned the political ambitions of the Northern Quarter itself. The region had not always belonged to the County of Holland, and the consciousness of its former separate identity, combined perhaps with the feeling that its economic interests were best served under a form of self-government, caused it to strive for a loosening of the ties which bound it to the rest of Holland. The existence of a local College of States' Deputies already gave it a semi-autonomous status. It considered this only a partial victory however and tried to introduce other "provincial" institutions, such as a separate mint, one of the attributes of provincial sovereignty.¹ Although Sonoy himself was not highly

¹Res. St. Gen., V, 474, 483f.

acceptable to the States of the Northern Quarter, the establishment of a special governorship nevertheless emphasized the region's semi-independent status and might encourage it in its separatist tendencies.

The main reason of the States of Holland's indignation at Leicester procedure was not, however, that the appointment threatened the unity of their province, but that it procured Leicester undue influence in its political affairs. Sonoy would consider himself directly responsible to the central government and not, like Maurice, to the provincial States. Leicester himself was aware of this advantage. He seems to have considered his control over the Northern Quarter one of his chief political victories. Early in July he had told Elizabeth that he hoped to get into his hands some towns in North Holland, by means of which she would be able to bridle the States and make war or peace as and when she wished.¹ He of course did not advocate an enforced peace and knowing Sonoy he must have realized that the latter would never cooperate in any such scheme. Elizabeth however did not know this, and might applaud the acquisition.

There seems to have been another reason for Sonoy's appointment. Both the contents of his instructions and the occasion on which he first used his new commission suggest that they may have been granted at the

¹Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 63.

request of the Reformed ministers of the Northern Quarter.¹ In this still strongly Roman Catholic area the Calvinists felt that they received insufficient support from States and magistrates, and they had been in the habit of looking to Sonoy for support. One of the current controversies between the church and the local governments concerned the administration of the church goods in the rural areas of North Holland. At one time this administration had been in the hands of a certain Guillaume Mostard, a Calvinist and a protege of Sonoy's, but later the magistrates had taken control. Apparently this change was to the disadvantage of the churches, which were entitled to part of the revenue. The ministers informed Sonoy that insufficient money was paid out for the maintenance of the churches, and Sonoy brought the complaints to Leicester's attention. With the advice of his Councillor Willem Bardesius, the former burgomaster of Amsterdam, who had once been Sonoy's lieutenant and was probably still one of his supporters, Leicester reinstituted Mostard.² When States and magistrate refused to acknowledge the appointment and forbade the villagers to deposit the revenue with Mostard, Sonoy stepped in. In a letter of September 27th he ordered, as Leicester's lieutenant, those villages that had followed the States' direction to recognize Mostard's receivership. The local College of

¹ His commission and instructions, which were dated June 13th and August 2nd respectively, are printed by Kluit, II, 508-510.

² Bor, II, 759. See for Bardesius' earlier relations with Sonoy, Jan Wagenaar, Vaderlandsche Historie, VII, 205.

States' Deputies sent the letter on to the States of Holland. These had not yet been informed of Sonoy's new rank and demanded a copy of his commission and instructions. Sonoy allowed his secretary to read the documents to them but refused to provide them with a copy. Repeated orders by the States remained ineffective. Before long he added insult to injury by threatening to send a contingent of soldiers to the three villages that still refused to recognize Mostard.¹

Developments had reached this stage when the remonstrance was submitted. The States of course demanded the revocation of Sonoy's commission. Leicester's determination to maintain him was equally strong. Wearied by the States' persistent requests he eventually informed them that they could change his lieutenant's commission if, as they maintained, it violated Maurice's rights or the country's privileges, and that he would abide by such a change.² This promise was only made to gain time however, and to shift the responsibility to Sonoy's shoulders. The commission was not revoked, nor was Sonoy told to submit it to the States for examination. In the absence of such a command he felt that he was still bound by his oath to Leicester. That conviction sufficed to make him persevere in his opposition after Leicester had left the country. Another Leicesterian stronghold had been created. Throughout the following winter, and throughout the

¹Bor, II, 759f; Res. Ho. 1586, pp. 438f, 448, 453.

²Bor, II, 764.

year 1587, Sonoy was to cooperate closely with the centralists of Utrecht and Friesland.

There is no need to give any detailed attention to the section of the remonstrance which was devoted to Utrecht. The catalogue of complaints about Leicester's policies there did not contain much that was new, and neither did the discussion. Special attention having been given by the States' to the burgher captains' interference with the offer of sovereignty, to the imprisonment of Buys and to the banishment of the politicians, Leicester reaffirmed his innocence in the last two procedures but implied that in his opinion they had been neither illegal nor unjustifiable. He nevertheless agreed that attempts should be made to end the domestic divisions in Utrecht, and suggested that in his absence the States General take the matter in hand. When the States' deputies asked him to authorize the Council of State to second them in these endeavours, he promised to do so.¹ Another request made in this connection was that he, or else the Queen, help to restore the political union between Holland and Utrecht by establishing Maurice's authority over the latter province. Leicester had no intention of forcing this union on Utrecht and intimated that his or the Queen's arbitration in the matter should be asked in the last resort only. Holland should begin by referring the question to the States General, to see whether

¹Bor, II, pp. 765f; BMHG, XXXIV, 76f.

that body might not be able to suggest and enforce an acceptable solution.¹

The States' complaints about Leicester's policy of promoting southerners to political functions were also ineffective. Throughout their remonstrance they had implied that whatever had gone wrong under Leicester's government was to be blamed on the influence of his southern advisers, and they asked him to refrain, at least in matters concerning the three remonstrating provinces, from "listening or giving credence to any people who had been members of the government of Brabant, Flanders and other disunited provinces". Leicester replied by asking the States to mention the names of those whom he had allowed to meddle in the affairs of Holland, Zeeland and Friesland. Prouminck and his friends in Utrecht had not been given power to do so. Reingout had received that authority, but he was no longer in office. After his dismissal there were only two people from the South who held influential positions in the central government, the Councillor Van Meetkerke and Leicester's secretary Daniel de Burchgrave. They were Flemings however, and Flanders was not, Leicester argued, one of the "disunited" provinces. It had treated with the Queen, continued to belong to the confederacy, and was consequently entitled to have its representatives in the central government. The States' deputies left the argument about Flanders'

¹ARA, SG 3781, st. 118.

rights of representation unanswered. They admitted that Van Meetkerke and De Burchgrave were among the people they considered objectionable and asserted that the two men had, among other things, introduced Reingout and his circle to Leicester.¹ Leicester ignored the accusation and informed the States that as governor of all the provinces he intended to continue lending an ear to all those who were willing to advance the common cause.² Although destined to be eliminated by the States after Leicester's departure, for the time being Van Meetkerke and De Burchgrave remained in office.

The last of the States' grievances to be considered here concerned Leicester's trade policy. The edict of August 4th, drawn up with the help of Holland and Zeeland, had allowed the export of victuals to neutral countries except those areas in France and Germany that were close to enemy territory.³ On August 28th Leicester had, at the instigation of some "turbulent spirits" as the remonstrance asserted, introduced certain restrictions in this decree.⁴ Although Zeeland also objected to the innovations it is possible that its own complaints had helped to rouse the prohibitionist spirits. It had been uneasy about Holland's suggestions that the export of victuals to forbidden neutral territory be allowed. By this time Zeeland favoured a reopening of trade

¹Bor, II, 763, 767.

²ARA, SG 3781, st. 118.

³See p.155 above.

⁴Bor, II, 762.

with Spain and Portugal, but it was still opposed to feeding the enemy in the southern Netherlands. Its States also seem to have been concerned about the effects of the licents upon the price level at home, especially in the case of dairy products. Later in the autumn they were to ask Leicester that he temporarily forbid the export of these products until prices had gone down to the accepted ceiling.¹ The fact that they joined with Holland in opposing the restrictive measure of August 28th suggests however that they did not consider a change in the decree itself desirable. The States' complaints were for once effective. Having painted a gloomy picture of the disadvantageous effects produced by the various changes in the regulations, and a still darker one of the financial damages suffered as a result of the first trade edict, they found Leicester almost apologetic. He told his Councillors to remember in his absence that the countries existed and were to be maintained by commerce; and ordered them to take the measures necessary for the preservation of trade and navigation, although care had to be taken that the public good was not subordinated to considerations of private gain.² The States of Holland and the States General were to relieve the Council of this particular duty not long after Leicester had left.

¹Kernkamp, I, 202f.

²Bor, II, 762, 766f; ARA, SG 3781, st. 118.

III

Although they had made it clear to Leicester that they found little to commend in his government, the States did not seem anxious to have it immediately discontinued. Early in November Leicester had come to The Hague to make the arrangements necessary in connection with his visit to England. Shortly after his arrival, on November 10th, and again towards the end of the month, the States informed him that his departure was regretted and that they would appreciate it if he cancelled his plans or at least postponed his trip.¹ The request was probably more than a polite gesture. There were reasons that made a prolongation of his stay advisable. The States needed his help for the settlement of many of the problems mentioned in their remonstrance. They further realized that his absence would create a void in the military command, a situation that was particularly dangerous because there was little agreement, and a great deal of rivalry, among the various army chiefs. An additional problem was that his departure would cause an unfavourable popular reaction. In the opinion of the people Leicester remained the symbol of the alliance; if he left they might despair of further English aid. What made the situation even more disagreeable was that they would probably blame the development on the States' uncooperative attitude.

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 428f, 430f, 435f; Res. Ho. 1586, p. 511; ARA, Index Bogaers, II, fo. 616verso.

Leicester's partisans were already spreading tales to this effect.¹

The fear of political unrest was strong enough to induce the States to ask Leicester that he send letters to all the provinces and towns declaring that he went to England to serve the countries' cause and that in time he would resume his charge in the Netherlands.²

In the meantime Leicester had found occasion to acquaint the States with some of his own requests and proposals. On November 21st he submitted a list of questions concerning the "state of the country", the replies to which were to serve him as a guide in his discussions with Queen and Privy Council. He wanted to know, among other things, whether they would offer to augment their own contributions and continue them for a number of years in case the Queen should resolve to increase her aid. Another question, which was probably inserted at Elizabeth's order, was that they state their opinion regarding possible peace negotiations with Spain.³

The States' answer to this memorandum contained no startling revelations. With respect to the first issue they declared at some length that they were not really in a position to augment their contributions or to promise them for a number of years in advance. However, if England should decide to double its subsidy the States promised that they would try to persuade their principals to offer an

¹Bor, II, 778.

²Res. Ho. 1586, p. 511; ARA, SG 3781, st. 159.

³Bor, II, 781.

extraordinary grant of some fl. 200,000 per year, for a period of three years.¹ Peace negotiations were of course out of the question. The States could never join these, and Leicester was urged to ask the Queen that she also refrain from entering into negotiations with Spain. The argument was that such preliminaries, innocent as they might seem, would have dangerous political consequences in the Netherlands. Many among the people failed to realize the present impossibility of a composition, and among them the negotiations would create a false sense of security.² They might, in other words, relax in their efforts, refuse to continue paying their taxes, or try by other means to force the States to enter the disastrous paths of peace.

Another point on which Leicester desired information was whether the Dutch offer of sovereignty to the Queen would be repeated. It has been seen that in October the three western provinces had resolved to leave this matter in abeyance.³ Leicester had hoped to induce them to a more positive resolution, and his failure caused him concern as well as annoyance. Convinced that ultimately the decision lay with Holland, his irritation was directed in the first place at the government of that province. When during one of the November conferences he broached the matter the members of the States General attempted to convince him

¹ARA, SG 3793, fos. 56f. Bor's statement (II, 783) that they promised an extraordinary contribution of fl. 200,000 per month for a period of three years is of course erroneous.

²Bor, II, 782f.

³P. 208 above.

that the delay was not a result of an anti-English attitude among their members. It was still their wish, they declared, to have the Queen as their sovereign, and the main reason why they had not yet decided about Leicester's proposal that the offer be repeated was lack of time. It remained a matter of some consequence that merited mature deliberation. The States of Holland, for example, had found it necessary to refer the question to their principals and until their opinion had been received no final decision could be given.¹

Leicester's suggestion had been made early in October,² and he had reason therefore to be concerned about the delay. The problem was, as he undoubtedly knew, that not all the towns of Holland were enthusiastic about the idea. Few if any of the opponents would have objected to making the offer for the sake of civility, but there was a possibility that Elizabeth, moved by Leicester's eloquence, parliamentary pressure, or by the consideration that in proceeding against Mary Stuart she would cross her Rubicon, would accept it. A transfer of sovereignty would imply the institution of a central government with semi-independent powers, and the man chosen to head that government would most likely be Leicester himself. Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Gouda and the towns of the Northern Quarter hesitated to incur this risk and had withheld their approval when on October 8th the nobility and the other towns had

¹ Bor, II, 780f.

² Res. Ho. 1586, p. 446.

agreed that the legation could make the offer on the conditions of the previous year, if upon its arrival in England it considered this advisable.¹ Holland's negative advice in the States General's meeting of October 15th suggests that the opponents had been able to sway the majority of the provincial States to their opinion.

There remained a group that favoured a renewal of the offer, however. It was led by Dordrecht, always a pro-English town and one that formed the chief Leicesterian enclave in South Holland. Religious factors were among the causes of this attitude; the Calvinists held an influential position in the magistracy.² Dordrecht was also on the side of the prohibitionists and agreed with Leicester's trade policies. Although a maritime town it shared in many respects the outlook of the inland provinces, partly because it was situated near the frontier, but also because it expected, unlike places like Amsterdam, few advantages from a protracted war. It depended primarily on the river trade and faced the prospect that it might be deprived of its major outlets so long as part of its hinterland remained under enemy control.

Still another reason why it was willing to press Leicester's suit was that it needed the help of the central government in protecting

¹ Res. Ho. 1586, p. 446.

² Dordrecht seems to have been the only town in Holland to declare itself in favour of accepting without restrictions the Church Order drawn up by the national synod of 1586. Ibid., p. 406.

its economic privileges against encroachments by its neighbours.

Dordrecht was the oldest town of Holland and had during the Middle Ages collected a large number of urban privileges, including toll and staple rights, which made not only the surrounding countryside but also the smaller urban centres of South Holland, such as Rotterdam, Schoonhoven and Gorcum, its economic dependencies. It had received these privileges from the Counts and had depended on the central government for their maintenance. That dependence had grown stronger when the neighbouring towns, weary of their inferior position, combined to attack its monopolies. Until the revolution of 1572 its government had consequently been strongly royalist. The attacks had not ceased after the removal of royal authority, and the post-revolutionary magistrate also felt the need of external support. An immediate problem was created by the fact that one of its privileges would expire in 1587. Rotterdam and the other towns would obstruct the attempt to have it renewed. Dordrecht had asked, and was soon to receive, Leicester's help in continuing this privilege, but it could have few illusions about the effectiveness of his decision so long as his influence in the government remained as limited as it was.¹

¹H. C. M. Moquette, "De strijd op economisch gebied tusschen Rotterdam en Dordrecht", TvG, XLI (1926), 40-63; J. C. Boogman, "De overgang van Gouda, Dordrecht, Leiden en Delft in de zomer van het jaar 1572", TvG, LVII (1942), 93f.

Dordrecht then had continued to advocate a repetition of the offer of sovereignty, not only in the States of Holland,¹ but apparently also in the States General.² It was no more able to hasten the decision than the other pro-English groups or than Leicester himself. It was not until January 12th that the States General finally decided on the issue, and its resolution was hardly an improvement on the earlier one. The legation was ordered to offer the sovereignty, but it was not allowed to submit any conditions. If the Queen wished to treat she was to be asked to give her opinion on the terms offered in 1585. Her suggestions were to be sent on to the States General; the deputies were not permitted to conclude, even provisionally, on these articles until they had received further directions. If they were asked why their commission had thus been restricted they were to reply that since the earlier presentation and during Leicester's government various innovations had been introduced to the country's prejudice, and that the States wished to consider with the Queen the ways and means by which the situation might be redressed.³

Leicester's discussion with the States General on this question had been held on November 23rd. On the 24th, the day before his departure from The Hague, he made the final arrangements regarding his succession. The form of the interim-government to be established had

¹Res. Ho. 1586, p. 507.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C VIII, fos. 248-251.

³Res. St. Gen., V, 530f.

been under consideration for some time. On November 11th Leicester had asked the States for their advice.¹ The question had that day been discussed by both the States General and by those of Holland. The latter considered suggesting Maurice as Leicester's successor and they thought of nominating Hohenlohe as commander in chief, presumably for both armies. Such an arrangement would have concentrated most of the political and military powers in Holland's hands, but it was unlikely that the other provinces or Leicester would have favoured it. Later in the day, perhaps after a conference with the States General, Holland dropped the idea and suggested instead an establishment approaching that which had existed before Leicester came. Both military and civil authority were to be entrusted to the Council of State, but Maurice was, together with one of the Queen's representatives, to have a position of some distinction in the Council; they were to sign the dispatches that normally went under Leicester's personal signature.²

After the proposal had been accepted by Zeeland and Friesland it was submitted to Leicester. He did not object to the idea of giving the executive functions to the Council but thought that there should be a general chief for the two armies. He had considered Sir John Norris, Sir William Stanley and his field marshal Sir William Pelham for the function, but found it difficult to choose. Stanley would be

¹Res. St. Gen., V, p. 431.

²Res. Ho. 1586, p. 497; Res. St. Gen., V, 432.

unacceptable to the States, who already distrusted him,¹ and to Sir John Norris, one of his rivals. Norris would probably also refuse to serve under Pelham, whose promotion by Leicester had earlier aroused his ire.² Norris himself, although his rank, ability and experience in Dutch affairs undoubtedly qualified him for the position, was also too controversial a figure to be an ideal candidate; a considerable number of military chiefs were opposed to him and might object to his appointment.³ The causes of these dissensions are not entirely clear. During the first months of the alliance, when Norris was supreme commander, he or else one of his brothers appears to have alienated some of the English chiefs.⁴ In other cases the feuds were older; that between Norris and Sir William Stanley, for example, dated from the time they had both served in Ireland.⁵ Leicester's own growing dislike of Norris and his policy of promoting his opponents had no doubt encouraged the factionism, although it is perhaps true that it would have been difficult for him to maintain an entirely neutral attitude in the conflict. Capable officers were scarce, and to risk sacrificing the goodwill of some of these to gain Norris' cooperation would have solved one problem and created others.

¹Bor, II, 753.

²Cal. Hatfield Mss., III, 168f; Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 137f.

³For a description of these rivalries see Motley, II, 86f.

⁴Cal. For., XX, pp. ix, 156f, 159f, 163f, 192.

⁵John Stow, Annales (London, 1605), p. 1232.

Norris' appointment as general chief would be frowned upon not only by a number of his own compatriots, but also by the Count of Hohenlohe, another of his enemies.¹ He had rights of seniority however, and eventually Leicester resolved to nominate him. Perhaps he feared an unfavourable reaction from England if Norris were bypassed, although Elizabeth herself had been concerned about the rivalry between Norris and Pelham and had thought of sending Lord Gray as a replacement for Leicester.² Another reason for his decision may have been his expectation that Norris, who had long enjoyed the confidence of the Dutch,³ would be the most likely candidate to be accepted by the States. In this expectation he was disappointed; the Dutch politicians made it clear that they were opposed to both his plan and his choice. Drawing attention to the disagreements between Hohenlohe and the Norris circle they informed Leicester that it would be the safest course to leave the matter in the hands of the Council, which could choose a chief if and when the occasion arose. Leicester submitted, and decided to appoint Norris as head of the English army only.⁴ The States seem to have

¹ Bor, II, 779; Bruce, pp. 391f.

² PRO, SP Dom. XII, 195, no. 3.

³ The appreciation of him was general. When upon Leicester's return in the early summer of 1587 Norris was recalled, not only the States General but the government of the city of Utrecht also risked Leicester's displeasure by sending Elizabeth a letter in recommendation of Norris. BL, St. Amand IX, fos. 52, 1.

⁴ Bor, II, 779. The commission was dated November 28th 1586. ARA, R. v. St. 1524, fo. 137.

agreed, but Norris' enemies did not. Five of them, Sir William Stanley, Sir Rowland Yorke, Colonel Morgan, Sir William Russell and Sir Roger Williams informed Leicester that if Norris were appointed they would offer their resignations.¹ This new problem he appears to have tried to solve by supplying Stanley and Yorke, and probably the other remonstrants as well, with a special commission which made them directly responsible to him and released them from their obedience to Norris.²

Having sacrificed the idea of an English generalship over the combined forces Leicester prepared his Act of Government. According to the States' suggestions, supreme military and civil authority was thereby given to the Council of State, which was to execute it in his name.³ This Act was signed on November 24th. On that same day he proceeded to limit the Council's powers by means of his secret Act of Restriction.⁴ That measure intended first of all to prevent drastic changes in the military establishment. It was to be expected that in Leicester's absence the Council would be tempted, or forced, to follow not the governor's but the States' directions in such questions as the reduction of the English forces and their disposal into garrison, and also in the choice and continuation of Dutch and English military officers. Leicester tried to prevent this by ordering the Council that

¹BM, Egerton Mss. 1694, fo. 51.

²Cal. For., XXI, II, pp. 234, 333; BM, Egerton Mss. 1694, fos. 66, 68.

³The Act is in Bor, II, 784f.

⁴Ibid., p. 786.

in the matter of the reduction and disposal of the English soldiers it follow the lists prepared under his direction,¹ and by forbidding it to dismiss or appoint any military governors without his consent. The Act further contained a number of provisions regarding the political government, one of which restricted the Councillors' powers also in this field. They had been ordered to help the States General to procure a settlement of the domestic divisions in Utrecht. Leicester did not intend that in the case of the exiled politicians and of Buys the solution should be imposed upon Utrecht against his partisans' wishes, and by his secret instructions he therefore forbade the Council "to ordain or dispose regarding the release of any prisoners [and regarding] people exiled by any towns, except by means of ordinary justice and according to the appointments made". Apparently this vague order meant that the judicature was to be entrusted to no other judges than those of Utrecht. The Council of State interpreted it in this light. When early in January it took the matter of Buys' trial in hand, it ordered the court of Utrecht to institute the proceedings.²

The Act of Restriction was not the cause, as the States were to assert, of the loss of Deventer and the Zutphen forts. Stanley and Yorke would have committed their treason regardless of the Council's, or for that matter Sir John Norris', authority or lack of authority

¹ See for these lists Bor, II, 786f.

² ARA, Index Bogaers, III, fo. 410.

over them. It nevertheless did create a potentially dangerous power vacuum in the military field. Leicester's desire to safeguard the position of his own appointees and of the English army is understandable, and he probably expected to act in conformity with the Queen's wishes as well. Elizabeth had objected to the appointment of Maurice as head of the government,¹ and the fact that she considered dispatching Lord Gray to the Netherlands shows that she also preferred to keep affairs of government under English control. But as it turned out, Leicester's secret instructions could not guarantee the preservation of the establishment built up by him, while in time they were to provide the States with one of the most effective weapons to attack his government.

¹ She objected to him because he was "a stranger, interested in the state of Flushing", and because he was led "by such as she [fancied] not". PRO, SP Dom. XII, 195, no. 3; Davison to Walsingham, November 5/15, 1586.

CHAPTER VII

THE STATES ASSUME CONTROL

I

The history of the first months of Leicester's absence is largely that of the attempts of the States to regain mastery over their own affairs. The aim of the present chapter is to describe these attempts, at least insofar as they proceeded from Holland, which was the leader of the movement. It was also the province that was to reap the greatest political benefits from the reorganization. The States' success in changing the settlement of the previous year led inevitably to Holland's hegemony in the confederacy and its leadership of the national government, a position which it retained throughout the Republican era. The Council of State continued to exist, but henceforth it depended on the States General, and that body was, in turn, dominated by Holland, the strongest and wealthiest partner in the confederacy.

The attempts to restore States' authority were inspired in the first place by distrust and fear of Leicester and by the intention to prevent him from resuming his former powers if he should return. They also constituted a reaction against centralism in general. That reaction would have come if the experiment in centralization had been made by another than Leicester. An independent federal government was by definition incompatible with the States' system, and the experience of

the past year had merely underlined this truth. Neither Leicester's final departure and resignation nor the defeat of his partisans could consequently induce the States to make another attempt at unification. A third factor, which has been mentioned in the discussion of Holland's stand against Leicester in the autumn of 1586, was what might be called a "defensive particularism", an attitude that was fostered by the difficult domestic and the insecure international situation at the time. Holland had no intention to leave its allies unaided, and it did not do so during these months, but it demanded the freedom to limit its responsibilities and to concentrate its efforts upon home defence.

Another aspect of this period, which was of no far-reaching consequences with respect to the country's political development but which at the time gave rise to considerable controversy, was the States' policy of restricting English military influence. Many of the measures introduced were aimed at clearing Holland from English soldiers and at reducing the English element within the army as a whole. In December, when the first plans for a reduction of the army were made, it had been decided to keep 4,500 English volunteers in the States' pay.¹ This was only 500 less than Leicester had intended to retain.² On February 9th however it was resolved to remove all Englishmen from the Dutch army by transferring them to the Queen's auxiliary, which was seriously

¹Brugmans, I, 308.

²According to his Act of Restriction; Bor, II, 787.

depleted.¹ Although that auxiliary itself was to be retained, the States were no longer anxious to have it increased. The legation to London had been ordered to ask Elizabeth that she double her army, but on February 17th the States General informed their delegates that it would be preferred if she converted whatever additional aid she might decide to give into a monetary grant, which could be used for the levy of German mercenaries.² There were no doubt practical reasons urging a limitation in the number of English soldiers. Their poverty and disorganization made them unwelcome to towns and rural areas alike, while Stanley's and Yorke's treason contributed to the impopularity of the English. The presence of a strong English army was considered dangerous also for political reasons, however. It protected and encouraged the militant anti-States' groups, it might be used as a means to reinstate Leicester, and it could be employed by Elizabeth to force a peace upon the country. This third factor constituted one of the States' arguments in defending their measures in the face of criticism by the Leicesterians of Utrecht.³

Prouninck and his partisans were not alone in objecting to the States' anti-English and decentralizing policies. They were seconded

¹Res. St. Gen., V, 604f.

²ARA, SG 3793, fo. 170. According to a document submitted to the Privy Council by Sir Roger Williams the States had around this time informally inquired into the possibility of the Queen's converting her entire aid into a monetary subsidy. Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 382.

³Bor, II, 910.

by the Council of State. The Councillors' opposition was not, it is true, very effective; with the exception of the English member Thomas Wilkes they usually ended by accepting Holland's direction. This does not necessarily mean that their protests were perfunctory only, or merely inspired by fear of the Queen's reactions and of Leicester's wrath. Councillors like the Fleming Adolf van Meetkerke, the Seigneur van Brakel, representative for Utrecht, and Hessel Aysma, who for a short period represented Friesland, were centralists and anxious to see not only Leicester's but also the Council's authority preserved. Neither can Leoninus and Dr. Dorrius, the members for Gelderland and Overijsel, have been indifferent about the attempts to make the central government wholly dependent upon the States and upon Holland. The Hollanders Van Loozen and the Seigneur van Brederode, and the Zeelanders Valcke and Teelinck, also give the impression to have been in favour of an independent Council, or at least of a reasonable division of authority between States and central government. Membership in the Council appears to have produced a less narrow provincial outlook than membership in the States. Even the Amsterdammer Willem Bardesius, who is usually considered the chief protagonist of the States and who in 1587 cooperated with the anti-Leicesterian groups in Holland,¹ had during Leicester's government seconded at least some of his policies that went against the States' wishes. In matters that concerned Holland Leicester had tended

¹Brugmans, II, 165.

to make use of his services, and in questions like the appointment of Mostard in the Northern Quarter,¹ and the reorganization of the Admiralty College of Hoorn,² he had given his cooperation to Leicester. There are of course also instances of his opposition to the governor, and it is possible that collaboration was the exception rather than the rule. Unfortunately only part of the Council's resolutions for the Leicester period has survived and the attitude of Bardesius, as well as that of the Council as a whole, towards Leicester's policies remains in some respects a matter of conjecture.

This is also true of the Council's opinions regarding the States' decentralizing measures after Leicester had gone. Most of the Councillors doubtlessly felt that Leicester's approach, and the circumstances of the moment, warranted at least some of the changes that were introduced. They also realized that in cases of innovations which could not be justified on these grounds protests tended to be useless. The Council depended financially upon Holland, and that even more so than it had done formerly. Apparently Zeeland and Friesland contributed little in these months,³ while Utrecht, whose countryside was despoiled by English and, since Stanley's and Yorke's treason, by Spanish soldiery, did for a time not even take the trouble to submit a financial "Consent" to the

¹See above, p. 237.

²See p. 267 below.

³BMHG, XXXIV, 176; Brugmans, II, 458.

central government.¹ The Council could achieve little without the aid of Holland, whose States were therefore in a position to enforce their policies.

One of Holland's immediate goals was to regain control over the disposition of its financial and military means and so to provide for the security of its own territory. The removal of the Council's power to administer these matters, the liberalization of the trade regulations, the strengthening of the navy, and the safeguarding of the frontiers -- which implied the need to gain control over Utrecht, its chief eastern bulwark -- were among the measures attempted. It achieved all these goals, except the last one. To bring Utrecht fully into Holland's orbit it was necessary not only to restore the anti-Leicesterians there, but also to bring the province under Maurice's government. Meurs' attitude towards Holland was friendlier now than it had been, but he refused to collaborate in the liquidation of his own stadholdership.² The centralists themselves were still firmly established. They enjoyed the protection of an English garrison, and they had the moral support of Wilkes and Sir John Norris, who especially in these months hesitated to alienate Leicester's partisans. After the treason there seems to have been a fairly general conviction that English influence would have

¹ Cabala sive Scrinia Sacra (London, 1691), II, 33; Res. St. Gen., V, 635, 697f.

² To retain his friendship Holland eventually agreed that for the time being it would approve of his continuation as stadholder of Utrecht. Res. Ho. 1587, p. 70.

been far more drastically reduced, if not totally excluded, had it not been for the opposition offered by the pro-English groups in such Leicesterian strongholds as the Northern Quarter and Utrecht.¹

The centralists of Utrecht were unable to prevent Holland from re-establishing its hegemony, but they did not cease their attempts to obstruct its policies, and the divisions between the two provinces deepened steadily. A violent quarrel had broken out in January, in connection with the release of Paul Buys. Knowing that the Council of State lacked the power to free him, Holland had given its adherence to a proposal that the States General take the matter in hand and order Buys' guardian to free his prisoner.² The order was obeyed and by the end of January Buys arrived in Holland. The rulers of Utrecht objected to the extension of the powers of the States General, both because it competed with the Council and because it was dominated by Holland. They concluded that by ordering Buys' release the deputies had exceeded their authority, and reacted by requesting Meurs to call a national assembly to their own city. The expectation appears to have been that once the delegates were removed from direct contact with the States of Holland they would behave in a less revolutionary manner. The assembly was called, and deputies from Gelderland came, but the western provinces refused to play Utrecht's game.³ The attempt had to

¹Groen van Prinsterer, Archives ou Correspondance Inédite de la Maison d'Orange-Nassau (Utrecht, 1857), II, i, pp. 44, 52, 65; Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 420.

²Kluit, II, 146.

³Bor, II, 907f.

be abandoned, but for more than a month, from the middle of February until the 31st of March, Utrecht neglected to send representatives to the States' assembly in The Hague. When through Noel de Caron's mediation the province resumed relations with the western allies it provided its deputies with a restricted commission; they were allowed to vote only on those matters that had been listed in the States General's convocation, and that had therefore been discussed by the magistrates and the provincial assemblies.¹ This procedure also aimed at limiting the States General's executive powers. It was at the same time the practical application of the political theories which, as will be seen later, the centralists were advancing in these months.

Until the middle of February Utrecht had been represented by Buth and Moersbergen, deputies of the first two estates. The centralists had tried to recall these since the time that Prouninck had been refused admission, and eventually the summons were obeyed.² The delegates sent on March 31st were commissioned by the ruling group. Presumably they were ordered to try and stem the anti-Leicesterian legislation, but they arrived too late. By the end of March most of the measures Holland wished to introduce had already been passed. On the whole the States General seems to have been cooperative. Zeeland and Friesland usually agreed with Holland, Buth and Moersbergen undoubtedly refrained from giving

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 715, 743f, 494-497.

² Ibid., pp. 242, 493f.

strenuous opposition to its proposals, and the deputies of Gelderland appear to have acquiesced in the direction given by the allies. Overijssel was still absent from the States General.

On January 26th the national assembly had drafted a new decree regulating the country's trade. It allowed the export of imported merchandise, except munitions of war, to any country that stood not under the obedience of Spain. In fact only the southern Netherlands were meant to be excluded; the States proceeded to free trade with Spain and Portugal. The decree was sent to the Council of State with the request that it publish it in Leicester's name. The Council objected and commissioned Leoninus, Bardesius and Aysma to try and dissuade the States. The three men admitted that financial and economic considerations made a more liberal trade policy advisable but thought that the domestic situation did not warrant the introduction of drastic changes. Their main argument was the possibility of an adverse popular reaction. The people were convinced that increased exports would cause a steep increase in prices at home, and they also continued to believe in the military effectiveness of a prohibition. If it happened that Parma made a successful attempt in the field they would blame it on the States' policy of relieving the famine in the South. The Council therefore suggested that the matter be left in abeyance until Leicester's return. If the States nevertheless insisted on publishing the decree they should, it argued, at least reinstitute the prohibition of trade with Calais and

Emden.¹

The States made some vague promises with respect to the last point. They further warned that the regulations would be published in the States General's name, if the Council refused to do it in Leicester's. The Council submitted and on January 30th it published the decree. It was done under protest however, and Wilkes refused to sign it. The moderations were not introduced. Although Dordrecht, Gorcum, Arnhem and Utrecht opposed the decree, and although Zeeland would have preferred a solution along the lines suggested by the Council, the States General decided to allow trade with Calais and Emden. The reintroduction of licents for the export of victuals and other merchandise to the southern Netherlands soon followed. The desperate financial situation provided the first occasion to change the new regulations in this respect. Once the custom was reinstituted it remained in force. Only when there was a direct military threat to the northern provinces was the export temporarily ended.²

After the introduction of its commercial measures Holland made an attempt to reorganize the naval administration. Leicester had left his marks also in this field. When he arrived in the Netherlands there were three separate Admiralty Colleges, one at Hoorn, serving the Northern Quarter, one at Rotterdam, and one at Middelburg. In all these

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, pp. 755-758.

² Ibid., p. 758; Kernkamp, I, 204f, 212-217.

the personnel was recruited, in part or in whole, from the respective Colleges of States' Deputies. Until the summer of 1584 the administration had been purely provincial, but upon the Prince of Orange's death some centralization was attempted. Maurice and the Council of State were given the superintendence over maritime matters and received the power to re-establish the Admiralty Colleges. Apparently the Council of 1584 had left the matter once more to the provinces, but Leicester, who had been given the same authority as the previous government, did institute new administrative bodies. The system of the three Colleges was retained, but the personnel was appointed by and received its instructions from the central government. The ordinance to this effect was issued on July 26th. It outlined, among other things, the area of the Colleges' jurisdiction. That of Hoorn would cover the Northern Quarter, Amsterdam (which had formerly fallen under Rotterdam but preferred to be joined to North Holland), Friesland, Utrecht, and the Quarter of Arnhem. The Admiralty of Rotterdam was to have charge over South Holland and the area of Waal and Maas, and that of Middelburg over Zeeland and the coasts of Brabant and Flanders. Maurice, the admiral, would be head of each College separately and of the combined Colleges.

The reorganization at Rotterdam does not seem to have caused strenuous opposition, but the States of Zeeland objected to the new regulations. Leicester had agreed to continue the members of the College of States' Deputies as members of the Admiralty, but the fact that these would have to serve the central, rather than the provincial government,

was considered too prejudicial to Zeeland's interests. Leicester's threat that he would send people of his own choice eventually induced the province however to acquiesce. Hoorn and the College of Deputies of the Northern Quarter also felt that the administration should remain unchanged and refused to admit the newly appointed Admiralty members. Bardsius was sent to bring them to terms and in the second half of September the States finally agreed to accept the College. Their decision came too late. Amsterdam was anxious to have an Admiralty of its own and offered to accept Leicester's appointees, who left Hoorn to settle in the former town. Hoorn protested but was unable to dislodge the College from Amsterdam. The Northern Quarter refused to submit to Amsterdam's jurisdiction and the local College of States' Deputies continued to administer naval matters for its own territory. Henceforth Holland was served by three Admiralty Colleges.¹

The traditional explanation that Leicester's measures were responsible for the decentralization of the naval administration in the Netherlands has been exposed by the naval historian, Dr. Elias, as erroneous.² The three separate Colleges existed, and although the measure led to a further split, this had not been the central government's intention. In view of the ambitions of Amsterdam and the Northern Quarter

¹ARA, J. de Hullu, De Archieven der Admiraliteitscolleges (in manuscript), pp. 10-18, 23-30; Johna E. Elias, Schetsen uit de Geschiedenis van ons Zeewezen (The Hague, 1916), I, 29-34.

²Elias, op. cit., p. 33.

it would no doubt have occurred sooner or later. So long as they remained under central control there were, moreover, no reasons to object to the existence of several local units.

Although the ordinance of July 26th did not aim at a proliferation of Colleges, a later decree by Leicester did threaten to have this effect. Late in November he established an Admiralty at Ostend in Flanders. By the terms of the provisional treaty for Antwerp, Ostend had been offered to the Queen as a cautionary town. It continued to have an English garrison, which was commanded by Sir John Conway. Ostend's economic condition was no better than that of other coastal towns in the southern Netherlands. Its inhabitants were impoverished, its harbour empty, and its maritime defences in a state of serious disrepair. The cost of defending it devolved on the allies, but neither the Queen nor the States were anxious to spend a large amount of money for its improvement. It was probably in the hope of strengthening the town's economic and thus its military position that Leicester introduced the Admiralty College.¹ He was unable however to make the institution

¹ This is suggested by a memorandum, written at a somewhat later date by an Englishman familiar with Ostend's state and situation. In this memorandum attention was drawn to the strategic importance of the town, but also to the need that something be done for its improvement, and one of the measures suggested was the establishment of an Admiralty. By this means trade would revive, "the costome of all things going in and out with the impost and accyse, and with the concourse of people, would sone enriche the place, and yield benefitt sufficient being well collected and disposed to quite her Majesty of manie charges and to repaire the haven, the Sluces, the Sea breaches and all other things amisse". PRO, SP Ho. 84, XIX, no. 47.

permanent. Holland and Zeeland refused to acknowledge it and after some months it was forced to cease operation.¹

The establishment of an Admiralty College in Ostend was no doubt one of the reasons why Holland, which at first does not seem to have objected to the Admiralty Act of 1586,² came to oppose it later. Another reason appears to have been Leicester's policy of choosing the Colleges' personnel without, or even against, the States' advice.³ Holland did recognize the need for more uniformity in naval matters however, and it tried to retain this principle. Unification was possible by placing the Colleges under the central government's superintendence, but it could also be achieved by putting them under the control of the admiral only. This was the arrangement which Holland now contemplated. The States General was again cooperative and passed, on January 31st, a new Admiralty Act.⁴ That Act did not explicitly remove the superintendence over naval matters from the central government, but this was implied in the provision that the Colleges were to keep correspondence with and obey Maurice, the admiral; neither the governor general nor the Council of State were mentioned. It further provided that Maurice would henceforth be served by a special executive body or Admiralty Council, consisting of six

¹ARA, De Hullu, pp. 36f.

²Cf. ibid., p. 26.

³This complaint was made by the States General in the summer of 1587. See Bor, II, 989.

⁴Res. St. Gen., V, 597-600.

members, three from Holland, two from Zeeland, and one from Friesland. In order to provide for the navy's maintenance, the admiral and his Council were to have power to borrow money on the security of future convoys and licents, and if the revenue of these duties was insufficient to repay the loans the residue was to be taken from the contributions granted by Holland and Zeeland for the land war. They were also allowed to grant, apparently without reference to the Council of State or even the States General, licents for the export of victuals and other products to enemy country.

Although the States General had given its adherence to the proposal, it does not seem that the new Admiralty Council was established. If it was, it did not survive, for after Leicester's resignation Holland was to come with a similar proposal. A "Superintendent College" was then appointed, but Zeeland refused to cooperate and after some years the executive College disappeared from the scene. Later attempts to achieve unification were also ineffective, and the principle of regional control remained in force for the duration of the Republic.¹

Another of Holland's goals was to resume control over military matters. This was accomplished in stages. The first step was taken on December 5th, when the Council of State requested the States General to provide money for the muster and reduction of the army. Of the extraordinary grants and of the normal contributions that would become

¹ARA, De Hullu, pp. 40ff.

due on December 10th an amount of fl. 180,000 was still owing, and the Council requested that the four contributing provinces pay this sum and advance the fl. 200,000 payable by January 10th. The States promised to do so, but on condition that for the next three months the garrisons of Holland, Zeeland and Friesland would be changed only after the consent of the stadholder and the provincial States had been received.¹

This condition was made before the States were aware of the Act of Restriction. That Act was not discovered until December 16th, when members of the States General visited the Council to submit a plan for the reduction of the army. The plan had been prepared in cooperation with Bardesius and Teelinck, and under the direction of the Count of Hohenlohe.² The Council itself had asked for Hohenlohe's advice, although in doing so it had undoubtedly acted against the wishes of Thomas Wilkes. Wilkes resented Hohenlohe's interference, for Hohenlohe and Holland were hand in glove during these months. The States needed his help in order to regain control over the military establishment, and Hohenlohe was prepared to give it. His services to the States were hardly less valuable than those of Maurice, and his role was a more active one. Maurice was of course indispensable; much of what seemed of questionable legality in the States' innovations could be justified with a reference to Maurice's commission, or else to the powers possessed by his

¹Res. Ho. 1587, pp. 414-416.

²Brugmans, II, 432f.

predecessors.¹ Maurice cooperated, but there is not much evidence of personal initiative on his side. Hohenlohe however, who had long been tired of his subordinate position under the English governor, became one of the central figures in the anti-English and anti-Leicesterian movement.²

Since Leicester's departure Hohenlohe had, as Wilkes informed Walsingham, been busy strengthening his own and weakening the English position by assuring himself of the frontier towns.³ The plans for the reduction of the Dutch and German companies, made after his "fantasie and mynd" were, still according to Wilkes, highly selective; pro-English companies were assigned to be dismissed and companies at Hohenlohe's and the States' devotion retained.⁴ These plans were concerned not only with the reduction of the Dutch and German troops but also with their disposal into garrisons. In a number of cases they were assigned to towns which Leicester had reserved for the English army. The Council therefore had to oppose the plans and it produced the Act of Restriction. The disclosure had no other effect than annoying the States' deputies, and especially Oldenbarnevelt, who "entered into choller and envayed indiscreetly against the said acte". The plans were not drastically changed and the Council, which had been warned that no money would be

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 535.

² Brugmans, II, 429.

³ Cal. For., XXI, 11, p. 253.

⁴ Brugmans, I, 310.

forthcoming unless it followed the States' lists, accepted these. Wilkes and Norris alone seem to have voted against acceptance.¹

The Act of Restriction provided the States with one argument to justify their procedures in limiting the Council's powers. Another and more potent one was provided by Stanley's and Yorke's treason. The danger of an adverse popular reaction to the States' anti-Leicesterian measures, and the fear of unduly annoying the English government had so far been restraining influences. The first possibility had now been removed, and the second seemed greatly diminished. Disastrous as the loss of Deventer and the IJssel forts might be from a military point of view, the treason by Leicester's nominees and favourites served a highly useful political purpose.

The surrender took place in the morning of January 29th, but it had been expected for some time. Rumours that one of Yorke's lieutenants was in correspondence with De Tassis at Zutphen had become current less than a month after Leicester's departure, and the magistrate of Deventer had long expressed its distrust of Stanley's intentions.² The plans may well have been made when Leicester returned to England, leaving his governors to the charity of States and Council who, as they knew, had objected to their appointments. The two garrisons were ill-paid, but they were probably no worse supplied than others. Poverty was general

¹Brugmans, I, 311f; II, 432f.

²Brugmans, I, 290, 302, 305f, 312f, 338f; II, 436f; Bor, II, 878f.

among the soldiers, Dutch as well as English. The last payment from England had been received in November and had in large part been used to cover arrears and to help finance the autumn campaign. The next shipment of money was to come in March,¹ but already in February wants among the English soldiers were such that with Norris' consent some of them entered the confines of Holland, where they prepared to organize a raid on The Hague to demand payment. Wilkes was forced to borrow money from the States of Holland for distribution among the soldiers to help prevent their design.²

The Council of State had been promised a month's payment to the soldiers in the States' charge, to which the garrisons of Deventer and the Zutphen forts belonged.³ A promise did not necessarily mean, however, that the money would be disbursed without lengthy delays or without important deductions. The Councillors complained, as Leicester before them, that the contributions were "paid in paper" instead of ready money.⁴ Towns refused to receive the ill-provided garrisons, mutinies threatened, and rumours about intended treason were heard from many sides. On January 17th the French captain Marchant, whom Hohenlohe had put in command of Wouw castle after Leicester's departure, made his peace with the enemy. Hohenlohe had tried to prevent Marchant's surrender by

¹Neale, Essays, p. 189.

²Bor, II, 886f; Brugmans, II, 452f.

³Bor, II, 787.

⁴Res. St. Gen., V, 667f; Brugmans, II, 19, 441f.

force.¹ Norris contemplated using the same procedure with respect to Yorke and Stanley, but the Council of State, fearful that a show of force might induce the two men to admit Spanish troops, restrained him.²

The anti-English reaction which followed Stanley's and Yorke's treason increased in violence when English companies in Zwolle, Arnhem and Ostend deserted to the enemy and when it was rumoured that Englishmen in Bergen op Zoom were in correspondence with Parma.³ Stories were spread that Stanley's and Yorke's action was the result of a concerted plan, inspired by the Queen or by Leicester himself, and for a time all Englishmen were distrusted.⁴ The soldiers were even less welcome to the towns than they had been previously, and their increased vagabonding in the rural areas served to intensify the anti-English feelings among the Dutch population. Even the city of Utrecht, where Norris had hoped to find lodging for part of his roaming soldiery, for a time refused to help him out. When presenting Norris' patent the captain of a company sent to that town was advised by Brakel to go and lodge his unreliable troops elsewhere.⁵

The States made no attempt to stem the frenzy. Oldenbarnevelt had in fact helped to set the tone when during a visit to the Council

¹ Bor, II, 878; Brugmans, I, 303.

² Bor, II, 879, 886.

³ Ibid., p. 925.

⁴ Cal. For., XXI, II, p. 382; XXI, III, pp. 43f.

⁵ BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, fo. 89; Cal. For., XXI, II, p. 359.

he attacked not only Leicester, but the entire English nation. On that occasion Van Loozen, Wilkes and George Gilpin, English secretary in the Council, had defended the English and counselled moderation.¹ There were others who objected to the accusations levied at the ally. Prouninck wrote a defence of the English,² and at Wilkes' request the Council issued a decree forbidding the "defamation of the English nation".³ Because it was in defence of Leicester the Council published it not on his, but on its own authority. The States of Holland objected to this solution and refused to publish the decree on the ground that it should have been in Leicester's name, or else in that of the States General.⁴ It is not clear whether they came back on their refusal. Late in April the College of States' Deputies was to allow the publication of another "placard" in defence of the English, but this second one contained a provision aiming at the suppression of libels against the States as well.⁵ By that time the political divisions of pre-treason days were reasserting themselves.

¹ BMHG, XXXIV, 149-153.

² Bor, II, 883f.

³ Res. St. Gen., V, 535.

⁴ Bor, II, 882f.

⁵ Res. Ho. 1587, pp. 124f. The States General itself had in fact asked for the publication of such a decree, and the document in question, although published in Leicester's name, had been drafted by the Advocate of Holland. ARA, Index Bogaers, II, fo. 598.

In the intervening period Holland had been able, however, to conclude its reorganization. Its States began by repeating their earlier decision that the Council was not to have any power over the garrisons of Holland.¹ Attention was also given to the removal of suspected elements from the Dutch army. The pro-English commanders of Muiden and Gorcum were replaced and the garrison of Woerden, which also seems to have been distrusted, was changed.² The States were unable however to reduce the governor of the Northern Quarter to their obedience. Sonoy refused to relinquish the commission given him by Leicester, and attempts to dislodge him by force were unsuccessful.³

One of the major changes introduced after the treason was Maurice's Act of Authority. It was passed in the course of February with an almost unanimous vote, only Dordrecht and Gorcum opposing it.⁴ By this Act all power over the military establishment in Holland and Zeeland was given to Maurice and Hohenlohe. Every officer serving there was to accept a commission from the stadholder and to take a new oath of obedience to him and to the provincial States, and no soldiers would be admitted, or allowed to pass through the two provinces, unless they had Maurice's patents. Before Leicester or the Council could introduce any measures affecting the military situation in Holland and Zeeland they

¹ Res. Ho. 1587, p. 34.

² Bor. II, 893.

³ Ibid., pp. 895ff.

⁴ Bor. II, 894; Res. Ho. 1587, pp. 90f.

had, in other words, to ask Maurice's permission.

The States intended to have the Act of Authority effectuated and proceeded to incorporate it, together with the new Admiralty regulations, into their Act of Consent for the renewal of the contributions.¹ This Consent, which was given on March 9th, at the same time deprived the Council of the power to administer Holland's money. It provided that Holland would continue payment of its share in the fl. 200,000 per month, but on condition that a number of deductions were made. The most important of these were: (1) Holland's share of Leicester's salary, as well as the salaries of Maurice, Hohenlohe and other officers serving in Holland, (2) the money needed for the payment of garrisons in Holland and in those frontier towns for which it had assumed financial responsibility,² (3) the sums needed for the victualling of frontier towns and the money required to pay the debts made in providing these towns the previous year, and (4) whatever sums might be considered necessary to help provide for the maintenance of the navy. If any money was left after these deductions had been made, it would only be paid on

¹ See for Holland's Act of Consent Res. St. Gen., V, 679-689.

² At least since January 1585 Holland had agreed to pay the garrisons of a number of towns that formed an immediate line of defence around its own territory (ARA, SG 3780, fo. 26). These included in 1587 the Zuiderzee and IJsel towns of Staveren, Blokzijl, Kampen, Zwolle, Elburg and Hardewijk, as well as Bommel, Tiel, Buren, Willemstad and a few other places on or near its south-eastern frontier. Res. St. Gen., V, 680.

condition that Leicester's "apostilles" on the November remonstrance were carried out, that Holland was relieved of vagabonding soldiers, and that the military administration was reformed in such a way that the soldiers could be paid at least every forty-eight days. The Council lacked the money and the authority to fulfil these conditions and so forfeited the right to administer Holland's contributions. The reorganization at the provincial level had been completed.

II

By this time the States had also succeeded in reorganizing the central government. The Council's term of office had ended on February 4th. On that day the States General had renewed its commission for three months and it had reappointed the members for Holland, Zeeland, Gelderland and Overijssel. The Seigneur van Brakel however, whom Leicester in the summer of 1586 had appointed to represent Utrecht, was dismissed. His place was to be taken either by Paul Buys or by such other person as the States General would choose from a nomination submitted by the provincial States. The Fleming van Meetkerke also lost his office, and in order to reduce the influence of his compatriot Daniel de Burchgrave, one of Leicester's secretaries, it was decreed that henceforth no "outsiders" would be admitted to the Council's discussions.¹ The two members for Friesland, Hessel Aysma and Yelger Feitsma, had left the Council a few days earlier. They had recently been chosen by Leicester, the first

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 712f.

as candidate of the towns of Friesland and the second as Westergoo's nominee.¹ The States General however had refused to acknowledge the appointments. Its arguments were that it had not yet been informed of Friesland's decision to submit itself to Leicester's government by accepting the Act of Authority, and that it was not certain whether the nomination for Councillors had indeed been legal.² In fact neither of the two men seems to have been interested in the office.³ Feitsma had anticipated the national assembly's verdict by offering his resignation. Meetkerke and Van Loozen remonstrated with the States General about its refusal to admit Aysma, but he also appeared willing to accept the States' decision.⁴

At this time, and in the months to come, most Councillors would probably have been grateful to have a similar excuse as the Friesian representatives. Membership in a Council that was deprived of its authority, troubled by creditors, and unable to introduce order into the political, financial and military chaos, was not an agreeable function. On February 6th Wilkes, Brederode, Loozen, Bardesius and Buys, the only Councillors present at the time, had told the States that the rearrangement of February 4th was unacceptable to them, in the first place because not enough members were left, and in the second because the Act of

¹ BMHG, XXXIV, 71.

² Bor, II, 927.

³ ARA, Index Bogaers, III, fo. 411.

⁴ Res. St. Gen., V. 710f.

Continuation had not been accompanied by a monetary grant. Without sufficient personnel and without money the government could not function, and they therefore offered their resignation. The States promised to consider the objections and at their request most of the Councillors agreed to serve for another month. Buys however resigned his membership.¹ Holland's Act of Consent of March 9th deprived the government of whatever financial independence it had possessed, and no increase in membership took place. At Wilkes' suggestion the Council asked the States General to appoint a member for Flanders, but the States refused this request.² Friesland and Utrecht neglected to submit a nomination;³ the latter province on the ground that the right to appoint Councillors belonged to Leicester.⁴ Seeing no improvement, the Council repeated its offer of resignation.⁵ For a while Bardesius retired from the government,⁶ but somehow the States succeeded in inducing the other members to continue in office until Leicester's return.

If the Dutch Councillors had their problems, Wilkes was in an even less enviable position. So long as it was not certain that Leicester

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 713f.

² ARA, Index Bogaers, III, fo. 645f.

³ Res. St. Gen., V, 719, 722.

⁴ Bor, II, 965.

⁵ Res. St. Gen., V, 717, 721; ARA, Index Bogaers, III, fos. 415f.

⁶ Cal. For., XXI, ii, p. 428. Under Buckhurst he was back in function; Bor, II, 969.

would resign, Wilkes would be considered responsible for the maintenance of the governor's authority, and that in the first place by Leicester himself. Wilkes knew that by his reports of the previous autumn he had incurred Leicester's wrath, and recent intelligence from England had informed him that his hostility continued.¹ Although he was innocent of the innovations in the Netherlands, it was nevertheless to be expected that they would be put to his account. Another of his problems was that there were no guarantees of the Queen's willingness to resign herself to the situation in the provinces by agreeing to a change in the treaty. Until this happened he was bound to try and uphold the treaty regulations, which provided for the maintenance of the Council's power.

As a result of illness Wilkes had been absent from the Council during part of the critical month of February.² Apparently he had not neglected to issue written remonstrances against the States' measures, and upon his recovery he resumed his verbal protests. Eventually the States decided to give him an official hearing. In March, during one of his frequent visits to the Council, Oldenbarnevelt suggested that Wilkes inform the States of his objections to their policies. They were prepared, he promised, to answer his complaints and capable of defending themselves against the accusation that they had in any way encroached upon Leicester's rights.³ The challenge resulted in a lengthy discussion

¹ Cal. Dom., Addenda 1580-1625, p. 203.

² Brugmans, II, 450.

³ Ibid., p. 454.

wherein Wilkes, seconded by Leoninus, Loozen and Teelinck,¹ mentioned the ways in which the treaty, Leicester's prerogatives and the Council's authority had been violated. The discussion in question derives its importance not so much from this catalogue of grievances as from the fact that it led to the submission of a written remonstrance by Wilkes, in the concluding section of which he questioned the legality of the manner in which the States exercised their authority. Hereby he invited the States of Holland to produce their famous "Deduction", a document that constitutes the first official declaration regarding the basis of States' authority and States' sovereignty.

The argument of March centred around the question to what extent the States were justified in acting as the country's sovereigns. On a number of occasions during Leicester's government they had referred to their sovereign rights. As Professor Fruin has pointed out, this practice grew as a result of the circumstances.² When Elizabeth objected to the grant of "sovereign authority" to Leicester, and when Leicester used his powers in a manner unacceptable to the States or considered them to be more extensive than they had intended them to be, the States had defended their actions and opposition with the argument that the sovereignty was and remained theirs. During the discussions on the Act of Authority for example, when Sidney asked whether the governor general

¹BM, Add. Mss. 48,083, fo. 15.

²Verspr. Geschr., III, 191.

might freely dismiss and appoint local governors, the deputies had replied that this was the prerogative of the provincial States, "who now possessed the sovereignty of the country".¹ Reference had further been made to States' sovereignty, as has been seen, in the course of the conflict about Brabant's confiscations and ecclesiastical goods.²

When after Leicester's departure the States were not merely trying to keep his authority within the bounds of his commission but rather to reduce it, they did this again on the strength of their sovereign rights. They had emphasized this fact during the discussions with Wilkes and his supporters in the Council.³ In his remonstrance Wilkes objected to this practice.⁴ In the absence of a prince, he told them, the sovereignty of the country did not belong to the States -- and the context shows that he referred to the deputies to the assemblies -- but to the people, whose "servants, ministers and deputies" the States were. That the States' deputies could not be called sovereigns was evident from the fact that their commissions were limited to a certain time and that they were bound by instructions. Sovereign powers, on the other hand, could not be but absolute. He went on to argue that the

¹ Brugmans, I, 48.

² P. 123 above.

³ Brugmans, II, 455.

⁴ The remonstrance has been printed by Bor, II, 918-921, and in part by Jan Hughes, Het leven en bedrijf van Mr. Franchois Vranck (The Hague, 1909), pp. 69f, who used a copy of the French original. Quotations are from the second source.

States did not even represent the sovereignty, because the people had given the administration of it to Leicester, and this right continued to belong to him until the people recalled it. Wilkes summarized and concluded his argument with the words, "Joint que suivant la règle du droict commun (quo Jure quid statuitur eodem Jure tolli debet) voz Seigneuries ont esté plainement auctorisez par les provinces, par les villes, ou pour mieulx dire par voz Maitres et Supérieurs de defferer ce Gouvernement a son Exce, s'ensuit que est besoing de semblable pouvoir et auctorisation pour le luy oster ou du tout ou en partie. Et si voz Seigneuries n'ont eu ceste commission pour luy retrancher de son autorité ou du Conseil d'Estat...s'ensuit de deux choses l'une, ou que voz Seigneuries n'ont pas bien entendu ce qu'ilz ont faict...ou plustost que voz Seigneuries ont encourru le crime de désobéissance, puisque si solennellement vous luy avez juré et promis obéissance".

The States' Deduction was drawn up by Franchois Vranck, pensionary of Gouda.¹ It opened with an exposition of the States' functions before the abjuration of Philip II. The substance of this introductory section, which was based more on legend than on historical fact, was that for eight centuries the Counts of Holland and Zeeland had received their sovereign rights from the nobility and the towns, representing the estates of the country; that until Philip's accession the Counts had tended to rule in conformity with the States' advice; and that, in the

¹For the Deduction see Bor, II, 921-924.

temporary absence of a ruler, the States had either administered the sovereignty or else established a special governor (a ruwaard) to take the prince's place.

Vranck went on to inform Wilkes that the thirty or forty deputies to the assemblies were indeed not the States. Whoever said so was ignorant of their actual function. The situation was as follows: the Counts having received their government from the people (the landzaten) had been obliged to rule with due regard for the people's interests. To prevent tyranny on the prince's part, it had been necessary that the people supervised him. It was impossible for them to do so directly, and therefore they had divided themselves into two estates, the towns, governed by their vroedschappen, and the nobility. The magistrates and the nobles, who "represented the entire state and the whole corpus of the landzaten", sent their deputies to the States' assemblies to represent the estates of the country before the prince. These deputies, it was emphasized once again, were "not in their persons or because of their own authority the States, but they merely represented, on the strength of their commission, their principals". It followed that if any deputy acted or resolved otherwise than according to his instructions, he committed an offence. But any such imputations, the States concluded, would have to be substantiated. He who accused the deputies without cause played a dangerous game, and this was particularly true in the case of a prince, who could not expect to achieve much without the "good correspondence of his subjects". The ruler who took his stand against

the States did not merely oppose the people's representatives but the people themselves.

Both Wilkes' and Vranck's arguments have been given in some detail because of the misconceptions that have arisen around the Deduction, the remonstrance, and the political theories of Dutch centralists like Prouninck and his associates, a group that had been in the habit of voicing similar objections to the States' practice as Wilkes had done and that may have inspired Wilkes' exposition. One of these errors, which has been exposed by Professor Huizinga and later by Professor Geyl, was that by their Deduction the States should have proclaimed their independent sovereign authority.¹ As the two historians have pointed out and as has become apparent from the preceding paragraph, this was not implied in Vranck's statement. The emphasis was on the representative character of the States' sovereignty and on the fact that it was derived from the people. Such a theory did not necessarily have any democratic implications. Professor Kossmann has shown that the principle of popular sovereignty could be and was used as the theoretical foundation for most forms of government, including the

¹J. Huizinga, Verzamelde Werken (Haarlem, 1948), II, 48f; P. Geyl, BGN, XII (1957), 44-48. Both historians objected particularly to the presentation of the argument by Fruin (Verspr. Geschr., III, 202), who seemed to imply that the Deduction intended to give a justification of the oligarchic practice and neglected to mention Vranck's emphasis on the fact that the States claimed no absolute, but only a derivative sovereignty.

aristocratic-oligarchic one established by the States.¹ But although the people had no means of asserting their rights and few of preventing their rulers from behaving as independent sovereigns, the States' own admission that there was no justification for such absolutism nevertheless served as a safeguard. In future centuries advocates of popular rights were to refer to the Deduction in their attacks upon the oligarchic system.²

Another and more general misunderstanding is that Wilkes' political theory was basically different from that of the States. In the publication just cited Professor Kossmann has drawn attention to this error, and to the fact that it has persisted in spite of attempts by the early 19th century historian Kluit to rectify it.³ It had been Kluit's intention to refute Wagenaar's interpretation of Wilkes' remonstrance as a democratic document. Kluit did not admit that either Vranck or Wilkes had based their arguments on the principle of popular sovereignty. He rather seems to have attempted to exonerate the latter from the imputation of having done so by suggesting that throughout his remonstrance he must have equated people or gemeenten with urban

¹E. H. Kossmann, "Bodin, Althusius en Parker, of: over de moderniteit van de Nederlandse opstand", Opstellen door vrienden en collega's aangeboden aan Dr. F. K. H. Kossmann (The Hague, 1958), pp. 90f.

²P. Geyl, op. cit., pp. 47f.

³E. H. Kossmann, op. cit., p. 85. See also his review of Professor Geyl's article on the Deduction; Revue du Nord, XXXIX (1957), 261.

magistrates.¹ He convincingly showed, however, that Wilkes did not oppose Vranck's view that the "effective" sovereignty belonged to the two estates, rather than to the masses. Wilkes had stated that the right to give instructions was the clearly recognizable attribute of sovereignty, and that this right belonged to the nobles and the magistrates. These were the States' deputies' masters, to whom they were to go for further instructions if they wished to introduce measures for which no authorization had yet been given.²

Later historians have tended to ignore these arguments. Disregarding or minimizing the States' own reliance on the idea of popular sovereignty they have implied that Wilkes introduced either an entirely new political concept, or else that he propounded a more direct kind of popular sovereignty than the Deduction had done. Fruin, for example, referred to the ideas held by Wilkes and by Leicester's partisans as a "novel doctrine", advanced by a "revolutionary party which wanted a popular government with a dictator at its head".³ Professor Huizinga implied that there was a difference in theory by suggesting that in the argument between Wilkes and Vranck only the latter represented the Calvinist principle, which pointed to the lower

¹Vranck's biographer, Mr. J. Huges, has rightly objected to this interpretation (*Het leven en bedrijf van Mr. Franchois Vranck*, pp. 70-72). Huges failed to notice however that Vranck also had based his argument on the principle of popular sovereignty, and that consequently the latter's theory was no less democratic (if that term must be used) than Wilkes'.

²Kluit, II, 285f, 310-313.

³*Verspr. Geschr.*, III, 201, 203.

magistrates, that is to a representative aristocracy, as the successors of a lawfully abjured prince.¹ According to Professor Geyl the States had "in opposition to Wilkes (and the Calvinists of Utrecht behind him) rejected the theory of popular sovereignty..."² Additional examples could be given,³ but the preceding ones sufficiently indicate the manner in which the ideas of the Deduction and the remonstrance have been juxtaposed.

It is true that Wilkes put greater stress on the people's rights than the States had done, but there were practical reasons for this difference in emphasis. Wilkes' problem was to keep Leicester's and the Council's authority intact, and the politically vocal part of the population shared this aim. He wished to warn the States that they should consider the people's wishes, and he probably also intended to remind the people of their political rights. Popular pressure upon the magistrates might have some beneficial effects. The fact however that Wilkes and the States disagreed on such practical matters does not disprove the similarity in their political theories.

¹J. Huiziga, op. cit., p. 49.

²P. Geyl, op. cit., p. 44.

³See e. g. P. J. Blok, Geschiedenis van het Nederlandsche Volk (3rd ed.; Leiden, 1924), II, 254, 255; I. H. Gosses and N. Japikse, Handboek tot de Staatkundige Geschiedenis van Nederland (3rd ed.; The Hague, 1947), p. 420; and J. C. H. de Pater in Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden (Utrecht, 1952), V, 301f.

It is also questionable whether Prouninck and other Dutch centralists demanded the introduction of democratic reforms in the national constitution. The two publications mentioned by Professor Fruin in proof of the revolutionary character of Prouninck's theories do not touch upon the question of direct or indirect popular sovereignty.¹ One of these is a letter to Leicester, written on May 22nd 1587.² In this epistle Leicester was told that the estate of the country was democratic, and that the sovereignty belonged not to the States but to the people. Prouninck neglected on this particular occasion to define the term "democratic", but he had done so in another letter to the governor. Therein he suggested that the States be bidden to answer the question whether in the absence of a prince the State was aristocratic or democratic. "Si aristocratique", thus Prouninck, "il ny a qung membre de leur estat, asscavoir les nobles out Optimates, et alors est impertinent de dire Les Estatz, au lieu qu'on debvroit dire L'Estat. Mais se trouvant entre les estatz plus dung membre, asscavoir en telle province deux, les nobles et les villes, en telle troix, Clergé, nobles et villes l'estat du pays est democratique."³ To have a democratic state it was evidently not necessary, in Prouninck's opinion, that the sovereign people be allowed direct influence upon the establishment of their

¹Fruin, Verspr. Geschr., III, 201.

²Part of this letter was quoted by Motley, II, 231. It is printed in full in BMHG, XXXIV, 218-229.

³BM, Stowe Mss. 163, fo. 11. See also the Appendix, no. III.

government.¹

The assertions made by Prouninck in his letter of May 22nd, seditious as undoubtedly they would have appeared to the States, could nevertheless have been footnoted with a reference to the Deduction itself. This is also true of the pamphlet which he wrote in the early months of 1588,² the second publication mentioned by Professor Fruin. Herein Prouninck objected to the States' habit of referring to themselves as the nation's sovereigns. One of his arguments was that it would create a strange impression in foreign countries if "Hans Brewer, Hans Cheesemerchant, Hans Miller" etcetera, "being the instruments of sovereign pensionaries", compared themselves to princes and potentates. Another reason was that the system of multi-headed sovereignty had not worked. For that very reason the States had given Leicester and his Council the right to administer the sovereignty, excepting only such matters as by the treaty and the Act of Authority had expressly been reserved to the States themselves. This centralized authority was,

¹Cf. the definition of the terms "aristocratic" and "democratic" in another centralist paper, which was unsigned but may well have been written by Prouninck. "Comment et par quelles raisons", the author of this document asked, "[peut-on] prouver que cet Estat est aristocratique et non démocratique; attendu que, à faute de Prince légitime, la souveraineté est retournée au peuple, et que les Estats ne sont que députés pour se trouver en l'assemblée et traiter des affaires de l'estat avec limitation et recès à leurs villes, vroetschappen et collèges, et qu'ils peuvent estre révoquez et desavouez, quand il plaist à leurs maistres...? Groen van Prinsterer, Archives, II, i, p. 39.

²Bor., III, 205-207.

according to Prouninck, the only solution to the country's constitutional and practical problems. He therefore advised the States that they uphold the central government's powers and that they refrain from asserting their own authority and sovereign rights. He did not imply however that in the absence of such an arrangement the States were not entitled to exercise the sovereignty on the people's behalf. After the abjuration of the King of Spain "the direction and use of the sovereign powers", he stated, "had come to those who as States represented the people of the country".¹

Similar arguments as those used by Wilkes and Prouninck appear to have been brought forward by the Professor of Theology Adriaan Saravia, another critic of the States' practice, who was to be exiled in connection with the pro-Leicesterian coup attempted in Leiden in the autumn of 1587. In a letter written a year after his banishment Saravia stated that in the early months of 1587 he had openly criticized the habit of referring to the members of the States' assemblies as sovereigns, and as such the superiors of Leicester. He had based his objections on the fact that the deputies were no more than "Estats representatifs", bound by the instructions of their principals. While maintaining that the people were sovereign and that the country's constitution was clearly a

¹"Want door de verlatinge des Koninks van Spangien...is wel de beleydinge en het gebruyk van de souveraine magt gekomen aen den genen die het volk van den lande staets-gewijsde zyn representerende..." Ibid., p. 206.

"popular" one, he also referred not to the masses but to the nobility and the "corps des villes" as the deputies' masters.¹

Prouninck's declaration about the States' representative sovereignty, which was in agreement with the States' own theory, did not contradict Wilkes' remonstrance. Wilkes had denied the States' deputies this title, but only because the power to administer the sovereignty had been transferred to Leicester. The admission that the assemblies would resume their former rights once the Act of Authority was legally withdrawn was implied in the statement that they were the delegates of the local sovereigns.

There indeed seems to be no reason to assume that either Wilkes or the Dutch centralists would have disagreed with the constitutional theory given in the Deduction. Their quarrel with the States was rather that these forgot their theories and acted in the assemblies as an independent aristocracy, by passing their decrees and resolutions without definite authorization by their principals. A related complaint was that the assemblies were dominated by a small, closely-knit group of men, mainly pensionaries, who were regularly deputed to the States' meetings. This group included people like Oldenbarnevelt, Franchois Vranck, Dr. Maelson, pensionary of Enkhuizen and leader of the States of the Northern Quarter, Floris Thin (before his exile), and the Friesian

¹BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D III, fos. 227-229. Saravia's argument also has been given in extenso in the Appendix. (No. IV).

deputy Carel Roorda. Because of their ability and experience, their power of patronage, and their association with politically, economically and militarily influential circles, these members had been able to set themselves up as the actual policy makers and to impose their will upon the country.¹

In these critical months the tendency was of course particularly strong to push measures through the assemblies without reference to the local governments. One of these measures, which was to create a major political storm, had been taken shortly after the loss of Deventer and the IJssel forts. On February 4th it had been decided to send a letter containing information about the treason by Leicester's appointees, together with an exhaustive list of the governor general's own misdemeanours, to Leicester himself and to the Queen. The letter in question had been drawn up by the Advocate of Holland, accepted by the provincial assembly without reference to the towns, and sent out in the name of the States General again without consultation with the provincial assemblies. Care seems to have been taken instead to keep the measure a secret from the towns and the provincial States.²

The States did not leave this argument entirely unanswered. In their Deduction they pointed out that no deputy could make decisions on

¹See in this connection the suggestion made by a member of the opposition that it would be better if the deputies to the States' assemblies were replaced every six or twelve months. Groen van Prinsterer, Archives, II, 1, p. 40.

²Fruin, Verspr. Geschr., III, 198. The letter occurs in Bor, II, 943-945.

his own authority; he was bound by the instructions of his principals. This did not mean however that he had to refer all new business to them. In war time the delegates were "generally authorized" to resolve on matters concerning the conservation of the country, the privileges, and similar issues. Wilkes could of course have objected that a deputy might interpret such a general authorization in a broader sense than his principals had intended. At the meeting which decided about the letter of February 4th the representatives of Gelderland and Zeeland had assumed that it allowed them to approve of this measure. The States of Zeeland seem to have agreed, but those of Gelderland, informed by Utrecht of the contents of the letter, disavowed and threatened to recall their deputy.¹

The centralists were correct in asserting that there was a discrepancy between the States' theory and practice, but they were fighting for a lost cause and their ideas were consequently unrealistic. They would be practicable only under a centralized system, and the dominant group in the States had already decided in favour of decentralization. The confederacy was to remain a confederacy, and powers of government were destined to be held by the States General. If that system was to be at all workable it was essential that a limited group of men took control of affairs and forced measures through. Attempts to obstruct this development, by wielding the popular weapon or by

¹Bor, II, 960; Res. St. Gen., V, 496.

other means, were bound to be ineffective. Wilkes came to realize this and before long turned into an eloquent defender of the States' rights.¹ Prouninck however continued his policy of attempting to paralyze the States General as an executive body and of inciting the populace against the States.

As a political outlaw and as an exile who had found a champion of the southern cause in Leicester, Prouninck had of course more to lose by Holland's political victory and the governor general's defeat than Wilkes. It is clear however that he was not alone in objecting to the course followed by the States General; to many in the country that course seemed a desperate, if not an irresponsible one. There were no guarantees yet that the States' system of government would work where formerly it had failed; it remained probable that the States General's approach constituted a risk with respect to the English alliance; and it was also likely that Holland, if England should withdraw, would be forced to leave the other provinces largely to their own resources. If Prouninck and his fellow-exiles were the most desperate of the States' opponents they were able to enlist support for their programme among the native population, both in the inland and in the maritime provinces.

¹Brugmans, II, 398-402.

CHAPTER VIII
THE SECOND YEAR OF THE ALLIANCE
AND OF LEICESTER'S GOVERNORSHIP

I

While the States were reasserting their power and curtailing English influence, an official Dutch embassy in England was offering the sovereignty of the countries to Elizabeth, asking her for Leicester's speedy return, and imploring her to enlarge her aid. The States felt in fact no longer any anxiety to stress the first point and they would have preferred leaving out the second, had it not been for fear of irritating the people and the English ally, but they continued to hope for a liberal increase in the English subsidy. Englishmen in the Low Countries shared their hope. Although Wilkes and Norris found it necessary to cooperate with and even to encourage the opposition groups,¹ they both realized that in the long run the English position in the Netherlands depended on the States' attitude, and that that attitude would to a large extent be determined by Elizabeth's own. If she should refuse to increase her aid and if she continued her peace negotiations, the only solution for the English would be, as on February 14th Norris told Wilkes, that they resign themselves to the situation in the Netherlands and stopped striving

¹Cal. For., XXI, 11, pp. 353, 405f, 415, 420.

with the Hollanders.¹ In Norris' own opinion and in that of other English observers such a capitulation would mean that English influence in the provinces would be still further reduced and that the frontier regions would be abandoned by Holland.² On the other hand, if Elizabeth agreed to accept a larger share of the responsibility for the country's defence, it might yet be possible to preserve the confederacy and the alliance.

The results of the negotiations in London, which were awaited with such general anxiety, did not become known until the middle of March.³ The embassy had arrived in stages. Jacques Valcke and William van Zuylen van Nijeveldt had left in November or December; the departure of the other members was delayed until the end of January.⁴ Their first meeting with Elizabeth took place on February 5th.⁵ It was not an encouraging one. The Queen was obviously ill-prepared to make a decision on the Dutch issue. The intervention in the Netherlands and other defensive measures were placing a heavy financial burden on England. Partly as a result of the war situation the country was suffering,

¹ Cal. For., XXI, II, p. 353.

² Ibid., p. 412; Cabala, II, II, 15, 33; BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 49verso.

³ Res. Ho. 1587, p. 83.

⁴ These were Josse de Menin of Dordrecht, Nicolaas de Sille of Amsterdam, and Wytze van Kamminga, deputy of Friesland.

⁵ The following discussion has been based largely on the official report of the negotiations which the Dutch legation submitted to the States General. A copy of this report is in ARA, SG 3793, fos. 203-349. The larger part of it has been printed by Bor, II, pp. 872-878, 929f and 940-953.

moreover, from a severe trade and industrial depression, and poor harvests aggravated the economic and social problems. Unemployment and high prices caused unrest among the poorer classes, who in a number of instances reacted by demonstrating against Dutch and other continental refugees living in England.¹ There were other problems. When the Dutch legation arrived the Queen was preoccupied with the affair of Mary Stuart, whose execution -- which seemed inevitable although Elizabeth had not yet signed the death warrant -- might lead to difficulties with France and Scotland and would bring the war with Spain closer. These problems and threats increased Elizabeth's anxiety to find out whether a composition might not be possible, and in the meantime to concentrate her resources on home defence.

The fact that under these circumstances the States should suggest that she increase her aid annoyed her, and Menin's speech of February 5th, wherein he asked her to double her auxiliary, to grant an additional loan of fl. 600,000 for a field army, and to reconsider the States' offer of sovereignty, elicited an irritable reply. Stress was laid not so much on her incapacity to increase her responsibilities as on the ingratitude of the States towards herself and their ill-treatment of Leicester, whom, contrary to the hopes the Dutch had entertained since Wilkes' embassy, she now found it opportune to defend. There is no doubt that the

¹J. D. Gould, "The Crisis in the Export Trade, 1586-87", EHR, LXXI (1956), 212-222; Acts Privy Council, New Series, XIV, pp. xxxf; Werken der Marnix Vereeniging, III, 1 (1873), 143.

anti-English measures irritated her and that the States' opposition to her lieutenant increased her aversion to the alliance, but these factors also provided her with a welcome excuse for her delays or refusals. While awaiting the results of the negotiations with Parma she wished her aid to the Netherlands to be as inconspicuous as possible, but she realized the dangers of a too negative attitude. It would be interpreted by the States as an indication of her intention to leave them and to force a peace upon the provinces. They might reply by expelling the English army and by trying to reach a separate peace with Spain. This was to be prevented; so long as there was no guarantee that the war could be ended it was necessary that the Dutch remained convinced of England's loyalty. Having displayed her grievances she therefore told the legation that she intended to continue supporting the Low Countries, that she would not negotiate a peace without their consent, and that their request for additional aid would be considered. No definite reply would be given however until the States had answered her complaints and given her satisfaction.¹ The deputies were told to explain their requests to the Privy Council, and the following weeks were spent in negotiations with Burghley, Walsingham, Leicester, Davison and other Councillors.² The possibility that these discussions would lead to a positive decision appeared slight from the beginning.

¹ Bor, II, 872-874.

² Ibid., pp. 874-878.

Although the deputies were probably right in suspecting that the Queen's outspokenly critical reaction was partly a result of Leicester's complaints about the States,¹ he tried in these weeks to repair the damage he had done by strenuously seconding the Dutch demands. It seems that Stanley's and Yorke's treason for a time convinced him, moreover, that the States had some reason for their annoyance. Informed of the event he sent Noel de Caron, who upon the conclusion of an embassy to Denmark had come to England, back to The Hague. De Caron carried what amounted to a message of peace and goodwill to the States General, Maurice, Hohenlohe, Meurs, Buys, and the exiles of Utrecht, who were promised that all outstanding questions would be promptly and satisfactorily settled upon Leicester's return.² A separate letter was sent to the Advocate of Holland, whom Leicester by this time recognized as the leader of the anti-English movement, Leicester informed Oldenbarnevelt that he had always appreciated his loyalty to the common cause and asked his help in removing the misunderstandings that had arisen under his government. Although denying that he himself was to blame for the difficulties, he nevertheless expressed the hope that in judging him the Dutch politicians would consider how difficult it was for a foreigner to become acquainted with their affairs, to choose the right advisers and, in short, to govern to the contentment of all. He promised that henceforth

¹Bor, II, 874.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D III, fos. 22-24. The States General's reply is in Brugmans, II, 121-125.

he would follow the advice of the States, who might rest assured that he would continue supporting the Dutch cause.¹

By the middle of February the deputies had been informed that for the time being there was little prospect of an increase in the English subsidy, and they made plans to leave with Noel de Caron. Leicester however persuaded them to stay for a while.² He hoped that the execution of Mary Stuart, which took place on February 18th, would induce Elizabeth to a change of policy and to accept a parliamentary subsidy for the Dutch war. Parliament was willing to make a considerable grant; according to Ortell it had offered to maintain an army of 13,000 footsoldiers and 2,000 horsemen in the Netherlands.³ Before long it appeared however that by tying the offer to the suggestion that the Queen accept the sovereignty over the Low Countries Parliament overshot its mark. Elizabeth objected to its attempt to dictate foreign policy and refused to accept the offer of a subsidy even after the condition had been withdrawn.⁴

The deputies had other reasons to regret the fact that they had postponed their departure. Until the end of February there had not been

¹BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D III, fo. 58.

²ARA, SG 3793, fos. 259, 266.

³S. P. Haak, Johan van Oldenbarnevelt, bescheiden betreffende zijn staatkundig beleid en zijn familie (The Hague, 1934), I, 123.

⁴Neale, Elizabeth I and her Parliaments, II, 183.

a great deal of official information about the changes in the Netherlands since the treason, but on March 1st Sir Roger Williams arrived from the Netherlands with an up-to-date report,¹ and during the following days the legation was confronted with complaints about the political and military innovations and about the treatment of the English army. One week after Sir Roger's arrival the legation received the States General's letter of February 4th to Elizabeth and Leicester, with the message that it was to be delivered immediately. The deputies obeyed, although expecting that thereby "a great fire and discontent would be kindled on every side". The effect was indeed disturbing. Leicester was particularly annoyed that a copy had been sent to the Queen, and Walsingham and Burghley accused the States of gross ingratitude towards their governor. Elizabeth soon joined the chorus of disapproval. The letter gave her another excuse meanwhile to postpone her decision about the States' requests. She told the legation that an ambassador would be sent to investigate the situation. If he were able to get satisfaction for her she would allow Leicester to return and let the States know whether they could expect additional support. Pending the investigation she planned to continue her normal aid, but on condition that the States in the meantime also "did their duty". With this message the legation left. Leicester's parting promise was that within four days after receipt of

¹ARA, SG 3793, fo. 290. Roger Williams's report is in Cal. For., XXI, II, pp. 381f.

the ambassador's report he would return to the Netherlands.¹

England could not afford to lose the Dutch ally, and the ambassador was sent not merely to investigate the situation in the Netherlands, but also to remove some of the causes of the disagreements between the allies. The man chosen for this task was the scholar-politician Thomas Sackville, Lord Buckhurst, a member of the Privy Council and a relative of the Queen. He belonged to Burghley's political circle, but appears to have enjoyed Leicester's confidence.² Leicester was to learn that he had mistaken himself in his man, as he had done earlier in Wilkes. Buckhurst, who in course of time became the most outspoken of Leicester's critics, sympathized from the beginning with the States' position. This inclination determined the manner in which he went about his task. Rather than insisting upon the satisfaction required by Elizabeth he tried to heal the Anglo-Dutch breach and the rift between the States and Leicester by compromise. His approach was the only feasible one, and the failure of his mission was less a result of his lack of insight into the problems than of the circumstances under which he had to work. The difficulty was that by its very nature his task was impossible, and that not merely because of the States' wish to loosen their political ties with England, but also because of Elizabeth's refusal to satisfy the Dutch in the matter of the negotiations with Spain. Rather than promising them that

¹Bor, II, 941-953.

²Ibid., p. 952.

these negotiations would cease, she ordered Buckhurst to require their collaboration in a peace conference. As it was, Holland had small intention to restore English influence, and it was utterly disinclined to do so when prospects increased that this influence might be used to the advantage of Spain. Other causes of Buckhurst's lack of success were the Queen's delays in implementing her monetary promises, and the fact that these promises were less substantial than had been expected. The ambassador's problems were still further increased as a result of Leicester's attitude. Leicester demanded the restoration of his former authority, but although in his parting message to the legation he had repeated his pledge to follow the States' advice in his government,¹ the agitation of his partisans, and his own correspondence with Prouninck, Sonoy and others,² made it appear questionable to the States that he would keep this promise.

Insofar as his mission was intended to restore Anglo-Dutch relations and to prepare the road for Leicester's return as governor general, Buckhurst's attempts were destined to fail. He did succeed however in temporarily easing the domestic problems. The legation's lack of success and the fact that Leicester's return remained questionable had caused disquiet among the pro-English groups. The discontent was kindled by a letter sent to the Netherlands by Buzanville, Navarre's

¹Bor, II, 952.

²Ibid., pp. 985f.

agent in London.¹ In this message the Frenchman blamed Elizabeth's negative attitude on the States' anti-English and anti-Leicesterian measures, and especially on their letter of February 4th. Parliament, he wrote, had offered to subsidize an army of 20,000 men, and the Queen would have accepted the grant and returned Leicester had it not been for the fact that just at that time the States' letter, and reports about the treatment of the English soldiers, had arrived in London. Copies of Buzanville's letter were spread throughout the provinces,² and the version given in it was widely believed. The reformed ministers of Holland and Zeeland stirred;³ the population of Amsterdam and other towns of Holland loudly proclaimed their discontent with the States' procedures,⁴ and the magistrate of Utrecht wrote letters to the other provinces in an attempt to procure a general disavowal of the letter of February 4th.⁵

It was obviously in the States' and in the country's interest that these rumours be contradicted, and Buckhurst lost no time in doing

¹The letter seems to have been addressed to Dr. Hugo Donellus, Professor of Civil Law at Leiden University. BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 460. Donellus, whose English and Leicesterian sympathies had earlier made him suspect to the magistrate of Leiden, and who appears to have earned the hatred of Paul Buys and Hohenlohe as well, was dismissed in April 1587. BMHG, XXXIV, 207f; Res. Ho. 1587, pp. 128, 182f, 189.

²Brugmans, II, 459.

³Res. Ho. 1587, p. 141; Notulen Zeeland 1587, pp. 92, 122.

⁴Cabala, II, 9; Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 405, 426.

⁵Bor, II, 958f.

so. On the 14th of April he had presented the States General and the Council of State with a list of the Queen's and Leicester's grievances.¹ The Council made "a very honest, modest, wise answer",² but the States either contradicted the imputations or explained them with a reference to the circumstances.³ In a number of instances Buckhurst suggested that the replies were not entirely satisfactory, but he ended by accepting the States' defence. Hereupon he sent a letter to the provinces and towns, explaining that whatever measures had been taken after the treason had been necessary for the country's preservation. It was his firm hope, he added, that both the Queen and Leicester would be satisfied by the States' explanation, that Elizabeth would not merely decide to continue her aid but even to increase it, and that she would allow Leicester to return.⁴

The message quieted the disturbances in the country as a whole,⁵ but Utrecht needed separate treatment. The city magistrate had been continuing its attempts to have the letter of February 4th disavowed. These attempts had been successful in the case of Gelderland, whose States resolved to recall Wijnbergen, their deputy to the States General.

¹Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 6-8.

²Ibid., p. 16.

³A copy of abstracts of the States' replies and the English arbitrators' rejoinders is in BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fos. 291^{verso}-303.

⁴Brugmans, II, 208-210.

⁵Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 15, 19.

Buckhurst, Leoninus, Sir John Norris and Oldenbarnevelt assured Gelderland that no such drastic measures were necessary because the letter had been accepted in England in the right spirit and would have no disagreeable results. Gelderland then allowed itself to be convinced,¹ but the city of Utrecht, which was visited by Buckhurst in April or May, was less easily satisfied. Realizing that the ambassador was in agreement with Holland's policies, the magistrate rapidly lost confidence in him, and Buckhurst's attempt to solve the divisions within the province failed.² The government was willing however to await the result of Buckhurst's negotiations with the States, and for the time being it ended its direct agitation against Holland and the States General.

Buckhurst knew that if the pacification was to last his promises regarding the monetary aid and regarding Leicester's return would have to be implemented without delay. The financial discussions were begun immediately after the States General had replied to the Queen's grievances. On April 16th and 17th Buckhurst, Norris, Maurice and Hohenlohe came together with members of the States General and the Council of State to draw up a defence budget, the so-called "State of War". It was estimated that for the current year a sum of just over five million florins would be necessary if for a period of four to five months a camp was to be established. In addition to the States' normal

¹Bor, II, 960; 962-964; Res. St. Gen., V, 546f.

²Bor, II, 965.

contributions and the Queen's subsidy an amount of fl. 1,500,000 was needed. The States agreed to pay two-thirds of this amount, on condition that England provided the remainder.¹ Buckhurst thought that the Queen would agree, but it appeared that he had been too optimistic. Elizabeth refused to increase her subsidy by more than £15,000,² and the State of War had to be reduced accordingly. It nevertheless remained necessary to levy additional soldiers for the summer months, and this matter was to cause another problem. Buckhurst saw no harm in attracting English soldiers and seems to have suggested to the Privy Council that a certain number be levied.³ The States objected to additional English forces and later refused to accept or pay the new recruits. In spite of the disappointment of the previous year, when the German levies had failed, they renewed the attempts to recruit mercenaries in Germany. Part of the extraordinary grant was sent to Bremen as security for the payment of these soldiers.⁴

In the meantime the endeavours to pave the way for Leicester's return were continued. In the last resort his return depended on the Queen's decision, and Elizabeth was not yet certain whether it would be advisable to send him back. It was possible however that his services

¹Bor, II, p. 957.

²Cal. For., XXI, III, p. 50.

³According to Leicester. ARA, SG 3793, fos. 426f.

⁴Res. St. Gen., V, 643.

would again be needed, and it was therefore one of Buckhurst's tasks to arrange a formal reconciliation between the absent governor and his opponents: the States, the stadholders and other military chiefs. The States, who on April 20th sent a formal invitation to Leicester, promising to restore his former authority,¹ did not seem uncooperative. Among the stadholders and military leaders special attention was given to Maurice and Hohenlohe. The former submitted a list of complaints about Leicester's government to Buckhurst, but promised that he would obey Leicester upon his return.² Hohenlohe made a similar pledge, but shortly after Buckhurst had sent a report of this diplomatic success to England, the Count asked for another interview in the course of which he repeated his objections to Leicester.³ In the eyes of both Buckhurst and Wilkes Hohenlohe formed one of the most serious obstacles to a pacification. A number of incidents made them wonder whether his hatred and distrust of Leicester was not too deepseated for a reconciliation, and they considered the possibility that upon Leicester's return Hohenlohe might revenge himself by making his peace with Parma. It was said that he was removing his property from Holland to Geertruidenberg, and it was also rumoured that he was already in correspondence with the enemy.⁴

¹Brugmans, II, 185-187.

²Ibid., pp. 195-198.

³BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, fo. 318.

⁴BM, Cotton Mss. 48,078, fo. 145; Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 426f; iii, pp. 36, 41.

He had, as a matter of fact, received a letter from the Count of Mansfelt, but had delivered it to the States.¹ Apparently this step did not fully exonerate him in the eyes of the English. Trying to explain why the Dutch politicians paid so much attention to the Count, whom a year earlier they would have been happy to dismiss, Wilkes suggested that they were moved not only by the wish to use him as a counterpoise against Leicester,² but also by the fear of alienating him and thereby risking his desertion.³

The prospect that Leicester's return might be followed by Hohenlohe's treason, or else by a private war between the governor and his former lieutenant-general, was a discouraging one. Discouraging enough, in the Queen's opinion, to warrant the Count's arrest, and orders to this effect were sent to her agents in the Netherlands.⁴ These realized that such a high-handed action was too hazardous to be contemplated, and upon receipt of the Queen's order Buckhurst hastened to inform the English government that the suspicions might be unfounded, and that the only means to regain Hohenlohe's collaboration was by catering to his wishes.⁵ Although care had been taken to keep the order

¹Res. St. Gen., V, 509f.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C V, fo. 83.

³Cal. For., XXI, ii, 426. The suspicion was a persistent one; in August Robert Beale held the same opinion. BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 574Verso.

⁴Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 19f.

⁵Ibid., pp. 35, 41.

a secret, Hohenlohe seems to have been aware of the fact that he was distrusted by the English, and in April or May he spread the tale that Leicester intended to kill him. Wilkes was careful enough this time not to send the news to England, but Leicester's secretary Athy did.¹ Leicester replied by informing the States and his own partisans that so long as the charge was not thoroughly investigated and his honour cleared it would be impossible for him to return.² Buckhurst, Wilkes, the States and the Council spent the necessary amount of time trying to settle this new problem. The magistrate of Utrecht, concluding that the accusation had been trumped up by the anti-English groups to prevent Leicester from returning, reacted by calling another general States' meeting to its city.³ The armistice between Utrecht and the States General had ended.

The failure of Buckhurst's embassy was by this time becoming evident to all. His initial promise regarding a subsidy of fl. 500,000 had not been realized and the Queen delayed paying the £15,000 she had in the end agreed to give. Just as disconcerting was the fact that she refused to avow the political negotiations and kept insisting on an apology for the anti-English measures taken since Leicester's departure.⁴

¹Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 89.

²Brugmans, II, 253; BMHG, XXXIV, 212-214; Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 39f, 47.

³Bor, II, 955.

⁴Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 47, 48; Res. St. Gen., V, 547f, 550f.

The States had refused to make that apology in April, and they were even less inclined to do it as time wore on. Buckhurst tried to convince Elizabeth of this fact but was forced, in the end, to tackle the matter once more with the States. The result was a new "explanation", which contained an even sharper criticism of Leicester's government than that given in the letter of February 4th.¹

Another factor interfering with the success of Buckhurst's mission was the order to inform the States that England was investigating the possibility of formal peace negotiations with Spain. The news did perhaps not come as a great surprise to the States, for since January 1587 it had been evident that the danger of an Anglo-Spanish composition was increasing. This revelation came not as the result of an English, but of a Danish step. Lutheran Denmark had generally been considered a potential ally, and during the early months of the alliance it seems to have made a vague offer of military assistance to Leicester. When the offer was not realized Leicester had sent Noel de Caron to Denmark, to find out about the King's disposition and to discuss the matter of Danish aid.² Caron's mission had had no positive effects, and before long it appeared that King Frederik -- succumbing, as Wilkes thought, to the influence of a pro-Spanish party at his court³ -- had set himself

¹It is in Bor, II, 986-991.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D III, fos. 19-21.

³Brugmans, I, 291f.

up as mediator between England and Spain, and had taken the preliminary step of sending an embassy to Madrid and Brussels. It was more or less by accident that the States became aware of this. Late in January the Danish ambassador, Rantzou, who travelled incognito through Brabant, was arrested by the garrison of Bergen op Zoom. The States allowed him to return to Copenhagen, but not until they had read and copied his papers. They found out that Frederik had given a list of terms to Philip, that Philip had refused the demand for religious freedom offhand, and that subsequently Rantzou had been sent to Brussels to open discussions with Parma.¹

The embassy does not seem to have been undertaken at Elizabeth's request or with her prior consent.² The States may have thought that it was. They in any case feared that the Danish initiative would bring an Anglo-Spanish conference perceptibly closer, and they urged Elizabeth not to accept the mediation.³ It is not clear whether the Queen approved of the Danish attempt. She assured Frederik that she was anxious to accept his offers,⁴ but yet seems to have maintained a somewhat reserved attitude. After some months of negotiation she informed the Danish King that in her opinion an assured peace was possible only if Philip granted

¹Bor., II, 893, 945; Van der Essen, V, 77-80.

²Van der Essen, V, 77.

³Bor., II, 945-948.

⁴Cal. For., XXI, 1, pp. 323f.

religious toleration. If he refused this the war would have to be continued, and Denmark would have to consider the question whether it was not obliged to support England and the Netherlands.¹ Perhaps Elizabeth preferred to keep the matter as much as possible in English hands, for her own negotiations, which were entrusted to the Flemish merchant Andrea de Loo, continued. Although the information which she herself received regarding Philip's attitude on the religious question was no more encouraging than Rantzou's had been,² she resolved to go forward with the preparations, and an order was sent to Buckhurst to discuss the question with the States.³

Buckhurst himself was active in the negotiations and regularly corresponded with De Loo.⁴ He appears to have had his doubts about Philip's sincerity however, and in the course of his embassy he further learned that the issue was a particularly touchy one in the Netherlands. He consequently was not enthusiastic about the Queen's order, and upon receipt of the letter he warned her not to put too much trust in Philip's pacifism and not to relax in her own war efforts; money and soldiers should be sent in abundance, because the safest introduction

¹ Cal. For., XXI, i, p. 370.

² Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 28.

³ Brugmans, II, 263-265.

⁴ Ibid., p. 263; Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 388f; iii, p. 185; BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, fo. 306.

to a peace conference was a "mighty war".¹ Having sent this advice, he began with the execution of the Queen's command. The question was first discussed with the Councillors of State Leoninus, Brederode and Valcke, and thereafter with Oldenbarnevelt and Van der Mijle, president of the Court of Holland.² In two lengthy reports, written when these negotiations were being held, Buckhurst tried to give the Queen some idea of the reactions to be expected from the Dutch.³ In the second of these letters Elizabeth was told that the majority of the people were willing to join a conference with Spain. According to Buckhurst the three Councillors were in favour of a composition, and the same could be said of "sundry good Protestants, in a manner all the Nobility and Gentlemen, the greatest part of the best Patriots, divers of States and Magistrates, all the Papists and Anabaptists, and the Spanish hearts, which [were] no small number". Among the people only "the Puritans and a great part of the Protestants" opposed it and these groups constituted, as he had written earlier,⁴ no more than one-fifth of the population.

He added the warning, however, that this minority was an influential one, that it had the support of the army, and that it cooperated with certain violently anti-Spanish members of the States.

¹Brugmans, II, 237-239.

²Cabala, II, 37.

³Ibid., pp. 37-39; 40f.

⁴Ibid., p. 37.

Those States' members were, on the whole, "Men of meanest Wealth and Calling, but most subtile and cunning", who were determined to prevent a reconciliation with Spain for no other reason than that they wished to keep the sovereignty and the government in their own hands. These three groups would never submit voluntarily, and a peace conference would cause dangerous divisions and probably rebellions. The people in favour of a peace were likely to refuse obeying their magistrates and paying their taxes, while the military leaders might decide to make a settlement with Parma on their own terms. It was therefore essential that England enlarge its aid, both to make its preliminary mighty war and to prevent serious political and military alterations in the provinces.¹

The effect of Buckhurst's revelation upon the States was comparable to that produced by Stanley's and Yorke's treason. Disagreeable as the news was, it did clarify the situation, and it provided the States with another piece of anti-English and anti-Leicesterian propaganda. Oldenbarnevelt's reaction was not nearly so violent as it had been in February. He and Van der Mijle played a more subtle diplomatic game this time; too "subtile and cunning", indeed, for the inexperienced ambassador. They began by warning Buckhurst that publication of the news might cause a popular and military revolt, so that secrecy was necessary. Nevertheless, because it was the Queen's wish to have it

¹ Cabala, II, pp. 37f, 40.

discussed, they were willing to lend their cooperation, but for the time being only from behind the scenes. Buckhurst himself was to break the ice. His first step would be to speak to one of the principal magistrates in each of the chief towns, and ask them that they try to persuade their colleagues to accept the Queen's proposal. The names of these magistrates would be suggested to him by Oldenbarnevelt c. s., and it may be assumed that the Advocate took care to select men upon whom the disclosure would have a beneficial effect. For Dordrecht he expressly recommended the violently anti-Spanish but pro-English pensionary Josse de Menin. It was further agreed that within a week Buckhurst would make his proposal to the States General, but only after he had received the members' pledge that they would keep it a secret. When all this was accomplished he and the members of the States General would work together in recommending the peace to the various local governments.¹

"Now though it may seem to your Majesty", Buckhurst concluded the description of this scheme in his report to Elizabeth, "that when so many Persons shall be privy to this Purpose, that it will be a thing impossible to have it held in secret; yet thus it is by some of the gravest and chiefest of them devised and desired..."² Buckhurst appears to have held the impression that the States themselves were interested in keeping the matter as long as possible from the people. The belief

¹Cabala, II, 37f.

²Ibid., p. 38.

that the promise of secrecy would be kept comforted him when on June 12th, shortly after he had his first interview with the three Councillors, he heard that England, by allowing Drake to sail out and "sing the King of Spain's beard", had taken a step seriously endangering the Anglo-Spanish negotiations. Informed of this event Buckhurst suggested to the Queen that it might be better if for the time being he let the matter rest. That same day it appeared however that some of those whom he had taken into his confidence had broken their promise and that the States General had already been informed of his message.¹ Before long the news was common knowledge.

The outcome could have been predicted, and those who still hoped for the success of Buckhurst's mission regretted or criticized his step. Elizabeth also concluded that the communication had been premature and severely reprimanded her ambassador.² Her annoyance was perhaps chiefly a result of the fact that she had just decided to send Leicester back to the Netherlands, and that by executing her order Buckhurst had placed another obstacle on the way of Leicester's re-acceptance as governor general.

II

The Queen's decision regarding Leicester's return, which was taken in the end of May, came as a surprise to her agents in the

¹Cabala, II, 40f.

²Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 95.

Netherlands.¹ They probably received the news with mixed feelings. Few if any regarded a renewal of the experiment without misgivings, and Buckhurst and Wilkes in particular had often warned that the political and military consequences were likely to be negative, and might well be disastrous.² On other occasions however they had asked for his return, or at least suggested that his reappointment might be the best solution after all.³ Fear of annoying Leicester, whom they knew to be dissatisfied with their negotiations,⁴ was perhaps one of the reasons why this latter advice was given, but they also appear to have held the opinion that his continued absence might create as many difficulties as his presence would. They had both been unable to divert the States from their anti-English and decentralistic course and it was possible that Leicester might succeed. An additional reason was that the centralist opposition, which England could not afford to alienate so long as relations with the States and Holland remained unsettled, needed his protection. The people also clamoured for his return, and new commotions might take place if they were disappointed. Still another consideration was that his return

¹ The message did not become known in The Hague until June 15. Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 102.

² Cabala, II, 22, 29, 33f; BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, fo. 326; Galba D I, fo. 49; Add. Mss. 5935, fos. 23f; Add. Mss. 48,078, fo. 233.

³ Cal. For., XXI, ii, pp. 363, 424, 427; iii, pp. 10, 18f; Cabala, II, 9, 10f, 13, 15, 20f.

⁴ Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 37-40.

would at least have the merit of ending the suspense in which Elizabeth's indecision held States and country, an indecision that became daily more embarrassing to the English arbitrators.¹ The impression was unavoidable, they felt, that Elizabeth postponed taking a resolution because she wished to await the results of the negotiations with Parma, and that the Dutch would be kept on the leash with empty promises until certainty had been reached on that point.

Apart from the fact that such suspicions did not help to improve the political climate, there was the problem that the delays were unfortunate from a military point of view. The loss of Deventer and the IJssel forts had not been followed by an enemy offensive, partly, it was thought, because of the extreme dearth in the southern provinces,² but largely, as later appeared, because Parma had been ordered to concentrate on the preparations for the English enterprise. His passivity would have given the allies a chance to open the attack, even if it were only by raids in Brabant and Flanders to destroy the enemy's harvests. Until June, that is until Parma had begun his own belated offensive in Flanders, no major raids were organized. The English army remained incomplete and most of it was used as a defensive force on the frontiers or for the protection (almost as much against the Hollanders and Hohenlohe as against the Spaniards) of the cautionary and other towns

¹ Cabala, II, 21, 30, 36; Cal. For., XXI, 111, pp. 67, 90f.

² Brugmans, II, 306; Cal. For., XXI, 111, 80; Cabala, II, 34.

at England's devotion. Whatever forces the States had at their disposal were similarly used for defensive purposes only, and in their case also about as much care was given to the allied as to the Spanish threat.¹

It is true that the States planned to establish a camp, even if Elizabeth should withhold her extra subsidy, but progress was slow. By the middle of June Buckhurst expected that it would take some weeks before an army would be complete. The preparations had begun too late. "If they had raised an army but one month ago in the feld", Buckhurst wrote, "they might have impeached and endamaged the enemy so much by this time, as he should have little hurt them this yere; for they might have gon where they had wold, and doon, what they had wold, yea, the dearth and necessity of Zutfen, Numegen and Deventer was than so grete as the only fame of an army wold have made them yeld. But now I wold our army, when we have him, cold but defend us from hurt, so as we forbare to hurt the enemy."²

The States' ability to prepare for the emergencies appeared small and there obviously was room for a general governor. It nevertheless remained true that the problem was aggravated by the uncertainty in which they were kept by the Queen. So long as there was no definite decision whether she would return Leicester, replace him, or allow the States to establish

¹See Wilkes' letter of May 25th to Walsingham, in Cabala, II, 32-34.

²Brugmans, II, 306f.

an alternate form of government, it was difficult to make arrangements. Eventually, by the middle of June, States and Council tried to settle at least the question of the military command by resolving that until Leicester's return the field army would be under Maurice's leadership.¹ Buckhurst, Wilkes and Norris withheld their vote,² although the ambassador admitted that the settlement was the only logical one.³ It was nevertheless questionable whether the arrangement would solve the military problem. Parma had already begun his offensive in north-western Flanders, and Maurice's influence upon the States was not such that he could force them to hasten their preparations and concentrate upon the immediate Spanish threat.

The fear that the States would leave Ostend and Sluys to their own resources was one of the reasons why Elizabeth decided to send Leicester back. Another was pressure by her Councillors. Leicester himself appears to have been in favour of returning, provided that Elizabeth complied with his requests for monetary aid and allowed him adequate support.⁴ Burghley and Walsingham agreed that he should resume his charge.⁵ Their support does not indicate that they had been

¹Res. St. Gen., V, 640.

²Cal. For., XXI, 111, p. 103.

³BM, Add. Mss. 48,078, fo. 99.

⁴BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, fos. 292, 294, 297; Harl. Mss. 6994, fo. 70.

⁵For Burghley see PRO, SP Dom. XII, 200, no. 21; 201, no. 40; for Walsingham BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, 294f, 296f; Harl. Mss. 6994, fo. 68.

impressed by his previous performance. There is evidence that especially Walsingham's attitude towards Leicester's policies had been a sceptical one. Wilkes and Buckhurst considered him as their ally and freely acquainted him with their objections to and outspoken criticism of Leicester and his government.¹ The fact that after Leicester's reappointment Walsingham sent his secretary Francis Needham to the Netherlands indicates that he himself had his misgivings about Leicester's policy. It appears to have been Needham's task to gain impartial information about Leicester's government and to help direct his policies. He was ordered to warn Leicester particularly against a "course of revenge" and to advise him that he adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the States.² Walsingham did the same by personal letters to the governor.³ When after the loss of Sluys the struggle between the States and Leicester was renewed he was one of the first to suggest to Leicester that he ask for his recall.⁴

Burghley's attitude towards Leicester's government is not so clear. He had from the beginning considered it advisable that the English governor possessed some political influence in the Netherlands. He continued to support Leicester, not only when the Queen

¹BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fos. 49, 93-95; Cal. For., XXI, 11, pp. 322-324, 365; iii, pp. 67f, 117f.

²BM, Harl. Mss. 287, fo. 37; Harl. Mss. 1582, fo. 54.

³BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 230.

⁴BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 232.

objected to his acceptance of the governorship, but also when the States began to challenge his authority.¹ During Leicester's second term, particularly when upon the loss of Sluys Elizabeth once more overwhelmed her lieutenant with her criticism, Burghley continued to defend his actions.² In the course of this year he came also around to Leicester's side in the matter of Elizabeth's peace policies. Burghley had always desired an "assured" peace, and he had long considered it advisable to keep contacts with Spain open, but he realized the dangers of unduly forcing the issue. From his letters to Walsingham, written in the summer and autumn of 1587, it appears that he strongly objected to Elizabeth's policy of trying to arrange a formal conference so long as there was no certainty that Philip would accept her conditions, and so long as the States refused to join the negotiations.³

¹Burghley approved, for example, of Wilkes' March remonstrance to the States. "I have", he wrote to Walsingham on April 22nd 1587, "considered an large wrytyng exhibited to the States Generall by Mr. Wylks on the behalf of hir Majesty, and my L. of Leister as hir Majesty's lieutenant, and Governor of those Contreys. Wherin he hath in my opinion both wisely, clearly and yet modestly, expressed the offences committed by the States generally ageynst my L. Authoritie, and in the end he presseth them with a sharp argument, taxyng the States with ther challenge of soverayntie, wher the same properly belongeth to the whole Contrey and people of whom they have ther authoritie. This argument is somewhat bytyng, and I long to heare what will be answered, for it is a matter questionable, and full of absurdities." PRO, SP Dom, XII, 200, no. 21.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fos. 231, 245, 248; Harl. Mss. 1582, fo. 53.

³PRO, SP Dom. XII, 202, no. 56; 203, nos. 34, 37. The first two of these letters have been printed by Read, Lord Burghley, pp. 398f. See further Burghley's "Arguments upon the matter of the offer to treat of a peace" in Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 466f.

The fact that Burghley agreed with some of Leicester's aims again does not prove that he was, any more than Walsingham, an admirer of his particular approach. Their insistence upon Leicester's return does suggest, however, that in their opinion there was no better solution. Parma's success in gaining control of one of the Flemish coastal towns might be followed by the long-expected naval attack upon England itself. In view of this threat it was more than ever necessary that some basis for Anglo-Dutch cooperation be found. Burghley and Walsingham seem to have felt that Leicester, because of his influence with Elizabeth and because of his prestige among the people of the Netherlands, might still succeed in keeping both Queen and States loyal to their treaty obligations.

England had long considered the possibility of a Spanish attempt against Ostend and Sluys. Fearful of jeopardizing the peace and reluctant to spend extra money, the Queen failed to try to prevent an attack in Flanders by a timely offensive, but she had never ignored the danger. The Dutch legation in London had been told on more than one occasion that the States were to strengthen the defences of the two places and to pay their garrisons.¹ The States had even been threatened that England would withdraw its subsidy if they neglected their holds on the Flemish coast.² Under the circumstances the threat could not very well be executed, and the States felt free to ignore it. Sluys and Ostend

¹ARA, SG 3793, fos. 257, 273, 283. See also Buckhurst's instructions, BM, Add. Mss. 48,084, fo. 58.

²Bor, II, 940.

received no more attention than other frontier towns. If the complaints of Wilkes, Buckhurst, Norris, and the governors of the two towns may be believed, they received considerably less, at least until the offensive had actually begun.¹ To them it was evident that the States would refuse to exert themselves unduly for the safety of the towns, so that England, if it cared for their preservation, would have to take the initiative. According to Sir Roger Williams the entire responsibility would devolve upon the English army; it was his conviction that the States were prepared to sacrifice the towns altogether. He based his suspicion on the fact that shortly before the siege started Maurice had tried to withdraw some companies from Sluys,² and on the report of a Spanish prisoner of war that the States had promised Parma a free hand if he moved against Ostend or Sluys.³

Elizabeth was forced into action. Having long ignored the complaints about the incompleteness of her auxiliary, she ordered late in April or early in May that levies for the army in the Netherlands be made.⁴ These levies were not quite completed by the end of May, when Leicester was commanded to return, but in the meantime the English began to prepare for the defence of the Flemish coast by means of the

¹BM, Add. Mss. 5935, fo. 23verso; Cabala, II, 15f; Cal. For., XXI, 111, pp. 15, 76, 80f.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 40.

³BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, fo. 98.

⁴Acts Privy Council, New Series, XV, 37f, 61.

troops they had in the Netherlands. Sir Roger Williams was transferred with some experienced English companies from Bergen op Zoom to Ostend, which for a time seemed to be the enemy's target. When on June 12th the Spanish forces settled down before Sluys he moved to that town.¹ Some weeks later, on July 6th, Leicester arrived in Zeeland. He was accompanied by 4,500 new English recruits, 1,500 of whom were meant to be at the States' charge.² These troops were untrained and largely unprovided, but the English government hoped that they would be supplied and armed by the States and added to whatever forces Maurice and Hohenlohe had at their command.³

Leicester's first task then was to coordinate the Anglo-Dutch forces for the defence of Sluys. It was not his only duty, however. Elizabeth expected him also to require the States' consent for and participation in a peace conference. Buckhurst's reports had given the impression that the majority of the people in the Netherlands desired a composition. They had also made it clear that the minority opposing it was a powerful and determined one, which would probably risk the break-up of the alliance rather than submit. The dangers were great, but in the Queen's opinion those of continuing the war were more serious still. Something was to be done to bring the opposition in line with her

¹Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 66; Bor, II, 983.

²Bor, III, 8.

³Ibid.

policies, and she thought that Leicester, his strained relations with the States and the antipacific inclinations of his partisans notwithstanding, was the man best fitted to perform this duty.

In order to facilitate his military and political tasks Elizabeth wanted him to assume an authority similar to that which had been offered him one year earlier, and she agreed that pressure be put on the States if they were unwilling to grant this authority. The procedure to be followed was outlined in Leicester's instructions.¹ He was first to treat with the States' deputies and to ask them that they "yield him the like absolute authority as they gave him at his first entry into his charge". If these refused to do so he was to inform the "several Provinces, towns and commonalities" and warn them that the Queen would withdraw her aid unless her governor received the required powers. In attempting to gain Dutch approval for the peace negotiations the procedure was to be reversed. Leicester was to begin by trying "to win by some private kind of dealing such as [had] best credit with the common sort of people to like and embrace peace, and to be content to be used as instruments to incline the said peoples' hearts to desire the same". That done he was to approach the States and tell them that if they refused to lend their cooperation England would be forced to conclude a separate agreement with Spain.

Elizabeth's demand that he propose the peace was of course

¹ See for the instructions, which were dated June 20/30, Van Deventer, I, 164-167.

disagreeable to Leicester, who tried to conceal the order as long as possible. The command that he employ the aid of the opposition in order to regain his authority was in conformity with his own ideas however, and he lost no time in executing it. Before he left England he ordered his secretary Junius to prepare the ground. Junius was told to visit Leicester's partisans and "such as had charge over the people", inform them that the rumours about Elizabeth's peace negotiations were unfounded, and warn them that Leicester returned on condition that he receive power sufficient to administer the sovereignty for the countries. He was to add that this was the will of the Queen, who had ordered Leicester to return to England if he should not be reinstated in his former authority.¹

Little harm might have come from this preliminary attempt if Junius had managed to keep his endeavours a secret from the States. He did not. Before he had had many interviews Oldenbarnevelt and a few other members of the States of Holland were informed of his activities, arrested him and forced him to provide them with a copy of his instructions.² The discovery caused the necessary commotion. The States saw their suspicions confirmed that Leicester would again follow the popular approach and complained to Lord Buckhurst. Buckhurst himself was no less indignant and decided to send Wilkes, who was anxious to

¹The letter to Junius is in Brugmans, II, 336f.

²See the "Verbal de Junius sur la prinse de ses lettres", in ARA, Aanwinsten 1889, XXVII A.

leave the Netherlands before Leicester's arrival, with a letter of warnings to the Queen.¹ Even some of Leicester's supporters criticized his action. Prouninck, who had often recommended the popular approach, now regretted that Leicester had followed his advice and thereby given cause of annoyance to the States. In his opinion only Elizabeth could have sent a similar message with impunity.²

Prouninck was wrong in assuming that the States were still willing to pay any price in order to satisfy the Queen. Leicester's ability to refer to Elizabeth's wishes and support scarcely affected their attitude towards him. It did not induce them, for example, to second his military efforts. Leicester experienced this during the weeks that he tried to raise the siege of Sluys. Weapons for at least part of his recruits had been provided, but otherwise little help was given.³ There was a shortage of munitions and provisions,⁴ and money to buy additional supplies was lacking. The States had managed to save fl. 200,000 of their extraordinary contributions but had sent it to Bremen for the payment of the German mercenaries, shortly after they heard of Leicester's return.⁵ Eventually, on July 23rd, they voted

¹Buckhurst's letter is printed in Brugmans, II, 374-379. It was dated June 28/July 8.

²BMHG, XXXIV, 241.

³Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 204.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Res. St. Gen., V, 643, 646; BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 101.

fl. 100,000 for the relief of Sluys, but only part of it had been paid by August 5th, when the town surrendered.¹

The governor's expectations that the States' forces would be joined to his English troops also remained unrealized. The soldiers available for field duty had been put under Hohenlohe's command and sent into Brabant. Hohenlohe declined Leicester's invitation that he join him with his army before Sluys, although he eventually agreed to send his English and Friesian companies. They came too late to be of service, and Leicester's attempt to relieve the town on the land side had to be abandoned because of lack of soldiers. Hopes to relieve it by means of a naval attempt were also frustrated, in spite of the fact that here the allies were clearly in a stronger position than Parma. A naval force was prepared, but the Admiralties maintained that either the entry into the harbour was too hazardous, or that the harbour itself would be unable to accommodate the fleet if it should succeed in entering. Reports from the besieged and assurances by sailors who knew the situation were ignored, and offers by private mariners from Zeeland to make the attempt, turned down. Despairing of relief, and unable any longer to man the breaches, the garrison and burghers of Sluys surrendered the town.²

The reports on the defence of Sluys leave little or no doubt

¹ Res. St. Gen., V, 702; Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 276.

² For accounts of the siege and of the attempts to relieve Sluys see Bor., III, 8f, 15-21; Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 206-208, 258-263, 274-278; BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fos. 199-205.

that Sir Roger Williams' prediction was correct, and that the States did sacrifice the town. It is doubtful whether they did this primarily because of their rivalry with Leicester. A military debacle would of course hurt his prestige, but the States must have realized that he would have little difficulty in clearing himself of the blame and passing it on to his opponents, so that the device would boomerang. Moreover, the States can hardly have been willing to lose a strategic town like Sluys, which might well become a second Dunkirk, merely because there was a chance of reducing the governor's credit.

It is more likely that the town suffered its fate as a result of the States' animosity against England and their distrust of English policies in general. In a report sent to the Privy Council after the capitulation it was suggested that one of the reasons for the States' attitude was their fear that England, which already had both Ostend and Sluys at its devotion,¹ would gain too strong a position in the southern Netherlands.² This fear may well have existed; the establishment of an Admiralty College in Ostend had shown the dangers of English influence in Flanders. But another and more pressing consideration was no doubt the fact that the town would provide the enemy with a port from which to launch his forces for an invasion of England; in Parma's opinion the

¹Ostend had an English garrison, and that of Sluys, which was commanded by the Seigneur de Groenevelt, an ardent Leicesterian, was also strongly pro-English. So was the population of the town.

²Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 258f.

conquest of Sluys was a necessary preliminary for the English enterprise.¹ If Elizabeth wished to prevent Parma from acquiring his port of embarkment it was, the States undoubtedly argued, up to her to act; for example by granting their request for additional subsidies, or else by employing her own navy for the relief of the town. This is not to say, however, that they regretted her failure to make a large-scale effort on behalf of Sluys. There is reason to believe that the Dutch leaders were not disinclined to see the Armada sail, or even to lend Parma a helping hand for this purpose. The best guarantee for a continuation of English support lay in an act of direct Spanish aggression against England itself. To see this accomplished it was worthwhile to risk England's discontent, the people's indignation, and the increase of Spanish control over the Flemish coast.

As it happened Philip was unable to take immediate advantage of his conquest and for a time the States had reason to wonder whether they had not made a miscalculation. De Loo's negotiations were not discontinued, and the possibility remained that Elizabeth would induce Philip to agree to a peace. The popular reaction also was disturbing, especially in Zeeland, the province that felt itself immediately threatened by the Spanish victory.² In Flushing the magistrate needed the help of the English governor Sir William Russell to settle the

¹ Correspondance Philippe II, II, iii, p. 225.

² Res. St. Gen., V, 726.

disturbances,¹ and in the pro-English town of Middelburg, seat of the States General and the Council of State during the latter part of the siege, serious concern arose about the safety of the States' deputies. To ward off the popular threat the magistrate was forced to hire additional soldiers.²

There also was the possibility that Leicester would try to revenge himself upon the States. Assured of the people's sympathy, and of the support of numerous groups within the army, particularly of those which had helped in the defence of Sluys, his position was strong enough to pose a danger. The States General realized the need to come to terms with him. The Council acted as mediator, and by the middle of August a formal reconciliation was arranged. The first step was a proclamation by Leicester aiming at the suppression of the popular agitation against the States.³ States and Council had in the meantime drafted their "Act of Satisfaction", which Leicester accepted on the 16th of the month.⁴ Herein they promised to reinstate him in his former authority and to give him their full cooperation and support. Details would be settled by a new States' meeting, which was to be held at Dordrecht.

Leicester himself doubted whether the agreement would have a

¹ Thomas Wright, ed., Queen Elizabeth and her times (London, 1838), II, 347-349.

² Notulen Zeeland 1587, pp. 156, 195-197.

³ Bor, III, 26.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 24f.

great deal of effect,¹ and before long it became clear that whatever the wishes of the States General, the States of Holland had no intention to implement the Act of Satisfaction. They had accepted it in order to gain a breathing space while waiting for the alternative solution to the domestic problem: the disclosure of Leicester's peace mission. It was no secret that Elizabeth pressed the negotiations and it was expected that eventually Leicester would be forced to come back on his denials. In the meantime Holland tried to prevent his reinstatement by delaying tactics and passive resistance. It began by boycotting the meeting of the States General at Dordrecht.² A further step was taken in September, when the provincial Acts of Consent were submitted. Holland's Act showed that the States still refused to entrust their contributions to the governor and the Council of State.³

Without Holland's cooperation in political matters and without Holland's money nothing could be achieved, and the wisest course for Leicester would have been to accept the fact that he had been defeated and to ask for his recall. One of the reasons preventing him from doing so was Elizabeth's order that he gain the States' approval for a peace conference. It was of course possible to extend the invitation without further ado, but this would place the English ally in too

¹ Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 226.

² ARA, SG 3782, fos. 506f. On Holland's relations with Leicester after the Act of Satisfaction was granted see Kluit, II, 333-344, 351-353.

³ Holland's Act of Consent is in Bor, III, 52f.

unfavourable a light. Leicester preferred to throw the blame for Elizabeth's policies on the States' uncooperative attitude and the country's financial incapacity,¹ and this plan required preparation. He probably also hoped that he might be able to induce the Dutch to accept the Queen's invitation, or at least to give their consent to her negotiations. His own opinion on the question remained a negative one, but his hopes that Elizabeth could be persuaded to postpone her plans had been dissipated by the military defeat in Flanders. A peace conference there was to be. If it should take place without Dutch consent a new anti-English revolt was likely to take place, and so long as England was threatened by a Spanish invasion it could not afford to lose its influence in the Netherlands.

This factor needs to be stressed, for it helps to explain Leicester's later attempts, ill-advised and irresponsible as admittedly they were, to regain his powers with the help of the opposition groups and to strengthen the English military position in the Netherlands. In these months the distrust was mutual. The Dutch felt that they had reason to suspect the ally of false play, but England entertained similar doubts about the States' attitude, especially since the loss of Sluys. Holland's subsequent refusal to support Leicester's attempts for the defence of Zeeland, Gelderland and Overijsel² increased these doubts.

¹Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 246.

²See Kluit, II, 333-335, 351-353.

Not only Buckhurst, but apparently Walsingham also considered the possibility that some of the Dutch chiefs, exasperated by the procedures of Elizabeth, would try to forestall England and conclude a separate agreement with Spain.¹ The reality of these English misgivings then must be considered when an explanation of Leicester's policies is attempted. If it is ignored his final two or three months in the Netherlands give no other picture than the traditional, but oversimplified one, of a man prepared to risk civil war for the mere purpose of serving his own position or of revenging himself upon the States.

III

The final struggle between States and governor produced, as the earlier ones had done, an endless stream of remonstrances and counter-remonstrances, and it gave rise to the equally inevitable reconciliation attempts by the Councillors of State, the members of the Courts of Holland, and other "moderates". There is no need to relate the story in detail, but some attention must be given to the more spectacular political events. Leicester's first set-back came with the disclosure of Elizabeth's order that he propose the peace. Two factors were responsible for his failure to keep it a secret any longer. One was that the States' agent in London, Joachim Ortell, was able to lay his hands on Leicester's instructions and sent a copy of it to the Advocate

¹PRO, SP Dom. XII, 197, no. 5.

of Holland.¹ Oldenbarnevelt was now in a position to contradict Leicester's disclaimers on the issue and to give a new basis to the persistent rumours that he had been ordered to resume his former powers merely to facilitate the transfer of the Netherlands to Spain.²

The second reason was Elizabeth's insistence that the matter of the peace be broached to the States without further delay. The negotiations had not ceased during and since the siege of Sluys. Shortly after the siege began the Queen had informed Andrea de Loo that the members of an English peace legation had been appointed.³ This communication did not induce Parma to remove his army from before Sluys, but Elizabeth thought that the presence of her embassy in the southern Netherlands might have this effect. On July 26th she considered sending her commissioners if Parma would promise that in that case a ceasefire would be arranged. The decision appears to have been taken at the suggestion of the pro-Spanish Controller Sir James Croft. Burghley, who was also acquainted with the plans, doubted that Parma would be willing to jeopardize his chances of gaining Sluys by granting an armistice, and feared that the step contemplated by Elizabeth would

¹Haak, I, 128. Ortell's letter was dated August 5th, but it does not seem to have reached Oldenbarnevelt until the end of August or the beginning of September. See Res. Ho. 1587, p. 241.

²For, III, 51.

³Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 161.

needlessly complicate matters for Leicester.¹ Apparently he was able to dissuade her, for two days later De Loo was told that no legation was to be expected until Parma had actually ceased hostilities.² Parma meanwhile kept the negotiations going. On August 6th, one day after the capitulation of Sluys, he prepared a safe-conduct for the English peace commissioners.³ Care seems to have been taken that the arrangement remained no secret from England's ally, for later in August Leicester told Burghley that copies of the safe-conduct were circulating in the northern provinces.⁴

¹ In a letter to Walsingham, which was dated July 16/26, Burghley gave a report of his discussion with Elizabeth. "I am greatly incombered", Burghley wrote, "with such direction as hir Majesty will have prosecuted upon Mr. Controller's report to hir Majesty of his mans mouth Morryce. He sayth, that the Duke of Parma is willing to make a cessation of armes by treaty with my L. of Leicester before the Commissioners shall come and this she will have procede with spede. And yet by the very words of Andrea de Loos letter to the Controller...it manifestly appeareth that the cessation of armes to be made with the Erle of Leicester should be duryng the communication of our Commissioners. And so I have shewed hir Majesty the very words. But yet she will be persuaded by Mr. Controller to the contrary, upon his mans report. And so in all haste she will have the Controllers man to return with this answer, that the Commissioners shall come without fayle, if he will assent to cese armes. I objected to this that it were necessary to know of my L. of Leicester, whyther the state of his affayres and the publyck cause will accord with this manner of proceeding and whyther it shall profitt or endanger his actions. To which hir Majesty answereth that she will undertake that my L. of Leicester shall do herein what she will command. But I do reply to this, that yet it is not thereby resolved whyther it be mete so to be commanded as a thyng good for hir Majesty. But I am answered peremptorily that so it shall be... I am unfit to be an executor of these sodayn directions, specially where the effects are so large and dangerous, but lords and ladyes command, and servants obey." PRO, SP Dom. XII, 202, 56.

² Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 185.

³ BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 242.

⁴ Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 246.

The loss of Sluys strengthened the Queen's determination to have a peace. On August 18th the Privy Council informed Leicester that Elizabeth was writing him to this effect. The Councillors added that "for sundry reasons" they themselves also had cause to desire a composition.¹ Even Walsingham agreed that in view of the Queen's war-weariness and the States' refusal to cooperate in their own defence "a secure peace" was to be desired above anything else. Although doubtful whether such a composition could be arranged he advised Leicester to attempt to win the Dutch for Elizabeth's plans.² Leicester replied by urging Queen and Council to postpone the dispatch of the commissioners and to give him a chance "to propound the matter of the peace [not] as a thing resolved by her Majesty to go forward, but only by way of admonition, that they would bethink themselves what her Majesty shall be forced to do unless they give her better contentment".³ Five days later, on September 2nd, he made his preliminary announcement to the States of Holland, taking care to explain the suggestion primarily in terms of the States' financial and military weakness, rather than of Elizabeth's own war-weariness. Assurances were given that the Queen would continue her aid if the provinces made it clear to her that they had the necessary means to wage war successfully.⁴

¹ Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 227.

² BM, Galba D I, fos. 244f.

³ Cal. For., XXI, iii, p. 246; Leicester to the Privy Council, August 17/27. For his letter to the Queen see BM, Harl. Mss. 4111, fos. 219-227.

⁴ Bor, III, 34.

Leicester had reason to expect that if the States publicized his communication they would not overemphasize the second part of his message. He himself prepared to do this, and at the same time to make a public display of his grievances against the States. A lengthy remonstrance was drawn up for this purpose. It was addressed to the States General, but copies were sent, on September 9th, to the various provincial States, the towns, and the High and Provincial Courts of Holland.¹

The effect of this communication was not highly spectacular. Hoping to ascertain the strength of the English party, Leicester had asked for answers by the individual towns. The States of Holland wished to prevent this and decided to give a combined reply,² a decision which only Dordrecht, Gouda, Medemblik and Hoorn appear to have refused to follow.³ The reactions from these towns and from the Courts of Holland were as might have been expected. All regretted the misunderstandings, all promised their obedience, and all, except Gouda, whose magistrate had long desired a composition, told him that a peace was unacceptable

¹Bor, III, 39. The remonstrance and the accompanying letter are printed by Brugmans, III, 84-94 and 100-102.

²Res. Ho., 1587, p. 256.

³BM, Add. Mss. 48,129 (no. fo.). For a similar paper see Cal. Hatf. Mss., III, 301f. Delft, Haarlem, Amsterdam and De Briel also acknowledged Leicester's letter but these towns informed him that they referred themselves to the States of Holland's reply.

to them.¹ Apart from Overijsel, which was willing to join the negotiations if there were assurances that the peace would not prejudice the country's privileges and the reformed religion,² the various provincial States also gave a negative reply with respect to the peace proposals.³

This near-unanimity made it clear to Leicester that it would be best to ignore the issue for the time being, but again Elizabeth frustrated his plans. Urgent orders continued to reach him from England, and on October 11th he made his second proposal to the States. This time it was expressed in more definite terms: Elizabeth was unwilling to postpone her conference any longer and the States were requested to join her and appoint commissioners. If they refused or delayed their resolution she might be forced, it was implied, to proceed without them.⁴

The fact that they had scored a political victory over Leicester did not make the governor completely harmless to the States. The revelations about the peace failed to have the results that had been expected. They undoubtedly cost Leicester part of his support,⁵ but many of his partisans refused to be convinced and still believed that

¹Some of the replies occur, in abstract, in the document last cited; the answers of the Courts of Holland and of Dordrecht have been printed by Bor, III, 47-50, 56-59.

²According to the summary in Add. Mss. 48,129. A similar reply was made by the two frontier towns of Tiel and Bommel. Ibid.

³See for the replies of Friesland, Gelderland, Utrecht and Holland, Bor, III, 46f, 54f, 55f, 76-80.

⁴Van Deventer, I, 173-175.

⁵Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 377, 380, 392.

the Queen's threatening desertion was the States' fault. Their agitation and activities were causing the government considerable anxiety. Suspicions about Leicester's own intentions also continued. The States seem to have considered the possibility that he contemplated a formal coup d'etat, although such a drastic measure was not even necessary for him to strengthen his position. All that was needed was to retain his control over the English strongholds in Holland, Zeeland and Utrecht, to increase the number of his partisans within the States (which might be done by seconding the opposition's attempts to change the magistrates in a number of individual towns), and to eliminate some of his most dangerous enemies.

One of the incidents arousing the States' suspicions was that during the first week of September English troops entered Holland and were received, at Leicester's order, by four or five towns.¹ Most of these appear to have belonged to the new English recruits whom the States refused to pay and whom Leicester was eventually forced to return to England. The measure was probably in the first place one of protest: the States were informed that Leicester would leave the soldiers in Holland until the States had decided whether or not they wished to keep them.² Part of the troops however were meant to stay, although perhaps for no other than defensive purposes, that is for the protection of

¹ Res. Ho. 1587, pp. 244f.

² ARA, Res. R. v. St., 6, fo. 102verso; Cal. For., XXI, 111, 330f.

De Briel. The number of soldiers in the cautionary town itself was increased, while the neighbouring towns of Delfshaven and Maaslandsloot were provided with an English garrison.¹ Similar precautions were taken on the island of Walcheren, where by means of special arrangements with their garrisons Vere and Arnemuiden were converted into English strongholds for the greater security of Flushing.² It is impossible to say whether or not Leicester contemplated more drastic measures. The States' fears that the English army would be used for an attempt against some of their towns were not realized, but it is not surprising that under the circumstances these fears did arise.

The States also believed that an attempt had been made by Leicester to remove a number of his opponents. Shortly after the dispatch of the English soldiers into Holland he had, at the suggestion of the Council of State,³ visited The Hague for an interview with the States of Holland, and it was rumoured that on this occasion he had intended to arrest Oldenbarnevelt and Maurice.⁴ Again it is uncertain whether or not the rumours were based on fact. If they were, Leicester acted in accordance with Elizabeth's suggestions. Furious about the Dutch "betrayal" of Sluys the Queen had made no secret of her wish that

¹ Res. Ho. 1587, p. 244.

² Cal. For., eds. Sophie Crawford Lomas and Allen B. Hinds (London, 1931), XXI, iv, pp. xviif.

³ BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 597.

⁴ Bor, III, 51.

Leicester dole out punishment to Hohenlohe, Maurice, and the uncooperative States' members.¹ It further appears from a letter written on September 11th by one of the Friesian centralists, who was then at Dordrecht, that at this time Leicester's partisans expected a "change for the better". The expectation seems to have been based on Leicester's garrisoning of Delfshaven and Maaslandsluis with English soldiers, his resolution to communicate directly with the provinces and towns, the apparent dissatisfaction of the Courts of Holland with the States' procedure, and on Leicester's decision to visit The Hague.² It remains possible however that nothing more was intended than a course of pressure and intimidation; no mention was made in the letter of any intention to use more rigorous means. Walsingham had urged Leicester to ignore the Queen's suggestion,³ and a letter by Leicester to the Privy Council, wherein he assured his colleagues that he had no intention to follow "some hasty course of revenge" suggests that he himself questioned the wisdom of Elizabeth's proposal.⁴ Although sufficient opportunities had presented themselves for an attempt against Maurice,⁵ these had never been used. It is not

¹ BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C XI, fo. 121; Galba D I, fo. 230verso.

² The letter, which was sent by Doeco Aysma to his brother Dr. Hessel Aysma, is printed in Van Deventer, I, 167-169. See also Bor, III, 51.

³ BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 230.

⁴ BM, Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 570.

⁵ At Middelburg, just after the loss of Sluys, and at Dordrecht, shortly before Leicester's visit to The Hague. BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D I, fo. 228; Add. Mss. 48,014, fo. 592verso; Cal. For., XXI, iii, pp. 238, 264.

impossible therefore that this particular suspicion, which may have arisen as a result of the States' awareness of the Queen's demands, was unfounded.

If Leicester had intended to adopt a "forceful approach", it was probably his experience of the States' superior political strength which dissuaded him from doing so. He continued to have a considerable following, also in Holland. The feeling that a reconciliation between States and governor might solve the problem posed by Elizabeth's pacifism was not confined to militant Leicesterians like Prouninck, Sonoy and the centralists of Friesland. The ministers of Holland held the same opinion and sent a delegation to the States with the request that they try to give Elizabeth and Leicester satisfaction.¹ Their intervention was not followed by further pressure, however. Other members of the English party showed more initiative, but they also failed to accomplish their purposes. Attempts against the anti-Leicesterian members of the magistrates of Leiden and Amsterdam were unsuccessful.² Sonoy's hope that with Leicester's help he might regain control of Enkhuizen, where he had recently lost his military influence, was also frustrated. Leicester duly came to the Northern Quarter. He visited and was feasted in Hoorn and Medemblik, but the magistrate of Enkhuizen refused to allow him to enter the town.³ A similar message of refusal came from the College of

¹Bor, III, 73f.

²Ibid., p. 63.

³Ibid., pp. 67-69.

States' Deputies of Friesland, to which province Hessel Aysma and his associates had invited him in the hope that the magic of his name and presence would help them to gain a victory over the College and other anti-English groups.¹

Except in one instance these intrigues and incidents had no other effect than sharpening the suspicions between the antagonists; no major political upheavals occurred and no blood was shed. The one exception concerned Leiden, where plans had been made for a military attempt against the magistrate. Although natives may have cooperated, the plot appears to have been organized primarily by refugees from Sluys and other southern exiles, many of whom had settled in this town. Among those who had been acquainted with the plans were the ex-Councillor of State for Flanders Adolf van Meetkerke and the Professor of Theology Adriaan Saravia, also a native of the southern Netherlands, while the Fleming Jacques Volmaer was one of the chief organizers. Military assistance was to be given by the companies of two officers who had served at Sluys, the Italian Cosmo de Pescarengis and the young Seigneur de Maulde. The attack had been planned for October 11th, but shortly before that day Cosmo was arrested, on charges unconnected with the plot. Hereupon the other conspirators decided to cancel their plans. The magistrate somehow received information about the affair however, and arrested Volmaer and De Maulde. Meetkerke, Saravia and a number of others who had received

¹Bor, III, 70.

a timely warning, were able to escape.¹

After a hasty trial by a court made up of members of the magistrate and the provincial States the three prisoners were condemned to death. Appeals by Leicester, Maurice, the Council of State and the Courts of Holland were ignored, and on October 26th the execution took place. In accordance with the sentence passed the heads of Volmaer and Cosmo were put on stakes and displayed at one of Leiden's gates. One year later they were still there, as a grisly warning to the burghers that rebellion against the magistrate would be ruthlessly suppressed.² After the execution, which created considerable disquiet among the people, a general pardon was proclaimed to those who might have been involved in the plot. The one exception concerned the men who had fled the town; these were to suffer their exile and the loss of their possessions.

The procedure was directed as much against Leicester as against the conspirators. When the tragedy had taken its course Leicester denied, at least by implication, that he had been actively involved, and rejected the imputation that he should have wished to attempt anything "against the state of the country by force".³ It is clear however that he was aware of the conspirators' intention to change Leiden's magistrate. Volmaer and Cosmo both told their judges that he had been informed of

¹See for the story of the Leiden plot Bor, III, 93-106.

²BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D III, fo. 330.

³See his letter of November 26, 1587, to the States General. ARA, Loketkas Loopende 56.

and given his blessing to their plans. It is true that at least in Cosmo's case this confession was extracted under torture,¹ but it was later confirmed by the testimony of some of those who had escaped. That testimony appeared in a public defence, which was dedicated to Leicester himself.² Whether the plans had been made at his suggestion is not certain. According to the pamphlet in question the initiative had come from the Leiden group, and Leicester had given his approval only on condition that bloodshed be avoided. It is possible however that the authors' desire to whitewash the governor coloured their account, and that Leicester's responsibility for the drama of Leiden was greater than his supporters were willing to admit.

The States' success in crushing the Leiden conspiracy served as a warning for other opposition groups. The one in Friesland was already meeting its doom. The invitation to Leicester that he visit Friesland was followed by the arrest of the centralists' leader, Dr. Hessel Aysma, who lost his position as president of the Provincial Council.³ Sonoy and Prouninck were able to maintain themselves for the time being, but it was unlikely that they would long remain in power if deprived of England's, and especially of Leicester's, moral and material support. Leicester's resignation was indeed to seal their fate; less than a year

¹Bor, III, 104.

²See ibid., pp. 98-103.

³ARA, Aanwinsten 1873, B XXVI.

after the governor's departure the pre-Leicesterian status quo had been restored in both the Northern Quarter and in Utrecht. It was this prospect, no less than the fear of losing England's support against Spain, that explains their desperate stand against the States during the concluding months of Leicester's second term.

The probable fate of his supporters could not induce Leicester to prolong his stay after the series of defeats he had suffered in October. It had become obvious that his role in the Netherlands had been played out. On November 1st he sent an urgent request to the Queen that she allow him to return to England,¹ and in the first half of that month he went to Zeeland to await her reply. In conformity with his own demands he had been released of the task of procuring the States' approval for a peace conference. This duty was entrusted to the diplomat Herbert, who arrived in November. Although Elizabeth appears to have recalled Leicester as early as November 17th,² he for a time delayed his departure, partly because he expected a Spanish attack upon Walcheren, but also because he hoped that the States General would do him the honour of sending a deputation to Flushing.³ The Spanish attack did not take place, and the States did not take the trouble of travelling to Zeeland. Leicester swallowed the slight and took his leave, on December 6th, with a lengthy letter of farewell to the States.

¹Cal. For., XXI, 111, p. 383.

²Ibid., p. 410.

³ARA, SG Lias Engeland 5880, Bundel 1587: Loozen and Valcke to the St. Gen., Dec. 6 and Dec. 7; Res. St. Gen., V, 733-737.

The letter was an extraordinarily moderate one and gives the impression that Leicester intended to resign himself to the situation, to give the Dutch his blessing, and at the same time to remove some of the obstacles that lay in the path of Anglo-Dutch cooperation. He regretted the fact, he told the States, that his government had not brought the success he and they had expected, and went on to suggest that the failure was partly caused by lack of means, but also by the States' neglect in giving him their full support. There was no need to stress his personal grievances however; his own case was of little importance, but he wished to urge the States that at least they cherish the Queen's friendship and give her all possible contentment. He further warned them to remember the enemy's power, to reunite themselves, strengthen their defences and, once more, to try to keep the support of England and the goodwill of other possible allies. If forced to rely on their own resources there was no future for the provinces. Without foreign aid the country would be condemned to a defensive war, and this would work the ruin not only of the frontier provinces, but in the long run also of Holland and Zeeland. He closed with the assurance that he would continue to support them, by advocating their cause before the Queen, by prayer, and by every other means available to him.¹

Leicester knew the Dutch cause to be so closely allied to England's own that it could not be abandoned except at England's peril,

¹The letter is printed by Bor, III, 140-142.

and there is no reason to question the sincerity of his professions of loyalty. It is nevertheless probable that they were received with considerable scepticism by the States, who were possessed by the fear that upon his return to England Leicester would revenge himself upon the provinces.¹ This fear was strong enough to induce some Dutch politicians to mention it to Leicester's secretary Athy, shortly before the governor's departure from Zeeland. Athy reported the interview to Leicester. The latter's reply to his secretary was not substantially different from his letter to the States General. It again showed his desire to allay the Dutch suspicions and to create some basis for future Anglo-Dutch cooperation. He once more had to give vent to his disappointment that the States were "so careless of her Majesty, and of such as love them and have done them good as [to] discourage all men from taking care for them", but his main concern was again with their relations with the English ally. Stress was laid on the fact that the best means to retain Elizabeth's aid was by showing her some gratitude and trust. The fear that he himself planned to wash his hands of the Dutch cause was said to be unfounded. He admitted that the States' anxiety to loosen their connections with England made him wonder whether they themselves were not plotting the provinces' ruin. He assured Athy however that if and so long as he "might take any hope of them to do good to the publyck cause" they would find in him an ally. "As for the other doubt of

¹"Gedenkschrift van Joris de Bye", ed. by R. Fruin, BMHG, XI (1888), 436f.

partycular revenge", the letter continued, "God doth know how farr I was from thought even toward the worst of them, and by his grace there shall no partycular matter nor man make me forgett my vowe to the furtherance of his service whatsoever become of me or how yll soever man shall deale with me. And therefore yf they wyll make yt probable to me any good course shall be taken by them for the general cause, they shall see what I wyll do, at the least my endeavour shall appear."¹

It may be assumed, as suggested, that Leicester tried to keep his promises. It is also clear that while his subsequent policies with respect to Spain and the peace conference could curry the States' favour, their suspicions of his intentions in their own respect were never fully mitigated. A number of incidents, ranging from minor squabbles about financial matters² to major disagreements about the support given to his partisans in the Netherlands, continued to cloud the relations between States and ex-governor during the remaining ten months of his life and, of graver consequence, to delay the restoration of Anglo-Dutch relations in general.

¹BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D II, fos. 233f; Leicester to Athy, December 3 (13?), 1587.

²Some concern arose among the States because of Leicester's refusal to acquiesce in their delays in paying the remnant of his salary and other financial claims, and of his threat to seek his "own remedy" -- presumably by the arrest of Dutch goods in English ports. EM, Cotton Mss., Galba D II, fos. 208, 233; ARA, SG Lias Engeland 5880, Bundel 1588; Ortell to the St. Gen., Sep. 2nd; Bundel 1588 "Ortell"; Memorie Jan van der Warcke en Ortell.

CONCLUSION

By describing the circumstances under which Leicester accepted and executed his task as governor general of the Netherlands it has been attempted to give an explanation of his policies. To explain his approach is not to suggest that there was no possibility of a different and more successful one. While it is true that many of the problems, conflicts and failures characterizing his government were due to circumstances beyond his control, it is also undeniable that his own policies, his underestimation of the States' powers and his refusal to follow their direction aggravated the difficulties.

Leicester's insistence on the grant and maintenance of independent powers was consistent with his attempt to centralize the system of government, the task which he had set himself and which initially the States also had recommended. It was at the same time his gravest political error. The States of Holland had in practically every remonstrance tried to convince him of this, usually with a reference to the better example given by the Prince of Orange. Others among his critics made the same comparison. Thomas Wilkes, for example, did so in a letter to Elizabeth, wherein he tried to convince her that Leicester's anti-States approach must fail. The Prince, Wilkes wrote, "would never attempt anything of importance, untill he had imparted the same to the States, and had obteyned their liking and allowaunce thereof; and the reason was, because

the nature of that people was and is to mislyke of the actions and attemptes of their governours, if they succede not to the profytt of the contrey, howsoever they be disseigned with reason or probability. This prince had not the showlder of so great a monarche as Your Majestie to countenance his gouvernement, but dyd all by wisdom and dexteritye. The States are the same people and of the same humor they were then and, to be plaine with Your Majesty, they doe not naturally love to be subject to any monarchicall gouvernement. I know, they have many other errors and imperfections irreformable in them, but their natures cannot be altered; and therefore Your Majesty - under most humble correction - must in this case make a vertue of necessity, sithe your safety is so contiguate with the preservacion of those contreys".¹

Wilkes overemphasized the advantages of Leicester's relations with Queen Elizabeth; in trying to govern the Netherlands this connection was as often a liability as an asset. His analysis of the Dutch political situation was valid however, and it pointed to one of the main causes of Leicester's political frustrations. The problem was that there was no room in the confederacy for an independent central government. However strong the arguments in favour of centralization were, particularly in times of military danger, those in favour of the confederate system had always prevailed. Ultimately each province and each town attempted to safeguard its own position before that of the generality as a whole.

¹Brugmans, II, 401f (July 12/22, 1587).

Leicester's failure to centralize the system was therefore not due to his English connections only; even a native governor could not have expected to succeed. The Prince of Orange, who had never doubted the military advantages of centralization, had realized that it was politically impossible and had been forced to content himself with fighting the most serious abuses of the existing system. His own government, and the country's experience in the following years, showed that no other approach was practicable.

It is nevertheless possible to see why upon the conclusion of the alliance the States had been tempted to make the experiment, and also why Leicester demanded that he be given independent powers. When he came to the Netherlands the confederacy was in a state of serious political disorganization. Particularism was rampant: the States General was unable to enforce its decrees, the Council of State was powerless, the military leaders were at loggerheads, and the provinces failed to pay their financial consents in spite of the imminent military threat. The inadequacies of the confederate system had never been more obvious than at this particular time, and the demand for a purposeful central authority was general.

There was also a general conviction that centralization offered the only possible solution to the country's long-term military problems. The conclusion of the alliance followed a period of uninterrupted defeats. The southern regions had been lost, and Parma had gained enough bases north of the great rivers to complete the subjugation of the inland

provinces and to organize an offensive against the western ones. The rapid Spanish upmarch since the Pacification of Ghent had been facilitated, it was generally agreed, by the provinces' political disunity and by the central government's lack of power to force the unexposed towns and provinces to an all-out effort on behalf of the exposed ones. It would have been unrealistic to expect that the English subsidy alone could have solved the military problem. A successful offensive had been impossible, even in the north-eastern provinces, when Brabant and Flanders were still bearing the brunt of the war. Parma's successes in South and East had been accompanied by a steady decrease in the provinces' revenue, and the 126,000 granted by the Queen did no more than counteract the loss in ordinary contributions that had been suffered in the one-year period preceding the conclusion of the alliance.¹ The grant of English aid would have to be followed, it had been agreed by the States, by an attempt to remove the obstacles that thus far had prevented effective political and military cooperation among the members of the confederacy.

When these factors are kept in mind Leicester's approach and many of the events of the Leicester period become intelligible. These same factors also show that Leicester's government was not an unqualified failure, serious as the consequences of his anti-States approach were. He governed the provinces at a time of drastic financial exhaustion,

¹Cf. ARA, Index Bogaers, I, fo. 341 (August 18, 1584).

acute military danger and -- the inevitable consequence of the military threat -- of widespread political unrest. He solved none of the problems confronting the country, but he at least prevented a further political and military disintegration. To have kept the confederacy intact, politically and territorially, was perhaps the most that could have been expected from any governor in this period of crisis and transition.

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The following lists contain only those collections of documents and historical works that have been cited in the text.

Abbreviations used in bibliography and/or footnotes

<u>ARA</u>	<u>Algemeen Rijksarchief, The Hague</u>
<u>BCN</u>	<u>Bijdragen voor de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden</u>
<u>BL</u>	<u>Bodleian Library, Oxford</u>
<u>BM</u>	<u>British Museum</u>
<u>BMHG</u>	<u>Bijdragen en Mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap</u>
<u>EHR</u>	<u>The English Historical Review</u>
<u>GAU</u>	<u>Gemeentearchief Utrecht</u>
<u>HMC</u>	<u>Historical Manuscripts Commission</u>
<u>KHG</u>	<u>Kronijk van het Historisch Genootschap</u>
<u>PRO</u>	<u>Public Record Office</u>
<u>RGP</u>	<u>Rijksgeschiedkundige Publicatien</u>
<u>TvG</u>	<u>Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis</u>
<u>WHG</u>	<u>Werken van het Historisch Genootschap</u>

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APPENDIX

I

ARGUMENTS AGAINST INTERVENTION IN THE NETHERLANDS

BM, Harleian Mss. 168, fos. 102-105.
 March 18, 1584. Copy. Anonymous.
 28 5

In a consultacion at the Lorde Tresurere Burleys house
 near the Savoie in Londne touchinge an aide to be sent
 into Hollande against the Kinge of Spaine, the 18 of
 March 1584.

The matter brought in deliberacione is, whether the Queenes Matie.
 should enter with forces into Hollande and Zeland to give aid to those
 provinces againste the Kinge of Spaine or noe.
 Wherupon these things are meete to be considered.

1. Firste whether the enterprise be juste.
2. Nexte for whome it shalbe taken in hand.
3. Thirdly againste whom.
4. And laste what is like to followe.

Which beinge well and thoroughlie weyed will directe men the better howe
 to give Advise.

1. And touchinge the firste. The enterprise cannot be juste excepte
 ther be either title or cause given. Title her Matie. doth make none
 to those Countreys that is knowne. Cause of offence be alledged diverses
 that shoulde move her; but non other then may receave some answer by
 the adverse partie, and may be repelled with other which they take to
 be greater givene on this side. For yf wee alledge againste the Kinge
 of Spaine his nourishinge of Rebelliones in England and Ierlande and
 also an invasione by the Pope into Ierlande maintained underhand by
 him; hee will thinke it suffitiente to answer, that by her Mats.
 permissione whole bands of Captains and Souldieres have been transported
 from hence into the Lowe Countreys and ther continued in service diverses
 yeares, and greate sommes of money sente to those Contries by her Matie.
 in maintenaunce of his subiects againste him. But be it that there be
 greater cause on this side to induce her Matie. to deale in this
 enterprise.

2. Then wee are to consider for the second pointe whome her Matie.
 shall ayde, and that is, subiects againste their Kinge, commone people
 and manye popular States without a heade. Fewe noblemen amongstesthem,
 and yet those subiect to their directione. The most of the nobillitie

of the Low Countreyes some tymes patriots [?] but now not only disunited but also enemies to them. Small redinesse to contribute to the charges of the warre, and small assurance to performe that which they shall promise as in the governmente of the Prince of Orange did appeare, who although he was borne amongstest them, and spent his life for their safeties, coulde not procure them to paye that which was requisite, not withstandinge the necessetie of their cause, that of itselfe should have bene suffitiente to move them. The small curtesie which all straungers finde at their hands that come to ayde them as by their evell entertainmente of Duke Casamire and our English natione was evedently seene. The people also of those Countreyes, inconstante, ingratefull, and subiects to mutenies & corruptione, wherunto ther is no doubt but they shalbe dailie solicited, neither are they so united in minde amongstest themselves but that ther be at this presente many and greate factiones in the verie bowelles of their Townes and Citties. Discentione also that is like to follow for superioritie betweene the governores and captaines of that armie which her Matie. should send thethere, and such heads as those contreyes now have. [In margin: Count Maurice, Count Hollock.] A thinge often happeninge amongstest men of warre, and verie perilous yf it shall fall out soe. The unwillingnesse besides like to be in them to delivere into her Mats. possessione any of ther stronge places specially those which be maritime. A thinge moste necessary both for the safegarde of her Mats. forces, and to make those people keepe promise with her, the yealdinge of which places of strength they will hardlie agree unto havinge denied that to the French Kinge; and the same (as it seemeth) beinge the speciall cause of the breache betweene them and him. A people moreover that have willinglie offered themselves to the French Kinge, without makeinge suite to her Matie. for releefe, wherby it shalbe founde howe coulde the Treatie betweene her Matie. and them is like to be, specially her Matie. offeringe them succour and favoure before they seke it.

3. Thirdlie this enterprise shalbe againste the King of Spaine, Lord of those Countreyes that seekethe to reduce his subiects to their former obedience. A thing that any prince would doe, & as her Matie. did upon the like occasione both in England and in Ierland wher in she could not have endured that any forreyne prince should have medled by maintaineinge or ayding her people againste her. And to reduce the provinces yet remaininge he is verie like, havinge prevailed alreadie so muche in the other, which were many in numbere, but are now brought to a fewe that hold out, so as this enterprise mighte then more fitlie and more to purpose have bene taken in hande, when there were xvii whole provinces united in one minde and one strength, then nowe, when ther be not above two or three remaininge. What he is beside of himselfe, is knowne. A mightie and potente Kinge, Lord and soveraine over many large Dominions, and of great welth also, wherby he is like to prosecute the matter to the uttermoste, and not like to leave the quarrell by any reasonable compositione, the rather beinge lifted up by his late victories over Portugall and the Easte Indeaes.

4. The laste pointe is to considere what is like to followe yf the matter goe forward. And that is: A presente warre with the Kinge of Spaine that will seeke to invade both England & Ierlande. Therby to diverte or revoke the Queenes forces out of the Lowe Contreyes. As Charles the Emperore, his late fathere, did (An^o 1548) in sendinge Duke Mauris into the Land of the Duke of Saxon, wherby he drave him to retire his forces thither for succour of his owne. And so both he and the Landesgrave beinge severed fell into the Emperores hands. And therfore how hard it shalbe for her Matie. to goe thorough with this Enterprise, and to defend her owne yf the Kinge of Spaine invade her, is meete to be thought on. And therwith the greate and exceedinge charges that muste needs growe by reason of this warre besides the perill of the successe. The charges also too great for her Matie. to beare without supporte of the Realme, whereunto it is hard to thinke that the people wilbe willinge to contribute, the moste of them like to take this for an unnecessarie warre, that being in peace we should provoke the Kinge of Spaine that in apparence maketh us no quarrell. The practises besides that he is like to use with forraine Princes, and evell subjects here, to trouble her Matie. and her state is not to be neglected. And further, of this muste needs followe a present stopp of all our Traffique, not onelie with the Lowe Contreyes but also in Spaine, whereof will growe mutenies amongst the subjects for lacke of vente, and a greate decaye of the Queenes customes which is her beste renewe.

It shalbe also fitt in this parte to considere the end of this Enterprise. Her Matie. doth not meane to conquere those Contreyes nor to make herselfe the soveraine Princesse therof, so as at length the matter muste growe to some end. And that wilbe: After she hath saved them from the present fury of the Enemy, or shalbe wearied with the trouble and charge of the warre; eyther to leave those Countreyes to the people of the same, to be governed by themselves; who shall not be able to maintaine and continewe their State in that good sorte which her Matie. may leave them in; or else by agreement, yf any be is greatly to be doubted, but being once in quiet possessione, find occasione enough to breake it. For how those things hold is evident by pacificaciones made both in the Lowe Contreies and in Fraunce in these late civill warres; they laste no longer but untill advauntage may be taken. Which fallinge out soe, as it is likely, then the case of those people noe better, but worse then before, and her Mats. perill no lesse than now, but rather more, to revenge so great an iniurie, as he will take it. Uppon all which matters thus remembered it shalbe meete to considere whether it wear not better to advise her Matie. to forbear this enterprise, accompanied with so many difficulties & daungers, and rather to proceed with effecte in the treatie with Kinge and realme of Scotland, for a certaine & firme peace, and a perpetuall League betweene her Matie. and them, with a perfecte establishment of the cause of religion in both the Realmes. The assurance of which contrie to this ought to be accompted of more vallue to us then the amitie either of Fraunce or Spaine, both because the Scotts dwell with us upon one

maine or continent land, and so most redie to offend us; and because also they have caste off the yoke of Rome, & doe professe the same Religeon of the Gospell that wee doe. A greater band then which cannot be betweene any people and nations in the world. This done and her Matie. puttinge her owne realmes in that order and strength which she may and is able to doe, ther wilbe little cause to doubte any perrill from the Kinge of Spaine though he should possesse all the Lowe Contreyes quietly; no more then ther was at such time as the Duke of Alva, his lieutenante in those parts, and having all there in peaceable possession, commaunded what he listed.

And yet the Kinge of Spaine can nevere so keepe those Countries, but he shall have neede of the amitie of England, considering the longe distance of his other dominions from thence, and the doubte he shall continually be in of mutinies and newe revoltes that may happen ther; together with the necessetie of the English traffique thether, without the which he shall have small renew thence.

And finallie whether it weare not better for her Matie. to shunne this unnecessary warre; and to keep her Treasure for her owne defence in time of neede then consuming it this way, to lacke when she shoulde have cause to use it, which together with the necessary preparation of all things here, wherof care is to be had, will deliver her from any perrill that may come by any forraine attempte or by sedition at home.

Counsailors present at this Consultacion:

The Lo. Chauncelor
 The Lo. Treasurer
 The E. of Shrewesbury
 The E. of Leycester
 The E. of Bedforde
 The Lo. Howard; Lo. Chamberlayne

The Lo. of Hunsdon
 The Lo. President of Wales
 Sr. Chr. Hatton, Vice-Chamberlan
 Mr. Secretari Walsingham
 Sr. Walter Mildmay, Chauncellor
 of the Exchequer.

II

LORD BURGHLEY'S ADVICE REGARDING THE APPOINTMENT
OF AN ENGLISH NOBLEMAN

In Burghley's hand. Endd.: July 13, 1585.
BM, Cotton Mss., Galba C VIII, fos. 89-90.

Upon the request of the States hir Maty. may with honour
assent to the same request as follows.

They do consider that ther is no prynce nor Contrey of whom they have more reason to require ayde and to be defended ageynst the tyranny of the Spaniard than of the Q. of England and of hir Contrey, for that ther hath bene allweys an entercourse of marchandes betwixt these Contreys and thers, and that in such sort so necessary for both, as the one by experience cannot well live without friendship of the other. And for that purpose when the princes of these Contryes have made leages of friendship for ther own persons, allweys it was provided that the towns and noblemen war also bound on to the other to mayntain amyty and entercourse. And in that respect the towns and people of these Contryes, fynding the tyranny of the Spaniards such as if they may have ther wills, they will styrr up a warr betwixt these Contryes and the realm of England, whereby shall insew a great desolation to both the Contryes, for avoydyng whereof the contryes now afflicted by the Spaniards and in danger to be subdued by them, do require only to be ayded and defended ageynst this intended tyranny for the benefit of both the Contryes, that they may enjoye the most auncient entercourse with the crown and people of England as they have done.

And hopying that hir Maty. will not relect this ther so just and resonable a demand tendyng to the benefyt of both the Contryes and people, they do also require hir Maty., that for the more spedy relief of them ageynst this tyranny intended, and the avoydyng of such confusion as hath happened amongst them, consisting of multitudes of towns and dyversities of provynces, being in a manner an equalitie, and no one gyvyng place to another in order and direction for ther defences, whereby though ther mynds be all unyted to defend themselves ageynst this tyranny, yet havying no persons amongst them that have power because ther strengths ar not unyted by any good ordre for lack of good counsell and direction that might unyte them all into one societie, therefore they do all offer to be advised and directed in all thyngs that may tend to strengthening of themselves, ther towns and people, ageynst the intended tyranny, as well for ther contributions of money and victells for mayntenance of ther army as for the defence of ther towns and places with garrisons,

by such noble person of English blood as her Maty. shall name and send unto them, who shall have power with the principall governors of the provynces and the Councillors for the States of those Contryes to direct good orders for the unyting of ther forces together for ther just defence.

To these requests hir Maty. may well assent, and name and send to them for principal nobleman accompanied with some persons as Councillors with hym, and the governors of the contryes and towns with all other the States of the Contrye may promise to observe and fulfill all such directions and advices as shall be made and gyven by the Councillors of the Contrey with the advice of such noble person of England as so shall be appointed, so as nothyng be determyned ageynst the auncient liberties of the Contryes. [Which person may well be accepted as a defender of their auncient libertyes ageynst the tyrannyes of ther enemyes.]*

*This final sentence was deleted in the draft.

III

PROUNINCK ON POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

BM, Stowe Mss. 163, fos. 10, 11.

The following paragraphs are taken from a paper drawn up by Prouninck and entitled "Apostilles responsives sur l'exposition de la lettre due 4 de fevrier 1587".

En toute regime libre, principalement où la monarchie est régné démocratiquement, lauctorite des Estatz est necessaire, laquelle Son Exce. veult et entend faire maintenir, mais aussy que les Estatz cognoissent les bornes de leur debvoir. Primum ence quilz se disent souverains - deinde souverains en contrepoix de lauthorité de leur Gouverneur general. Quant au premier, quilz voyent si leur estat a faulte du prince est aristocratique ou democratique. Si aristocratique il ny a qung membre de leur estat, asscavoir les nobles ou Optimates, et alors est impertinent de dire les Estatz, au lieu qu'on debvroit dire l'Estat. Mais se trouvant entre les estatz plus dung membre, asscavoir en telle province deulx, les nobles et les villes, en telle troix, Clergé, nobles et villes, lestat du pays est democratique. Cest doncques le peuple ad quem, Principe repudiato, summum imperium videtur rediisse, cuius populi pars est nobilitas, pars item plebs. Comme a Rome, ou Senatus n'estoit pas Souverain (quemadmodum nec senatus ordinum nostrorum) sed administrator duntaxat summi imperii cogere classes populi rogare populum legem datam exegit (nec enim alterius quam populi erat legem dare, id est concludre des grandes affaires de l'estat). Hec eorum administrationis summa fuit.

Le mesme sont noz Estatz administrateurs et exploicteurs des poincts de Souveraineté, dont ilz ont interrogué et receu commission du peuple. Auquel ilz feroient tord silz se portoient aultres et s'assumoient jurisdiction ou autorité plusgrande.

Or, daultant quilz ont au nom du peuple et suivant la teneur du serment tanquam illorum deputati transferré ladministration de la Souverainete a Son Exce. es poinctz non reservez, on ne peult comprendre pourquoy ilz se portent Souverains es poinctz transferrez, quy ne le sont pas encoires es poinctz non transferrez.

IV

PROFESSOR SARAVIA'S APOLOGY

BM, Cotton Mss., Galba D III, fos. 227-229.
October 6, 1588

Les causes pourquoy certains du magistrat de Leide ont
conceu mauvaise opinion de moy et fait que i'ay esté tenu
suspect des Estats de Hollande.

Il est ainsi que Son Exce. estant au camp devant Sutphen,
envoya vers moy un gentilhomme nommé Maistre Cornliche avec une lettre
de credence, pour cognoître ce qu'on luy avoit rapporté, que i'auroye
ouy dire de Paulus Buys, qu'il ne se seroit point porté fidelement en
certain affaire que Son Exce. luy avoit commis, mais auroit fait mauvais
office, de quoy i'estoye du tout ignorant et n'en avoye rien entendu.
Mais fort bien, que peu de iours auparavant certain propos seditieux
avoient esté tenus par un certain Pieter Mack minister, fondé sur le
conseil et advertissement que ledit Mack disoit que Paul Buys avoit
donné au Magistrat de Leide, de se donner garde des desseins de Son
Exce. et que le froc ne leur fut ietté par dessus la teste devant
qu'ils s'en apperceussent, et aultres plusieurs semblables propos seditieux,
tant contre la religion que la police. Dequoy ceux du consistoire (a qui
tels propos desplaisoyent) estant fort esmerveille, coucherent lesdits
propos par escrit et furent d'avis de rappeler ledit Pieter Mack, pour
ouir s'il les vouldroit maintenir ou bien confesser d'avoir temerairement
parlé. Car se disoient-ils, nous ne pouvons croire que ce que vous avez
dit de Paulus Buys et d'autres notables personnes soyt vray. Lequel
persistant en ses premiers propos et qu'il n'avoit rien dit que la
verité, qu'au besoin il trouveroit bien ses auteurs. Et ainsi il fut
resolu d'en advertir les Magistrats, lequel n'en fit point de cas. Afin
de n'y rien adiouter du mien ie fis tirer une copie de tout ce que
estoit enacté au livre du consistoire, et l'envoyai a Son Exce, lequel
estant de retour du camp la beilla au procureur fiscal du conseil
provincial de la Haye pour en prendre plus ample cognoissance et pour
proposer le fait au conseil. Ce qui a esté empesché par le Magistrat
de Leide, lesquels prindrent cela de fort mauvaise part, et voulurent
savoir comment et par qui Son Exce. venoit a avoir la copie de ce qui
s'estoit passé, tant au consistoire que pardevant eux. Quant a moy en
estant interrogué ne pouvoye et ne debvoye point nier mon faict cognu
a ceux qui m'avoient livré la copie. Et decela conceurent un merveilleux
grand desplaisir contre moy les Burgmaistres, disant que ie leur avoye
fait grant tort.

Puis apres environ un demy an on commenca a parler de la souveraineté, et ce pour amoindrir l'autorité de Son Exce. et la faire moindre et inferieure a celle des Estats, comme s'il n'eut esté que leur lieutenant, et eux les souverains. Dequoy un jour parlant familièrement avec un Burgmaistre je luy dis ce qu'il m'en sembloit comme i'en juge en ma conscience et suis certain estre la verité. Premièrement que ceux qu'on appelle les Estats n'avoient iamais esté souverains, qu'ils ne l'estoient point, et ne le pouvoient estre. La raison est toute evidente, un souverain ne recognoit que Dieu par dessus soy, au lieux ou il est souverain, et n'est point accountable de ses actions a autre qu'a Dieu; que les Estats avoyent pour maistres les corps des villes, desquelles ils n'estoyent que procureurs et commissaires, et avoyent leurs instructions auxquelles leur puissance estoit limitée, estant tenus de faire rapport de leur actions et en rendre conte. Aussi leur titre d'estat representatif demonstroito assez qu'ils n'estoient point les vrais Estats, mais seulement leur commis, durant le temps de l'assemblée et pour les affaires seulement desquelles ils ont speciale charge, lesquels points sont du tout contraire a la nature de souveraineté; concluant par la que le Gouverneur general du pays n'estoit point lieutenant des Estats representatifs, mais de la Conté mesme de Hollande, qui est le vray estat composé de toutes les villes ensemble avec la noblesse, et ce non point pour un iour d'assemblée mais iusques a ce que la charge de Gouverneur soit rappelée par le commandement special de toutes les villes et de la noblesse; et qu'il n'estoit en la puissance des Estats de luy oster sa puissance ne de la limiter ny interpreter sans speciale charge et commandement de leur maistres, desquels le gouverneur tient son autorite et non point d'eux. Et que le serment de Son Exce. estoit fait a la Conté de Hollande et au corps des autres Provinces et non point aux Estats representatifs qui sont auiourdhuy en autorité et touchant certain cas particulier et demain ne sont plus rien: mais le corps de la Conté demeure tousiour en son autorite, ne se pert point sinon apress quelle est resignée et mise en la main et disposition d'un seul Conte et Seigneur.

Au reste que quant a l'autorite souveraine le m'en rapportoye a ce qui en pouvoit estre: mais que le Roy Phelippe n'aucun de ses predecesseurs n'avoit onques esté Seigneur souverain de Hollande, Geldre, Frise, Brabant, etc. excepté l'Empereur Charles en qualité d'Empereur. Vrai est que de Flandres et Artois il est Prince souverain par ce que l'Empereur en a aquis la souveraineté par l'espee, et que le Roy Francois et son successeur le Roy Henry y ont renoncé par plusieurs traites de paix, et ainsy est non seulement Conte de Flandres et Artois mais Prince souverain et vrayement Roy, encore qu'il n'en porte point le titre, ne recognoissant autre que Dieu pour superieur, duquel immediatement il tient lesdites Contées. Mais quant au Ducez de Brabant, Gueldre, Hollande, Frise, il doit homage et service a l'empire et est homme lige de l'Empereur, qui est le vray Prince souverain desdites Ducees et Contees. Et combien que le Roy Phelippe ait forfait le droit

et titre de Conte de Hollande, qu'il ne peut avoir forfait la souveraineté, laquelle il n'avoit onques eu, et qu'il y pouvoit bien avoir de l'abus quand on conioindoit l'autorité de l'Empereur Charles avec celle de son filz le Roy Phelippe, laquelle est fort differente. Car celle de l'Empereur avoit double respect, cest a savoir d'Empereur et de Conte, et ainsi il estoit souverain non point en qualité de Conte mais d'Empereur. Et que combien que le Roy Phelippe ait succede a son Pere, il ne luy a succede qu'en qualité de Conte: tellement que l'Empereur Charles en se deportant de l'Empire et de toutes ses Seigneuries a eu deux successeurs, l'un a esté Ferdinand son frere qui a succede a l'Empire et a la souverainete de toutes les terres et Seigneuries tenues de l'Empire, et le Roy Phelippe a l'Espaigne et au terres et Seigneuries du Pais Bas, a chacune d'icelles selon leur qualité et condition, qui sont diverses les unes aux autres. Que si la souverainete a esté quittée au Roy Phelippe de par l'Empire ce que j'ignore, ou bien ci elle est pour le iourdhuy negligée de l'Empereur et de l'Empire et abandonnée comme il semble quelle est, si long temps que les villes de Hollande demeurent unies ensemble comme elles estoient auparavant, la souveraineté est tombée en tous les corps des villes ensemble et en nulles d'elles en particulier, d'autant qu'elles ne font qu'un corps, une republique ou Conté. Toutesfois et quantes qu'un estat se dissout par la mort du souverain sans successeur ou autrement, la puissance et autorité souveraine ou autre tombe es mains et disposition de toute la republique n'est qu'ordre soit prins et estably auparavant pour durant le temps de l'Interregne se gouverner, comme on voit en l'Empire Romain et au Royaulmes electifs. Apres que les Rois furent deschasé de Rome les Consuls avec le Senat pensoient que l'autorité souveraine leur estoit escheue mais le peuple ne l'entendit point ainsi; quand il s'appercent que le Senat s'attribuoit toute les Royautés et souveraine puissance que les Rois avoyent eus auparavant, ils virent bien qu'on les avoit trompé leur faisant entendre qu'en deschassant les Rois ils seroyent un peuple libre; mais se trouvant bien esloignez de leur conte quand pour un Roy il en voyoient deux cents. Ils se revolterent du Senat tant que l'estat fut estably populaire, auquel combien que le Senat tenoit le premier rang et degré d'honneur et puis apres les chevaliers, le peuple toutefois retenoit la principale autorite en ce qui concernoit la souveraine puissance. Quant a Hollande l'estat ne peut estre que populaire, car les gentilhommes n'ont nulle prerogative de suffrage ne d'autorité en ce qui concerne l'estat, car tous ensemble n'ont qu'une voix non plus que le moindre corps de ville de Hollande. Partant je ne me puis assez esmerveiller de voz Jurisconsultes qui doibvent cognoître cecy et vous faire entendre quel est vostre estat. Car si long temps que ce point est ignoré vous ne pouvez proceder en voz affaires legitiment comme il appartient mais faut que commetiez beaucoup de fautes et absurditez en matiere d'estat lequel vous maniez.

Or, ses propos cy n'ayant esté tenu de moy qua deux ou trois ie ne scai s'ilz on esté rapportez a Messieurs des Etats. Tant y a

que depuis ce temps la ils m'ont eu suspect et pense de moy que ie faisoie entendre a Son Exce. beaucoup de choses au prelude de leur autorite et du pais. Toutefois iamais ne luy ait tenu propos aucun de l'Estat du pays n'y en general n'y en particulier, seulement quand il s'est plaind des traverses que les Estats luy donnoient ie l'ai prie que pour l'amour de Dieu et de Son Eglise il luy pleut d'avoir un petit de patience et que finalement les Estats deux mesmes s'accomoderoyent a toute raison. Et que feu de haute memoire le Prince d'Aurenge les avoit gaignez par tels moyens et amené si avant qu'ils ne faisoient rien sans son congé et conseil, auquel ils estoyent resoluz un petit devant sa mort de mettre entre ses mains tout l'estat du pays et le faire Conte de Hollande.

Voila le pire conseil que j'ay donné a son Exce. Il y a un tiers point dequoy Messieurs ont este fort offensez, c'est qu'un Synode a esté tenu par le commandement de son Exce. et comme ils pensent par mon conseil, en quoy aussi ils s'abusent, imputant cela plus a moy qu'aux autres ministres, lesquels me prièrent de leur tenir compagnie pour requerir Son Exce. de vouloir faire establir et autoriser quelque ordre certain pour le gouvernement de l'Eglise.