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Lobbying in Company: Mechanisms of political decision-making and economic interests in the history of Dutch Brazil, 1621-1656

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6. THE LAST HOPE, 1652-1654

Hendrick Haecxs returned to Brazil on board the fleet led by Admiral Witte Cornelisz de With, leaving Zeeland on 26 December 1647. Even though Haecxs had labored to have the rescue fleet leave before the winter would set in, it had already been below freezing temperatures in early December.⁷²⁹ The fleet arrived at Recife on 18 March, and was greeted by a volley. The so dearly longed-for rescue fleet had finally arrived in Brazil, but it soon became clear that Admiral de With and the High Government in Brazil had opposing plans. While the High Government favored an attack over land, de With favored an offensive against the Portuguese in Bahia. The High Government pushed its decision leading to the first battle of Guararapes. Even though the WIC had an army of 4,000-5,000 men against a Luso-Brazilian power of 2,300-3,000, the WIC lost the battle, leaving around 500 souls on the battlefield, and another 500 wounded, while the Luso-Brazilians only reported 80 deaths and 400 injured. The soldiers ran back to Recife shouting that only swift payment of wages could force them back on the battlefield. After this mutiny was settled with some wine and two months' wages, one of the Colonels remarked that 'we live here like animals, and will die like pigs'.⁷³⁰

Indeed, many of the WIC soldiers eventually would not return from Brazil alive. The tropical climate, diseases, and of course warfare killed nearly half of the employed soldiers. The scarcity of food supplies further tested the mental and physical limits of the WIC soldiers. The rescue mission of Witte de With was not a huge success.⁷³¹ Over the course of the next few years the colony spiraled into an ever deteriorating situation going without food supplies for weeks at the time. The low point for the WIC in Brazil, at least in military terms, happened in February 1649, when the WIC army fought a decisive second battle at the Guararapes Mountains.

⁷²⁹ 'het soo sterck begon te vriesen, dat met alle geweld het ijs stucken slaende en breeckende', l'Honoré Naber, "Het dagboek van Hendrik Haecxs," 243.

⁷³⁰ Quoted in Hoboken, *Witte de With*, 92.

⁷³¹ This was in part due to his myriad examples of tactlessness which worsened the relation between him and the High Government. The actions of de With have been documented in much detail previous scholarship, so they will not form the center of this chapter, see: C.R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the struggle for Brazil and Angola 1602-1686* (London: The Athlone Press, 1952), 250-261; Hoboken, *Witte de With*.

This chapter investigates the lobbying through petitions in an attempt to help answer the question why the States General did not succeed in sending a final rescue fleet to Brazil between 1652 and 1654. Moreover, it demonstrates the (im)possibilities of petitions in the Republic.

6.1. *THE SECOND BATTLE OF GUARARAPES*

In the days leading up to 19 February 1649 there was little to suggest that the WIC was about to lose a decisive battle to the Portuguese. The minutes of the meeting of the High Government discuss the prison, which was too small to house all Portuguese prisoners, organizing more efficient payment for the soldiers, and the possibility of using defecting enslaved Africans of the Portuguese as spies.⁷³² Moreover, according to their superiors, the soldiers had returned ‘encouraged by the raid on Bahia’ between December 1648 and January 1649.⁷³³ Nevertheless, the army leadership was aware that their principals in the Republic demanded more success. Their clearly stated aim was to not only safeguard the possessions in Brazil, but also to ‘damage the enemy in order to facilitate peace negotiations’ with the Portuguese.⁷³⁴ The WIC colony in Brazil was an important bargaining chip in the Portuguese-Dutch diplomatic relations.

In order to further damage the Portuguese, von Schoppe floated the idea of making a move on Rio de Janeiro. This idea was rejected by the High Government, which preferred facing the enemy nearby. Their main argument was that they were confident that additional troops would arrive, allowing an attack on Rio in the future.⁷³⁵ As such, the decision was made to march 3,510 men on the evening of 17 February, and try to engage the enemy head-on for a second time at the Guararapes Mountains.⁷³⁶ After the WIC army had found a favorable position on top of the mountains, a Portuguese army of 2,600, led by Francisco Barreto, arrived on the 18th and took positions in the shielded lower areas. As the night fell,

⁷³² NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 73, 14-Feb-1649; 17-Apr-1649 [scan 240-256].

⁷³³ NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 76, 04-Feb-1649 [scan 475].

⁷³⁴ ‘(...) oock wel succederende den vijandt werdende affbreuck toegebracht, sulcx de vreedehandeling in t vaderlandt sal comen te faciliteren’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.05.01, inv. nr. 76, 04-Feb-1649 [scan 476].

⁷³⁵ NL-HaNA, , 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 76, 04-Feb-1649 [scan 477].

⁷³⁶ 3.060 soldiers, 200 indigenous Brazilians, and 250 sailors.

nothing happened. The next morning the WIC troops, led by van den Brinck as von Schoppe's foot wound prohibited the latter to leave Recife, tried to engage the Portuguese troops. The more tactically gifted Barreto only had to wait until the sun would create an unbearable situation for the WIC army. As the WIC retreated towards the sea, Barreto attacked them in the back. Notwithstanding its perceived 'good spirits', the WIC army quickly resorted to a disorganized flight. The tired and sunburned soldiers who remained were killed by the Portuguese. If the Portuguese had not subsequently looted instead of chasing the soldiers who fled to Recife, almost the entire WIC army could have been obliterated. Nevertheless, almost one third of the WIC soldiers did not return from this battle: 957 deaths and 89 captured, and this included more than one hundred officers.⁷³⁷ Many others were wounded: after the battle, the WIC had only 4,230 soldiers of their original 6,000 left, 385 of which were incapacitated.⁷³⁸ The fresh widows and orphans who had travelled with their soldier-husbands to Brazil found themselves now stuck there. Without a head of the household bringing in income, they were unable to pay for their journey back home aboard a ship. In an attempt to feed themselves and their children, the widows needed to support themselves in a 'dishonest fashion', as one observer called it euphemistically.⁷³⁹ Other women were condemned to live a 'godless and scandalous life' by living with men who were not their husbands.⁷⁴⁰

This battle, that was advocated against by the army commanders but pushed forward by the High Government under pressure of their principals in the Republic, forced the WIC into a more defensive policy in Brazil from this point onwards. It did not help the reputation of the High Government that one of its members allegedly immediately after the battle said that 'without this defeat it would have been impossible to supply the others with sufficient food'.⁷⁴¹ The historian Naber questioned the reliability of this statement in a footnote, and van Hoboken also kept some distance. However, this point was reiterated in a letter to the States General in which the High Government wrote that if it had not been for the dead soldiers that no longer consumed food, 'hunger would have driven us in the arms of the

⁷³⁷ Van Hoboken, *Witte de With*, 148-150.

⁷³⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, Report on the soldiers in Brazil.

⁷³⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, 07-Aug-1649, Extract from a letter from an officer in Recife.

⁷⁴⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 60, 11-Jul-1645 Extract from the court case against Aeltgen Cornelisz.

⁷⁴¹ S.P. l'Honoré Naber, "'t Leven en bedrieff van vice-admiraal de With, zaliger'," *Bijdragen en Mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap Utrecht* 47, no. 1 (1926): 136.

enemy'.⁷⁴² There was certainly some truth to this statement. After all, the following years the colony struggled to feed all the inhabitants of Dutch Brazil. Together, they failed to produce sufficient staple foods locally, while the supply of provisions from the Republic was far from reliable, which was partially a consequence of the dwindling faith in the potential of the colony in Brazil. This faith was certainly not strengthened by the circulation of a printed list of the names of all the dead officers.⁷⁴³

6.2. WHY WAS BRAZIL LOST?

Did the revolt of 1645, or this second battle of Guararapes in 1649 create a path-dependent trajectory culminating in the loss of Brazil? According to the contemporary author Pierre Moreau the loss of Brazil was inescapable. The Dutch owned the less profitable lands in Brazil, while the Portuguese had all the good areas. Furthermore, the Dutch did not have enough infrastructure to provide for their troops (including clothing, food, and ammunition), whereas the Portuguese did. Thus, no matter how much the Dutch would have put into the colony, it was a lost cause from the start. Every added cost would have meant an added loss for the Company.⁷⁴⁴ Other contemporaries argued that the WIC was bound to decline because of its heavy spending within the Republic. The many directors, bookkeepers, and servants that the Company employed were an extravagance that prohibited the Company of efficiently and profitably managing a colony.⁷⁴⁵

In more modern historiography everyone agrees that without a revolt from the Portuguese plantation owners the colony would have never been lost. Therefore, explanations that have been offered for the loss of Brazil can be broadly divided in two groups. Firstly, the historians that try to explain the revolt, and secondly the historians that explain the success of the revolt. As a consequence, the historians that try to explain the

⁷⁴² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, 31-Aug-1649, Letter from High Council to States General. Hoboken found the same quote in other correspondence, see: Hoboken, *Witte de With*, 151-152.

⁷⁴³ Knuttel 6465: Anonymous, *Lyste vande hoge ende lage officieren, mitsgaders de gemeene soldaten, dewelcke in Batalie teghens de Portugiesen aen den Bergh van de Guararapes (3 mijl van 't Recif) doot zijn gebleven op den 19 Februarius 1649* (np: np, [1649]).

⁷⁴⁴ P. Moreau, *Klare en waarachtige beschryving van de leste Beroerten en Afoal der Portugezen in Brasil. Door J.H. Glazemaker vertaalt* (Amsterdam: Jan Hendriksz en Jan Rieuwertsz, 1652), 88-89.

⁷⁴⁵ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 84.

revolt, explain the loss of Brazil from a more 'Brazilian-centric' standpoint, while historians explaining the success of the revolt maintain a more 'Euro-centric' view on events.

The reasons for the revolt offered by early twentieth-century Brazilian historiography adhering to a more Romantic tradition of nationalistic scholarship are that the WIC colonial leadership was unsuccessful in winning the hearts and minds of the majority of the people that lived in the colony. The Dutch were a common enemy who united the Portuguese, Indians, Africans, and everyone in between in a strife for Divine Liberty. 'Our side won' from 'the invaders' as Abreu phrased it.⁷⁴⁶ The reason the Dutch forts fell to the Luso-Brazilians was thus partly ignorance of the WIC and its inability to establish durable relations with the various Amerindian groups.⁷⁴⁷ Moreover, the Dutch were considered too external, creating a unique alliance of the different ethnicities in Brazil. Something resembling a proto-Brazilian identity was allegedly already in place in the seventeenth century. Therefore, the Brazilian problem for the Dutch was the lack of harmony between the Brazilians and the Dutch. Since the Dutch felt superior to the Brazilians it was impossible to create a peaceful and successful colony; the Dutch just used the Brazilians to enrich themselves.⁷⁴⁸ This is similar to another, more pragmatic, explanation. The leaders of the revolt allegedly saw the revolt as a solution to the debt they owed to private traders and the WIC. That they owed money is definitely true, and the WIC certainly was aware that it played a role in the incentive to revolt. However, as Wim Klooster has argued, this does not explain why non-elites, who were not indebted to the WIC, supported the revolt.⁷⁴⁹ Both the proto-nationalist motivations and the economic reasons for the revolt are not entirely convincing. Thus, it seems that the reason for the popular support for revolt was egged on by the Portuguese King João IV and that the determination of the Luso-Brazilians (whatever their motivation) was primarily responsible for their eventual success.⁷⁵⁰

The Portuguese support, as well as private French and English ships providing the uprising with weapons and ammunitions, partly explain the success of the revolt. However,

⁷⁴⁶ Capistrano de Abreu, *Chapters of Brazil's Colonial History, 1500-1800*, 87.

⁷⁴⁷ P.C. Emmer and J. Gommans, *Rijk aan de rand van de wereld* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2012), 219.

⁷⁴⁸ Gonsalves de Mello, *Nederlanders in Brazilië*, 242-246.

⁷⁴⁹ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 77.

⁷⁵⁰ C.A.P. Antunes, *Globalisation in the early modern period: The economic relationship between Amsterdam and Lisbon, 1640-1705* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2004), 149; F. Ribeiro da Silva, *Dutch and Portuguese in Western Africa. Empires, Merchants and the Atlantic System, 1580-1674* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 330-331.

can the success of the revolt perhaps be explained as a result of disregard by the Dutch? At least since the eighteenth century the Dutch reminisced about their 'neglected' Brazil (*verzuimd*).⁷⁵¹ This implies that if the WIC or the States General had wanted to, they could have saved the colony. According to this view, the explanation for the loss of the colony should thus be sought in European factors. The first European-centric element is the machinations of the Portuguese ambassador Sousa Coutinho in The Hague.⁷⁵² These slowed down a quick and decisive action and succeeded in driving a wedge between different stakeholders within the Republic as a peace with Portugal promised a large part of Brazil without incurring any further military expenses on behalf of the Provinces. This point is reiterated by the Brazilian historian Cabral de Mello who agreed on the agency of the Portuguese diplomacy, but specifically pointed out how the First Anglo-Dutch War created the right setting for the Portuguese to apply this pressure.⁷⁵³ This war with England is the second important European element brought forward to explain the success of the revolt. Because the Dutch were preoccupied with equipping a war fleet in the North Sea to fight the English, there was simply less available capital and fewer ships, sailors, and soldiers to alleviate Brazil. Moreover, the Dutch privateers who had moved their sphere of action to Brazil after the Dunkirker pirates had capitulated in 1646, now switched back to European waters to hunt the English.⁷⁵⁴ This meant not only that the Portuguese could more freely ship people and ammunition from Europe to Brazil and that the Portuguese could reap profits from Brazilian sugar that no longer was seized by privateers, but also that the WIC saw their income from privateering reduced.

According to Charles Boxer there is just one player to blame for the inability of the States General to save Brazil: the town of Amsterdam. If Amsterdam had consented to find the money to either block the Tagus river or take Bahia, or perhaps even both, before the outbreak of the First Anglo-Dutch War, the revolt probably would not have succeeded,

⁷⁵¹ Groesen, *Amsterdam's Atlantic*, 187-188.

⁷⁵² E. Prestage, *The diplomatic relations of Portugal with France, England, and Holland from 1640 to 1668* (Watford: Voss & Michael, 1925), 209.

⁷⁵³ While Amsterdam merchants profited more from the intra-European trade in peace times, Zeeland profited more from privateering enemy ships, see further: E. Cabral de Mello, *De Braziliaanse Affaire. Portugal, de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden en Noord-Oost Brazilië, 1641-1669* (Zutphen: Walburg Press, 2005 - Originally published in Rio de Janeiro, 1998: *O Negócio do Brasil. Portugal, os Países Baixos e o Nordeste, 1641-1669*), 61-70, 119-121.

⁷⁵⁴ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 87-88.

Boxer argues. He points out that that none of the other European powers were in the position or condition to assist the Portuguese.⁷⁵⁵ To what extent Amsterdam action would have prevented the success of the revolt is of course speculative, but John Elliott and other historians after Boxer nevertheless reiterate the argument that the WIC's failure to obtain sufficient support from the city of Amsterdam led to the downfall of the colony.⁷⁵⁶

Why the city chose not to support an aggressive policy against Portugal is usually ascribed to strong trading interests.⁷⁵⁷ While merchants from Amsterdam were dominant in the European trade between the Baltic and the Mediterranean, merchants from Zeeland benefited more from privateering and Atlantic commodities. The province of Holland, supporting its Amsterdam merchants, thus preferred a peaceful relationship with Portugal to facilitate easy European trade, while Zeeland, supporting its privateers as well as its WIC chamber, preferred a more hostile approach. This explanation is, however, not altogether convincing as these two trading routes should not be considered separately. The privateering spoils brought to the Republic, for example sugar, were not just for the Dutch market, but were transported to other parts of Europe. Merchants from the Dutch Republic were carrying 98 per cent of all the sugar transported to the Baltic in the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁷⁵⁸ Colonial commodities were just as much part and parcel of European trade as salt, wine, and wheat were.

As has become clear from the historiographical overview above, the inability of the WIC alone cannot explain the success of the revolt. Yet, as the dominant explanation that Amsterdam alone was responsible for the forbearance and acquittal of the rescue fleet in the 1650s is altogether insufficient it is important to consider how lobbyists tried to influence the decision-making in this period.

⁷⁵⁵ France was facing the *fronde*, England the aftermath of the Civil War, and Sweden was licking the German wounds of the Thirty Years' War, see: Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 255-258.

⁷⁵⁶ Israel, *De Republiek*, 663-664, 670, 788, 1033-1035; Dillen, *Rijkdom en Regenten*, 157; J.H. Elliott, *Imperial Spain, 1469-1716* (London: Penguin Books, 2002), 355.

⁷⁵⁷ Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 217-219.

⁷⁵⁸ J.J.S. van den Tol, "De handel met de vijand: Het economisch belang van smokkel en Spaanse handelsembargo's voor de Republiek in het begin van de zeventiende eeuw," *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 13, no. 1 (2016): 63.

6.3. THE DELEGATES FROM BRAZIL

The news of growing tensions between the Dutch Republic and England worried the population in Brazil. In a letter dated 8 July, two days before English parliament officially declared war on the Dutch, the High Government expressed its concerns. On the one hand, because it feared that a possible war with England would weigh heavily on the naval power of the Dutch Republic, pushing the needs of Brazil to the background. And on the other hand, because hostilities in the North Sea and the Channel would limit the possibilities of shipping provisions to colony.⁷⁵⁹ This demonstrates that at this point the colonists considered themselves almost completely dependent on European affairs, emphasizing that the political mandarines in the Dutch Republic decided their fate. The High Council had ways of supplying the colony with modest amounts of corn (*'milho'*) from the island Fernando de Noronha and fruit from Itamaraca, but completely relied on support from the Dutch Republic to restore peace in the colony.⁷⁶⁰ However, the soldiers were first to be supplied, and the rest of the population only came second. When the latest shipment of corn had spoiled due to seawater and the fruit harvests were lower than ever before due to a two-year lasting drought in Brazil, the people in Recife were excited to see the ship *King David* arrive with provisions from the Dutch Republic. When the population realized that the ship brought nothing but beer, wine, and spirits, an angry mob of women and children headed to the houses of the High Government while weeping and shouting: 'Bread! Bread!'. Upon realizing that it was the regents in the Republic who abandoned them, the civilian population in Brazil thought of a plan.⁷⁶¹

Through their court of Sheriff and Aldermen (*Schout en Schepenen*) the population submitted a petition to the High Government requesting to send a delegation to the Republic to request assistance.⁷⁶² This request had been submitted to the High Government in

⁷⁵⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 67, 8-Jul-1652 Letter from the High Government to the Board of Directors [scan 133].

⁷⁶⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 67, 12-Aug-1652 Letter from the High Government to the Board of Directors [scan 196].

⁷⁶¹ 'in grooten getalle aen de huijsen van de regenten sijn gecomen, vrouwen ende kinderen alle schreijende ende roepende "Broot, broot!" ende geen broot connende becomende, roepende weklage over den heeren regenten in het vaderlandt van de welke sich verlaten bevonden', NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 67, 13-Jul-1652 Letter from the High Government to the Board of Directors [scan 151].

⁷⁶² For information on the lower councils in Brazil in this period, see chapter 1 and 2.

previous years, but had always been denied. This time, the High Government realized that the colony was at the mercy of the decision-making in the Republic and that it would not hurt their cause to add some Brazilian lobbyists to remind the High-Mightinesses and Board of Directors of the Brazilian affair when tensions were rising between England and the Dutch Republic. The mission of the delegates ‘from the two nations of Jews and Christians’ was to demonstrate the miserable state of the colony and that it was no longer an option to balance on the verge of death. The three gentlemen selected to form the “Delegates of Brazil” were Jasper van Heussen, an alderman of Mauritsstad, Jacob Hamel, secretary of the court of sheriff and aldermen, and Abraham de Azevedo, a Jewish merchant in Recife and prominent member of the Jewish community.⁷⁶³ In later years van Heussen would serve as the director-general for the WIC on the African Gold Coast. Before Hamel had been appointed as secretary of the sheriff and aldermen, he had been a notary in Recife.⁷⁶⁴ This means that he had both training and experience in drafting and submitting petitions.

The three delegates left Brazil in August 1652 with a letter of recommendation from the High Government, and arrived in the Dutch Republic on 15 October 1652. It was their task ‘to present the miserable and pitiful state of the country and the people’, and ‘to request the necessities and means that would release this misery’.⁷⁶⁵ The members of the High Council furthermore asked that the High-Mightinesses would decide favorably on the requests from the delegates from Brazil. Between 13 December 1652 and the 28 May 1654, the delegates submitted no less than 29 requests to the lofty members of the States General, as can be seen in Table 6-1. There was apparently a very clear hierarchy between the three men, as they always sign their requests in the same order. Even when one of them was not present and not all of them signed they maintain their order. It is interesting to note though that Jasper van Heussen, who held a public office and was the first to sign - indicating that he would be the first in the hierarchy – was never the sole signatory, whereas Jacob Hamel and Abraham

⁷⁶³ Unfortunately, not a lot more is known about the three individuals. It is likely that Jacob Hamel is related to Hendrik Hamel, one of the member of the High Council during the tenure of Johan Maurits. Both of the Hamels served in the militia of the city of Recife and Mauritsstad during the 1640s. See the minutes of the High and Secret Council, for example, NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 69, 21-Aug-1641 [scan 305].

⁷⁶⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 68, 10-Nov-1640 [scan 1510].

⁷⁶⁵ ‘aldaer voor te dragen den miserabilen ende jammerlijcke toestant van dese landen ende volckeren ende voorts uwe Ho:Mo: te versoecken de gerequireerde secoursen ende middelen waervoor eenmael uijt dese miserie mochten verlost werden’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5763 15-Oct-1652 Letter from the High Government to the States General.

de Azevedo do seem to have been trusted to submit requests by themselves ‘on behalf of all the delegates of Brazil’.

Table 6-1: Requests sent to the States General by the delegates of Brazil 1652-1654

	Suppliant 1	Suppliant 2	Suppliant 3
1652			
13-dec	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
18-dec	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
1653			
17-jan	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
4-feb	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
27-feb	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
1-mar	Hamel		
6-mar	Azevedo		
19-mar	Azevedo		
21-mar	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
3-apr	van Heussen	Azevedo	
14-apr	Hamel		
21-apr	Hamel	Azevedo	
13-may	van Heussen		
14-may	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
28-may	Hamel	Azevedo	
21-jun	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
3-jul	Azevedo		
24-jul	Hamel	Azevedo	
31-jul	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
23-oct	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
3-dec	Hamel		
1654			
26-jan	Hamel	Azevedo	
12-feb	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
20-feb	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
27-feb	van Heussen	Hamel	Azevedo
21-mrt	Hamel	Azevedo	
5-may	van Heussen	Azevedo	
5-may	van Heussen	Azevedo	
28-may	Hamel		

Source: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5763-5764.

A lobbying campaign of this scale would obviously be costly and neither the delegates themselves nor the High Government in Brazil had the means to pay for such a mission. The

High Government could (and did) request the Board of Directors to offer practical assistance to the Delegates on their mission, but nothing more. The solution from the people in Recife was to organize a voluntary collection. Everybody donated as much as they could miss to support the delegates during their mission in the Republic.⁷⁶⁶ Not just the three delegates devoted themselves to the cause, but all inhabitants voluntarily ‘invested’ in the mission. This demonstrates to what extent this particular lobbying campaign was a form of colonial popular participation in political decision-making in the metropole. Moreover, this participation transcended the more traditional and conflictual forms of popular participation such as protest in the streets. Instead, Jews and Christians came together in an attempt to influence the political centers through lobbying.

6.4. REQUESTING A RESOLUTION FROM THE STATES GENERAL

No requests have survived from the period between the arrival of the delegates on 15 October 1652 and their first petition from 13 December that same year. However, it should be noted that the archives for these months are particularly patchy. Nevertheless, their first petition already mentions their gratitude towards the High-Mightinesses for the States General’s intention to dispatch a rescue fleet. What worried the delegates, though, were the rumors ‘that are increasing by the day’ that the Republic was about to enter a treaty with the Portuguese Crown dividing the captaincies in Brazil. Some of these lands originally belonged to the WIC, the delegates argued, and therefore they proposed detailed plans for what would happen to the different possessions in those areas.⁷⁶⁷ A few days later, on 18 December, they wrote to the States General again. The reason the delegates sought contact was that they had received a letter from Gilles Venant, a former WIC commander on the island Fernando de Noronha in Brazil who wrote from Hamburg.⁷⁶⁸ He wrote that ‘some Jews and recently arrived Portuguese’ were making plans to liberate Brazil from the Dutch.

⁷⁶⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 67, 12-Aug-1652 Letter from the High Government to the Board of Directors [scan 198-199].

⁷⁶⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5763, 13-Dec-1652 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁶⁸ Venant had also petitioned the High Government 1645 requesting assistance in the plantation of Indigo in Brazil, see NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 60, 1-Mar-1645 Request by Gilles Venant [scan 151-158]. For its success, see also: J. Nieuhof, *Gedenkweerdige Brasiliaense zee- en lant-reize* (Amsterdam: De weduwe van Jacob van Meurs, 1682), 204.

The conspirators had asked him to join in, and to provide them with detailed information about the situation in Brazil. Venant was willing to function as a spy, but wanted a decision from the delegates, who in their turn wanted a decision from the States General.⁷⁶⁹ It seems perhaps a bit odd that his offer to function as a spy would be directed to the delegates from Brazil rather than directly to the *Heeren XIX* or the States General. However, it did help the delegates by providing them with an excuse to send a new request to the High-Mightinesses. In the last paragraph, the delegates remind the States General of the still pending decision from the assembly of a rescue fleet to Brazil despite their good intentions. Moreover, the delegates hoped that a report that there were plans by (European) Portuguese to attack Dutch Brazil could potentially speed up the decision-making process and increase the size of the rescue fleet.

In their next request, on 17 January 1653, the delegates used a similar tactic. They formally requested the States General to make a decision. They repeated the argument that was already present in the writings of the High Government that even a decision not to save Brazil would be better than to remain in uncertainty. They complained that, despite their efforts for the past three months, nothing had happened. They proceeded to invoke the sense of responsibility of the High-Mightinesses and used *pathos* to convince the States General to reach a decision: 'Please, consider the foreboding doom and utmost extremities in which the loyal souls and their women and children have found themselves'.⁷⁷⁰ This quote highlights the way the delegates considered their role in the events; it was not their fault as they had 'found themselves' in this situation. Even though it was not their fault, their trials were extreme nonetheless. It was thus responsibility of the High-Mightinesses to provide assistance for the colony as their 'negligence or delay' could lead to 'inconvenience and doom for the Fatherland'.⁷⁷¹ In a similar way, the delegates also tried to appeal to what they called the 'fatherliness' of the States General: 'we pray you again so very humble, and beg

⁷⁶⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5763 18-Dec-1652 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁷⁰ 'Overweecht doch de uiterste periculen ende extremiteijten daerinne althans die getrouwe zielen ende haere ende onse vrouwen ende kinderen sijn geraeckt', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 17-Jan-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁷¹ 'de onheijlen ende inconvenienten die ons lieve Vaderlandt door nalaticheijt ofte dilajj souden kunnen overkomen', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 17-Jan-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

your High-Mightinesses, to consider your fatherliness'.⁷⁷² This further underlines the rhetorical strategy of the delegates to emphasize the dependency relation between the colony and the Republic. Just like a father needed to provide for his child, the States General needed to provide for its colony. Economic arguments are completely absent from this petition. Instead, the request mentions 'merciful eyes' of the High-Mightinesses that can see the 'many thousand loyal subjects' which they hope would lead to 'compassion'.⁷⁷³ Now that the colony was no longer providing any real economic value to the Republic and the Company, the delegates realized they needed *pathos* arguments to appeal to the 'fatherly' responsibilities of the States General. This highlighted the dependency relation of the colony and emphasized its inability to take care of itself.

Even after this request, and another request by the delegates of Brazil on 4 February to send a deputation on behalf of the States General to the non-paying province of Friesland, it took the High and Mightinesses until 17 February to reach a decision.⁷⁷⁴ Apart from an extraordinary subsidy of 310,000 guilders, the States General also ordered six larger and two smaller war ships. The way the Republic was set up meant that the task of equipping war ships was divided over five different Admiralties, located in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Harlingen, Middelburg, and Noorderkwartier (Hoorn and Enkhuizen). The ships for Brazil were divided according to bearing power of each of the Admiralties. Amsterdam was assigned to pay for two larger and one smaller ship for example. Normally, building, equipping, and maintaining ships by the Admiralties would be paid from the *convooien* (a fee paid per ship for convoys to protect them from privateers) and *licenten* (a fee that allowed merchants to conduct trade). However, in times of war the States General could decide on an extra subsidy that was earmarked for building ships.⁷⁷⁵ This extraordinary subsidy was not paid from the normal income from *convooien* and *licenten*, but all the individual provinces needed to contribute to their local Admiralty according to a specific distribution code.

⁷⁷² 'omme nogmaels in alle ootmoedicheijt te bidden ende smeecken, uwe Ho:Mo: gelieven eenmael vaderlijck te overwegen', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 17-Jan-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁷³ 'haer barmhertige oogten te slaen over sooveel duijsenden getrouwe onderdanen van man, vrouwen, kinderen, weduwen, wesen, ende van den Brasiliaense natie, medelijden met deselve te hebben', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 17-Jan-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁷⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 4-Feb-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁷⁵ P. Brandon, "Masters of War. State, capital, and military enterprise in the Dutch cycle of accumulation (1600-1795)" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Amsterdam, 2013), 57-61.

Table 6-2: Subsidies for Brazil by the States General

Year	Subsidies	Aim	Paid in 1651	Not Paid in 1651	% Unpaid
1645	f 700,000.00	General subsidy	f 700,000.00		0%
1646	f 700,000.00	General subsidy	f 700,000.00		0%
1647	f 700,000.00	General subsidy	f 700,000.00		0%
1647	f 886,584.00	6.000 army men	f 756,924.44	f 129,659.56	15%
1647	f 600,000.00	12 ships Brazil fleet	f 381,337.36	f 218,662.64	36%
1647	f 77,320.00	Weapons for the 6.000 army men	f 64,464.12	f 12,855.88	17%
1647	f 764,708.38	Three years of sailors and ships		f 764,708.38	100%
1647	f 3,028,612.38	TOTAL 1647	f 1,902,725.92	f 1,125,886.46	37%
1648	f 700,000.00	General subsidy	f 700,000.00		0%
1648	f 700,000.00	Particular subsidy	f 648,178.53	f 51,821.47	7%
1648	f 1,400,000.00	TOTAL 1648	f 1,348,178.53	f 51,821.47	4%
1649	f 1,200,000.00	Occupation of Brazil and 1 year of army costs	f 1,200,000.00		0%
1650	f 787,012.00	Buying provisions and 1 year of army costs (2,800 soldiers)	f 300,000.00	f 487,012.00	62%
1651	f 787,012.00	General subsidy		f 787,012.00	100%
1651	f 1,200,000.00	Particular subsidy for second rescue fleet		f 1,200,000.00	100%
1645-1651	f 9,802,636.38	Brazil and WIC	f 6,150,904.45	f 3,651,731.93	37%

Source: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02 inv. nr. 5763, 12-Dec-1651, *State of payments*.

The decision to make the provinces responsible for providing the money was, considering the recent past, a dangerous move from the States General. This can, for example, be seen in the case of the army of 6,000 men sent to Brazil after the lobbying done by Hendrick Haecxs in 1647.⁷⁷⁶ The special committee on WIC affairs drafted a memorandum dealing with the question why these soldiers still had not been paid in 1652. The committee concluded that in principle the WIC was responsible for paying the soldiers. However, the Board of Directors never received the promised extraordinary subsidies from the provinces to pay for the soldiers. Despite ‘the years and years of soliciting’ by the WIC directors, some of the provinces still did not pay for their share of the distribution code.⁷⁷⁷ It is therefore not surprising that the States of Holland wrote that ‘they are willing to promptly come up with their quota, provided that the other provinces are pleased to do the same’ when they learned

⁷⁷⁶ See chapter 5.

⁷⁷⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, xx-xx-1652 (after May 1652).

who were paying for the extra ships commissioned to the Admiralties.⁷⁷⁸ At this moment, Holland still had to pay 43,500 guilders, and Friesland had paid nothing of their share of 86,160 guilders. Based on the yearly accounts for both provinces it becomes clear that they chose not to pay rather than that they were unable to. Not all years have survived with similar completeness, but for example in 1651 Holland had a positive balance of more than 800,000 guilders, and Friesland almost 75,000.⁷⁷⁹ Of course it is important to take into account that the provinces probably had more debts than just their subsidies to the WIC, and that these funds were also needed to pay for budget deficits in prior years.

The decision of the States General to fit out six ships and two yachts marked the next phase of the activities by the delegates of Brazil. Over the next months they were primarily busy attempting to speed up the process of equipping the ships. This can be seen in Table 6-1 as it became less regular for all of the delegates would be in The Hague to present their requests to the High and Mightinesses together because one or more of them would be away to lobby the Admiralties or meetings of one of the provinces.

6.5. A DELEGATION TO FRIESLAND

Now that the States General had resolved to order the ships for the rescue of Brazil the delegates took it upon themselves to streamline the process of equipping the ships. From the resolutions of the States General it becomes apparent that throughout January and February 1653 there was a constant 'buzz' on the state of Brazil. Not only the delegates from Brazil were lobbying the High-Mightinesses, representatives of the army were also regularly present to seek payments of arrears, and there were several individuals that saw military career opportunities in the new mission.⁷⁸⁰ One week, however, there was an almost

⁷⁷⁸ 'Zij bereijst sijn der selver quote daer inne promptelijck te doen sumeren, versoeckende dat d'andere provintien van gelijcken gelieven te doen', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 30-Feb-1653 missive from the Holland deputies.

⁷⁷⁹ C. Trompetter, *Gewestelijke financiën ten tijde van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden, Deel VI: Friesland*, vol. 106, RGP Kleine Serie (Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 2007), 69-70; R. Liesker and W. Fritschy, *Gewestelijke financiën ten tijde van de Republiek der Verenigde Nederlanden, Deel IV: Holland*, vol. 100, RGP Kleine Serie (Den Haag: Instituut voor Nederlandse Geschiedenis, 2004), 154.

⁷⁸⁰ One of these was Boetius Schaeff, see: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 18-Feb-1653 Request from Boetius Schaeff.

deafening silence on the Brazilian affairs in the meeting hall of the States General. Between Monday 27 January and Sunday 2 February only two issues related to the WIC were discussed in the General Assembly.

What can explain such an anomaly? It seems that the president of the meeting, in that week Hans van Wijckel, was unreceptive to affairs related to the WIC. It should come as no surprise that van Wijckel represented Friesland, in particular the quarter of Oostergo, at the meeting of the States General.⁷⁸¹ The deputy directors of the WIC in The Hague would sometimes remark in their notes that a particular president was unwilling to receive them and that they would have to wait for a later moment.⁷⁸² In other words, the previous weeks when Frederik van Reede tot Renswoude (Holland) or Jacob Veth (Zealand) had been president, or the following weeks when Willem Ripperda (Overijssel) or Johan Schulenborgh (Groningen) presided over the meeting, the delegation of Friesland merely refused to consent to decisions relating to the WIC until they would receive their own WIC chamber. However, when the Frisian delegation provided the president for the States General it seems that they actively tried to obstruct discussing matters relating to the Atlantic.

The following week, during the chairmanship of Ripperda, the delegates from Brazil thus expressed their concerns that the province of Friesland would not provide the necessary funds. Therefore, the delegates wrote to the States General that they were happy to learn that the High-Mightinesses had decided to comply with the delegates' request from 4 February to send a delegation to the meeting of the Provincial States of Friesland. As detailed in Chapter 5 the States General had done so in 1647 and afterwards had sent special envoys on West Indian affairs to Friesland in 1649, 1651, and 1652.⁷⁸³ If Friesland maintained its refusal to pay for the WIC, the delegates were worried that it would lead to a delay in the rigging of the ships. This, they argued, would mean a loss of conquests in Brazil and great sorrow for the 'many thousand souls and loyal subjects' of the States General.⁷⁸⁴ Again the delegates thus appealed to the States General by using a *pathos* argument, emphasizing the dependency on

⁷⁸¹ See *Repertorium van Ambtsdragers* via <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/repertoriumambtsdragersambtenaren1428-1861/app/personen/4635> consulted on 8 June 2017.

⁷⁸² For example: NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 3, fol 54r.

⁷⁸³ See NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 9412, Collected reports of the deputations to Friesland.

⁷⁸⁴ 'tot groote droefheijt ende mogelijk totale ruine ende verlies van die waerdige conquesten en sooveel duijsenden rampsaelige sielen, getrouwe onderdanen van uwe Ho:Mo:', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 4-Feb-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

the States General and Dutch decision-making for the colonists. The High-Mightinesses sent Johan Schulenborgh, Godert Adriaan van Reede tot Amerongen, en Willem Linteloo to Friesland.⁷⁸⁵ The delegates further offered their services to accompany the delegation requesting the Frisian Diet 'to take pity on' the colonists in Brazil. This part of the request was not immediately granted, but the delegates would eventually, on 20 February, receive their recommendation letter from the States General.⁷⁸⁶ A week later the delegates expressed their gratitude and received a positive response to their additional petition to the States General to ask the Frisian Stadtholder to lobby for the Brazilian affair as 'the interest of his Excellency would have great effect'.⁷⁸⁷ It must have been well-known to the delegates how successful the Count's efforts had been in 1647 and having the Stadtholder and his societal capital on their side could just give them the small advantage they would need.

With the three gentlemen of the States General ready for a mission, a recommendation letter for the Brazilian Delegates, and the High-Mightiness's letter to the Frisian Stadtholder it seemed that the lobby team for the Frisian Diet was at full strength and well on time before the Diet would close again. The delegates heard worrisome rumors though. Willem van Linteloo had still not arrived in The Hague to depart for Friesland and it was uncertain if he would be travelling on his own to Friesland straight from his residence in Gelderland. Time was of the essence, so the delegates requested the States General to create a provision that the two other gentlemen would be given the necessary credentials to lobby on behalf of all three. The High-Mightinesses granted this request and two days later, on 3 March, the apologies for not arriving in The Hague from Linteloo were indeed received by the States General. The apologies were accepted.⁷⁸⁸ This small episode demonstrates to what extent the three Brazilian delegates were in touch with the political news in the Republic and how they were attempting to speed up the process. Their main concern at this point was to remove any obstacles that could slow down the rescue fleet for Brazil. The delegates had just successfully won two days for the Frisian lobby campaign by requesting a resolution before the official letter with Linteloo's apologies arrived.

⁷⁸⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 49r.

⁷⁸⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 53r.

⁷⁸⁷ 'opdat door sijn Excellentie interessie het versoek wegens die ellendige ende uitgemergelde gemeente van Brasil beeter tot effect mach gebracht worden', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 27-Feb-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁸⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 53v-54r.

6.5.1. The report from the Friesland commission

Before the apologies from Linteloo arrived, the gentlemen van Reede and Schulenborgh had already departed for Friesland via Haarlem and Amsterdam on 2 March. In their report, the two gentlemen remarked how eager the WIC directors in Amsterdam were to help them to get to Friesland offering their ship to sail across the *Zuiderzee*. Upon arrival in Leeuwarden, they learned that the Frisian Diet would continue for at least a few more days, but that the meeting of the Groningen provincial assembly would quickly come to a close. They therefore decided to travel to Groningen first. Instead of addressing the issues in Brazil, they started with discussing the war with England, urging the province to pay its share. The meeting thanked the two gentlemen for all they had done and resolved to take a decision the next day that would firstly be good for God's church, and secondly for the commonwealth. The Frisian mission had thus also been tasked with discussing the naval war with England with the Groningen province. That is not to say that these two issues were necessarily intertwined. The issue of Brazil was not discussed in Groningen.

On 9 March van Reede and Schulenborgh received a letter from the High-Mightinesses to also pay a visit to the Frisian Admiralty so they left to go to the city of Harlingen. Their route from Groningen to Harlingen went through Leeuwarden, and 'upon passing through Leeuwarden, we decided to give our regards to the Stadholder of Friesland'.⁷⁸⁹ In this short and *ad hoc* meeting with the Stadholder they excused themselves for not yet having provided the States General's recommendation letters regarding the affairs of Brazil. Their apology indicates that the Stadholder had already wanted to advocate for the Brazilian case, but that this was postponed in absence of this letter. They promised Willem Frederik to provide the recommendation after their return from Harlingen. They did 'as much as is possible' at the Admiralty Board, but because none of its members (except for one who was in bed sick) were there they quickly returned to Leeuwarden. As they found the meeting of the Provincial States already in session and the issue of Brazil not on the agenda, they decided to pay the Stadholder an extra visit and deliver him the recommendation from the States General. The Stadholder thanked them multiple times for the honor shown to him in this

⁷⁸⁹ 'door Leeuwarden passerende hebbende wij goetgevonden sijn Excellentie Graef Willem, Stadhouder van Vrieslant te gaen salueren', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 15-Apr-1653 Report from van Reede and Schulenborgh.

missive and promised them to promote the cause of Brazil with his office and personal effort, expressing his regret that it had not been more effective up till now. The next day they were received by the Frisian Diet.

At this meeting, they presented the letter from the High Mightinesses, arguing that despite all the good reasons presented to them, the States of Friesland still had not paid for the rescue of Brazil. This was why they came for the fifth time now to present their cause.⁷⁹⁰ They started by repeating the arguments the Frisian had heard the previous times. Firstly, it would be unfair to the investors if the WIC was not saved by the Republic, despite the investors counting on this, and having promised this to the investors in the past. The renewal of the charter had signaled the High-Mightinesses' commitment to the WIC. Secondly, thanks to the good work that the WIC had done in harming the possessions of the Spanish king in the past, the Republic had a moral obligation to aid the WIC in this time of need. The delegation of the States General thus did not copy the arguments of the Brazilian delegates. Instead, they urged the Frisian Diet to align itself with the other six provinces to show gratitude to the WIC for its past efforts. Without the WIC there would not have been a peace with the Spanish crown, they argued. The fate of the many thousands of poor souls in Brazil that had been mentioned in the appeals to the States General did not translate to the arguments of the commission. If the Frisians would have to take pity on anyone, according to the States General, it should be the poor investors that ran the risk of losing it all if the colony would be lost. To conclude they presented the Frisian convention with three options: 1. Leave the colony despite all the blood spilled and efforts undertaken by the subjects of the Dutch Republic; 2. Negotiate a peace with the king of Portugal and end up with a smaller colony; 3. Beating the Portuguese ('which is about time') and restore the colony to its former glory.⁷⁹¹ After having presented this letter and a second letter about paying for the ships for the war against England, van Reede and Schulenborgh continued to orally advocate the significance and interest of Brazil.

After a long debate the members of the Provincial State returned to the two gentlemen and told them that there was more interest in the war against England than in saving Brazil amongst the Mightinesses of Friesland. That is, unless there would be an extra directorate's

⁷⁹⁰ After 1647, 1649, 1651, and 1652.

⁷⁹¹ 'twelck meer als tijt is', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 15-Apr-1653 Report from van Reede and Schulenborgh.

chamber for the WIC in Friesland and the lay-out of the board of the Company would be drastically revised. Subsequently, the secretary of the Provincial meeting handed them an excerpt of the resolution of the Provincial States. In the resolution van Reede and Schulenborgh could read that the Mightinesses of Friesland were of the opinion that the representatives of the States General came with an insufficient mandate and margin to negotiate with the States of Friesland. However, they would gladly receive a new delegation that would be sufficiently mandated. As the Diet would come to a close the next day the two gentlemen did not pursue the issue any further. Before returning to The Hague, the two gentlemen paid one last visit to Stadholder Willem Frederik, who once more emphasized how sorry he was about the entire situation.⁷⁹²

The lobbying mission to Friesland in 1653 arrived in full strength. The States General sent a delegation that included a prominent nobleman in the person of van Reede, goodwill from a northern province through Schulenborgh (who was from Groningen), and the authority of the Republic's only Duchy through Linteloo, who was represented through the other two. The lobby further included both the office and the personal efforts of the Frisian Stadtholder. The majority of the other provinces did not have a Stadtholder in this period, but the (political) power of the Frisian Stadtholder remained as strong as ever in the early 1650s. Even though he had stated at the outbreak of the first Anglo-Dutch war that 'one can see clearly that merchants are not good politicians', saving the WIC colony in Brazil was important for international politics.⁷⁹³ The Brazilian delegates left no trace of their visit to Friesland, but it is apparent from the resolution of the Frisian Diet on 12 March⁷⁹⁴ that their efforts had little to no effect for the Diet remained of the opinion that in exchange for support the province needed its own WIC chamber. Does that mean that the rescue mission for Brazil failed here '*op t Landtshuijs*' in Leeuwarden on 12 March? No, as the share of Friesland was relatively modest in comparison to the total of the other six provinces together, their refusal to consent to the subsidies for the WIC was not necessarily detrimental. Their efforts demonstrated that the Brazilian delegates had tried to sway Friesland, but there was no way to persuade that province. By reconfirming the Frisian refusal to pay, this issue did not need

⁷⁹² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 15-Apr-1653 Report from van Reede and Schulenborgh.

⁷⁹³ Janssen, *Creaturen van de Macht*, 198-199.

⁷⁹⁴ The resolution is dated 2 March in the 'old style' calendar. The individuals signing the resolution were Scheltema and Bouricius for Oostergoo, van Haren and Gerrits for Westergoo, Scheltinga and van Aerssen for Zevenwolden, and Simonides and Intiema for the cities.

to be debated any further. There was, however, another issue that the delegates needed to solve. Abraham de Azevedo had remained behind in Holland and noticed that the Amsterdam admiralty was slacking in fitting out its share of the ships. In absence of his colleagues, Azevedo had started petitioning the States General on 6 March to urge the admiralties to deliver the necessary ships. This marked the second stage of the delegates' attempts of removing obstacles for the Brazilian rescue fleet and to speed up the process.

6.6. *SPEEDING UP THE ADMIRALTIES*

The delegates had submitted a request to the Admiralty of Amsterdam on 4 March to act in accordance with the resolution of the States General to prepare two larger and one smaller war ship for the rescue of Brazil. The Admiralty had responded that this touched upon what they had written to the States General on 25 February. Thus, according to the Admiralty Board, the suppliants would have to address themselves to the States General rather than the Admiralty. Thus, Abraham de Azevedo drafted a request to express his 'great distress' and to request the High-Mightiness on 6 March to instruct the Admiralty of Amsterdam 'to rig out the two ships and a yacht quickly and without postponement'.⁷⁹⁵ The lofty members looked at the request, discussed it briefly, and then responded that they deemed that they had already urged the Amsterdam Admiralty to equip the ships, so that no further action was required. They changed their minds one week later though, and then resolved to urge all of the Admiralties to start preparing the ships.⁷⁹⁶

However, less than one week later, on 19 March, the delegates of Brazil returned to the States General with a new request. Even though the High-Mightinesses had sent new letters urging the Admiralties to equip the ships, the delegates felt they needed to complain about the slow progress of the ship building. The Admiralty of Amsterdam was no longer alone in postponing the rigging of the ships, but was now accompanied by the Admiralty of Rotterdam. The letter from 13 March requesting the Brazilian ships had been one of eight letters the States General sent to the Rotterdam Admiralty that day. Since this missive did

⁷⁹⁵ 'omme op t spoedichst sonder uitstel de voors: twee schepen en een jacht metten aenckeren van dien toe te', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 6-Mar-1653 Request from the Delegates of Brazil.

⁷⁹⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 54r-54v.

not contain a direct response to the Admiralty's latest letter on the matter they decided not to do anything with the letter of the High-Mightinesses.⁷⁹⁷ It was thus thanks to the Brazilian delegates that the Admiralty's argument that they had no suitable ships arrived in The Hague. Again, the delegates took on the role of streamliners of the decision-making process in the Republic.

That did not mean, however, that the issue now had been solved as the delegates presented themselves again on 3 April to the States General claiming that not all that much had changed. Time and time again the High-Mightinesses obliged to their requests and sent letters to the different Admiralties urging them to equip the ships. Because the delegates streamlined communications between the different bodies in the Republic, the number and frequency of letters the Admiralties received from The Hague increased. First the Admiralty Board of Rotterdam complained in their minutes that they 'received one order after the other from the States General' and that it was 'one thing now, and something else the next time'.⁷⁹⁸ The Admiralty of Amsterdam also made it clear that they did not appreciate the many letters the States General sent them.⁷⁹⁹ In informal conversations, the Rotterdam Board further made it clear to the delegates that 'even if the States General wrote one-hundred letters' they would get the same response.⁸⁰⁰ Both the Amsterdam and Rotterdam Admiralty repeated that the main problem at this point was finding the necessary funds for purchasing and equipping the ships.⁸⁰¹ Moreover, ships were scarce as many were employed for privateering during the war with England.⁸⁰² The Brazilian delegates realized that their requests to the States General to send letters to the different Admiralty Boards were not getting them any further. Their appeals for 'fatherly care' had not lost its effectiveness, as the States General

⁷⁹⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.46, Admiraliteitscolleges, inv. nr. 148, *Resolutions of the Meuse Admiralty 1653*, fol. 111v.

⁷⁹⁸ 'De wijle men bevind dat men hier daglicx ordre op ordre van haer Ho:Mo: becompt, nu tottet een, dan tottet ander te versorgen, van t gene aen dit collegie behoorende, den dienste van den lande vereijsse', NL-HaNA, 1.01.46, inv. nr. 148, fol. 115v.

⁷⁹⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 58v.

⁸⁰⁰ 'Al quamen er hondert brieven van u Ho:Mo:', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 29-Nov-1653
Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸⁰¹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.46, inv. nr. 148, fol. 115v-116r.

⁸⁰² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 58v.

were very willing to send one letter after the other.⁸⁰³ The delegates, in other words, needed a new strategy to try and convince the Admiralties to follow their instructions.

The next time the delegates petitioned the States General they therefore requested that the High-Mightinesses would commission some of their own to the Admiralties. The Admiralty of Amsterdam still refused to build the ships. The delegates suggested to have the gentlemen Halewijn Halewijns and Matthias Schooff 'recommend in the most serious manner possible' the affairs of Brazil.⁸⁰⁴ These two gentlemen were the States' deputies on sea affairs in Holland and thus had experience in the dealing with the Amsterdam Admiralty. Again, the States General responded positively to this request and to instruct the two gentlemen to 'push and advance the rigging of the ships by al means'.⁸⁰⁵

A week later, on 21 April, the delegates had news from the Admiralty of Rotterdam. There, the delegates had insisted that there should be no further delay in the rigging of the ships. The Admiralty of Rotterdam replied that it had no ships that were suitable for Brazil, but that it was planning on buying the ship *Sphera Mundi* from Marinus de Clerq. However, this still did not please the delegates. They considered the *Sphera Mundi*, a flute ship, unsuitable for Brazil. Therefore, they asked the States General to order the Admiralty of Rotterdam to buy a frigate, such as the one Joris Brest in Rotterdam had. The delegates further reported more news from Amsterdam. The local Admiralty was still postponing the rigging of their ships. Therefore, the delegates requested again that the States General would use its representatives at the Admiralty Board, all the more because there was again news from Portugal that a fleet was ready to sail to Brazil.⁸⁰⁶ Upon hearing this request, the States General also decided to dispatch two deputies to the Rotterdam Admiralty: Johan van der Meijden and Nicolaes Verbolth.⁸⁰⁷

Van der Meijden, a former Burgomaster of Rotterdam, and Verbolth operated vigorously and decisively. They bought a ship from Adriaen Joosten for 8,000 guilders and

⁸⁰³ 'haer voorgemelte trouwe onderdanen haer barmhartige ooge soodanich over te slaen van door vaderlijcke goede voorsorge', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 3-Apr-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸⁰⁴ 'op het serieuste doenlijck te recommanderen', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 14-Apr-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸⁰⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 59v-60r.

⁸⁰⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764 21-Apr-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸⁰⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 61v.

ordered the Rotterdam Admiralty to equip the ship for Brazil.⁸⁰⁸ Joosten was the master shipwright (*meester scheepstimmerman*) of the Admiralty, so it seems unlikely that the Admiralty would have had no option of contacting him for this ship. Admittedly, the ship was not immediately ready for departure and needed some work on the inside to prepare it for crew and captain. However, after months of dragging its feet the Admiralty now finally had started working on a ship. This small episode demonstrates that the States General acknowledged that they needed a new strategy to make the Admiralties act as requested. The letters had clearly not resulted in the required outcome, but the actions of deputies van der Meijden and Verbolth were achieving something. However, this was just one ship, and the Admiralty was responsible for two.

The delegates of Brazil stayed out of touch with the High-Mightinesses for a while after these requests. However, they clearly kept a finger on the pulse of what was going on in the Republic and visited the different Admiralties.⁸⁰⁹ The delegates had joined forces with two WIC directors during their visit to the Amsterdam Admiralty. In their description of the situation in Brazil, the delegates emphasized the hardship and bad conditions for the ‘good subjects’ in Brazil. Thus, ‘in the name and on behalf of all the miserable souls’ they requested the Amsterdam Admiralty to equip their share of the ships.⁸¹⁰ They used the same main arguments as they had used in Friesland, but they did not appeal to any fatherliness of the Admiralty Board towards the colony in Brazil like they had done to the States General. Instead, they tried to guilt trip the Board members by telling them that ‘we cannot believe that it would be agreeable to you that the colony would be lost due to your delays’.⁸¹¹ The delegates told the Amsterdam Admiralty that all the other Admiralties were delivering their share for the Brazilian ships, they had ‘no doubts’ that within fourteen days the other ships would be ready. The delegates appealed to the possible fear of the Admiralty of receiving the blame of the colony would be lost. Instead of emphasizing possible advantages for the Admiralty, the delegates choose a strategy of appealing to fear of receiving the blame.

⁸⁰⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 63r-v.

⁸⁰⁹ Though, no evidence from the archives of the Admiralties indicates their presence there.

⁸¹⁰ ‘Ende inde naem ende van wegen die ellendige zielen te versoucken, bidden ende smeecken’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 14-May-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸¹¹ ‘niet connen geloven dat u E:Mo: aengenaem soude sijn dat door dileij veroorsaect zoude connen werden het verlies van soo voortreffelijcke conquesten’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 14-May-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

The Admiralty Board responded that it was difficult for them as they were still lacking ships and money to meet the demand. Therefore, they sought to write to the High-Mightinesses with a plan to solve this predicament. They were willing, if the States General agreed to this, to find the ships amongst the 100 ships under the command of Admiral Tromp who was fighting the English. After all, the WIC directors deserved 'to finally see effect of their lengthy solicitations'.⁸¹² It seemed that after all this time there was finally momentum for the Brazilian affair. The Admiralty Board now pushed the issue, and forced the States General to make a choice. They needed to either prioritize the war with England, or to prioritize the fleet for Brazil. Moreover, it was also a smart solution for the financial problem of equipping a fleet for Brazil. All the provinces had consented to pay for a fleet against the English, so that had made money available to build or buy ships – even Friesland paid their share.

The delegates took it upon themselves to deliver the missive from the Amsterdam Admiralty and attached all these document to their petition to the States General as they realized the momentum of the Amsterdam Admiralty moving towards their requests. They requested the States General to quickly respond to the missive of the Admiralty so that they could return with an answer 'this same night'. They added though that they would understand if the States General did not mean to obtain the ships from the Tromp fleet as it could threaten the security of the country. The minutes of the States General show unusual long notes on the deliberation. The High-Mightinesses followed the lead of the Amsterdam Admiralty and resolved that at the earliest convenience the Admiralty Board should equip two ships and a yacht and bring them under the flag of Admiral Tromp. 'And then, when they have arrived there, and not a moment earlier, the Admiralty shall eagerly recall these ships and bring them under the command of the fleet destined for Brazil'.⁸¹³

⁸¹² 'ten eijnde de meer gemelte bewindhebbern door haer langdurige solicitatien dienaengaende gedaen eenmael tot het effect van hun versouck mogen geraecken', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 14-May-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸¹³ 'ten spoedichsten willen equiperen twee schepen ende een jacht van oorloge ende de selve in allerijle sende nonder de vlagge van de gemelte Lt: Adm: Tromp. Ende soo wanneer die aldaer sullen wesen gearriveert ende eerder niet, sal t meergemelte collegie die gerne van daer mogen revoceren die onder de gem: vlote jegenwoordige dienst doende ende mede destineert zijn nae Brazil om also aen de reijse derwaerts te vorderen met en nevens die van de andere collegien ter Admiraliteit daertoe mede gestedineert', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 65r-v.

It was a political solution for a financial problem. Friesland would come up short for their share in the rescue fleet, but they – as well as the other provinces – had consented to pay for a fleet for the war with England. These earmarked funds would now be used to equip ships for the fleet against England. Technically this adhered to the instructions for the way the money was to be spent. However, they found a loophole by circumventing the instructions *after* it had arrived at the fleet of Tromp. The Admiralty was only inclined to do so, after they were confronted by the risk of receiving the blame for losing Brazil. This detail shines a new light on the connection between the loss of Brazil and the first Anglo-Dutch War. Instead of being distractive, the war with England actually provided an opportunity for the Dutch Republic to find additional funds to equip a rescue fleet for Brazil. When one month later the Admiralty had prepared the ships for the cost of 75,000 guilders they requested again the formal instructions from the States General to recall the ships after they had arrived at the fleet of Tromp. In their correspondence, they particularly mentioned that they wanted to avoid being accused of neglect in the future. This demonstrates how effective this particular argument of the delegates had been.⁸¹⁴ The province of Groningen meanwhile reported that it would grant an extraordinary subsidy for the Admiralty of Harlingen in order to avoid this Admiralty also missing the funds for the Brazilian fleet.⁸¹⁵

It seemed that the chance of success was increasing for the Brazilian delegates. The States General had consented to support the Brazilian colony, and had tirelessly labored in writing and through delegations to try and force the different bodies in the Republic to align themselves for this cause. The province of Friesland was not convinced and refused to pay any more money for the WIC unless it would receive its own chamber. The Admiralty of Zeeland had never made a problem of supplying the ships, and now that the Admiralty of Harlingen received a special subsidy from the province of Groningen and that the Admiralty of Amsterdam was aligning itself with the cause of Brazil, it seemed like not much could go wrong for the lobbying efforts of the Brazilian delegates in the Dutch Republic. In the colony, though, sizeable groups of people had starting leaving in February. The slaves on the island of Fernando de Noronha, realizing that Brazil was being abandoned, had started a revolt attempting to kill all the men and children and enslaving the women. The army in

⁸¹⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 14-Jun-1653 Missive from the Amsterdam Admiralty.

⁸¹⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 68v.

Pernambuco was also feared by the population. Since the soldiers had been malnourished for a long time and were behind on their pay, the civilians feared that they might also take matters into their own hands soon. The delegates realized very well that their lobbying might be a nuisance for the States General: 'it has been a sorrow oftentimes that (as commissioners) we have been forced to trouble your High-Mightinesses in their important affairs so many times'. They thus very humbly requested the States General to agree to a resolution that would avoid further lengthy correspondence to the different admiralties and that would result in the expedient preparation of the ships for Brazil.⁸¹⁶

6.7. SEIZING MOMENTUM

The ship of Adriaen Joosten that had been bought for the Rotterdam Admiralty needed much internal work to prepare it for its purpose. The Rotterdam Admiralty wrote the States General that its requested additional funds to do this. The response of the High-Mightinesses is telling as they delegated a decision to one of its special committees: that of sea affairs. This committee was in charge of the naval administration and, in that capacity, was coordinating the fleet preparation for the first Anglo-Dutch war. The States General were thus hoping that again funds that were earmarked for the war against England could be somehow re-appropriated for the war in Brazil. The Rotterdam Admiralty was not exaggerating when it wrote that it did not have the funds to prepare the ships. Indeed, the coffers of the Admiralty were nearly empty. Its minutes show that its debts were increasing and its payments often delayed. Its solvency was so 'suspicious' that it had 'no clue how to obtain sufficient credit for a decent price'.⁸¹⁷

The Admiralty of Noorderkwartier had not received much attention from the Brazilian delegates until July 1653. Since its share in the total ships was modest in comparison to that of Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Zeeland, the delegates had focused their attention on the main suppliers first. On 8 July, the delegates orally requested the States General to send a

⁸¹⁶ 'Dat ons meenichmael leet is geweest dat wij (commissarishalven) soo veel maelen genootsaecht waeren u Ho:Mo: in haer swaerwichtige besoignes te importuneren', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 21-Jun-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

⁸¹⁷ 'in zulcx verdacht gemaect dat men voorten geen raet en weet, om ons credijt tot behoerlijcke prijs te becomen', NL-HaNA, 1.01.46, inv. nr. 148, fol. 115v-116r.

letter encouraging the Admiralty to finalize equipping its ships. The High-Mightinesses obliged.⁸¹⁸ This did not immediately result much effect, so on 17 July the delegates reported to the States General again. They did so because Noorderkwartier had sent its own deputies to the States General, and the Brazilian delegates wanted to remind the High-Mightinesses of the worrisome state of Brazil, and to counterbalance the Noorderkwartier deputation. The Brazilian delegates wrote that not only had the Admiralty of Noorderkwartier not yet started equipping its war ship, it had also ‘made some difficulties’ about doing it all.⁸¹⁹ The States General sided with the Brazilian delegates and commissioned a delegation to visit the Admiralty and to urge it to equip their share of the Brazilian fleet.⁸²⁰ The commission consisted of again Godert van Reede tot Amerongen, and another man named de Schele. Once more it becomes apparent how the pro-active lobbying by the Brazilian delegates succeeded in countering the Admiralty’s protests before they were even addressed to the States General, and how the States General again consented to send a commission to lobby an Admiralty.

In Rotterdam meanwhile, the Brazilian delegates learned that the ship was ready and the delegates could hardly hide their excitement about this when they communicated this to the States General. The captain of the ship moreover, was working hard to prepare for departure as soon as possible. The obstacle, though, was that he could not get the money to hire sailors and crews. He had petitioned the Admiralty, but as had become apparent above, it had neither cash nor credit to assist him. The Brazilian delegates thus assisted him in turning to the States General for financial assistance, thus smoothing the process of decision-making.⁸²¹ The States General responded positively and consented to find the required money to hire his crew.⁸²² This did not mean however, that the share of the Rotterdam Admiralty in the Brazilian fleet was completely ready for departure. For one, the sailors did not have any muskets yet. This issue was only solved more than two months later when the States of Zeeland promised to equip this ship with muskets.⁸²³ Secondly, the second ship the Admiralty needed to provide was still not ready.

⁸¹⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 71v-72r.

⁸¹⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 17-Jul-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸²⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 72v.

⁸²¹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 24-Jul-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸²² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 73v.

⁸²³ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 78r.

Things continued to move slowly, and the delegates continued to function as special messengers between the States General and other bodies in the Dutch Republic in an attempt to smooth the process. In September, though, still no real advancements had been made. The Board of Directors of the WIC thus expressed its disappointment to the States General that from the promised six larger and two smaller ships, only one – from the Admiralty of Zeeland – was ready.⁸²⁴ The WIC directors in Amsterdam further requested a recommendation to go to Friesland, which they received.⁸²⁵ The States General sent a letter to the Diet of Friesland, announcing that representatives of the WIC would be visiting them to talk about the possibilities of a Frisian chamber, and in the meeting of the Board of Directors detailed plans for an eighth chamber were drawn up. However, on two occasions, the States General received a letter in which the Frisian Diet related that they received the announcement of a WIC mission going to Friesland, but that – unfortunately – the Diet was coming to a close soon. Therefore, it could not be discussed until the next meeting. In other words, a trip to Friesland would be fruitless and a waste of resources and time.⁸²⁶

6.8. *PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE*

Despite all of this, the delegates must have felt that things were moving in the right direction and that a fleet for Brazil would be dispatched soon because they brought new issues to the Board of Directors and the States General. Abraham de Azevedo, on behalf of seven other Jewish merchants, requested a better position for the Jewish nation in Brazil in a meeting with the Board of Directors.⁸²⁷ The Jewish nation requested ‘the same advantages as the Dutch nation for shop keeping, trade, crafts, and all other means to sustain oneself’ as a reward for their loyalty as Dutch subjects.⁸²⁸ In traditional fashion the Board of Directors

⁸²⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, xx-Nov-1653 Copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of the WIC.

⁸²⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 74r.

⁸²⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, xx-Oct-1653; NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 74v.

⁸²⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, xx-Nov-1653 Copy minutes Board of Directors.

⁸²⁸ ‘dat de voorsz: joodse natie in brasil sal genieten deselve voordelen ende beneficien van winckelen, neringen, ambachten, hantwercken, negotien, ende alle andere middelen omme haer onderhout aldaer te becoomen ende gereputeert als alle andere ingesetenen ende inwoonderen van de Nederlandsche natie ten eijnde sij tegens alle ongelegentheden versekert ende niet voor gesepareert mogen gehouden worden’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, xx-Nov-1653 Copy minutes Board of Directors.

postponed a decision until a yet to be defined moment in the future. The same rhetoric of favors being granted in reward for loyalty can be seen in a petition from the Board of Aldermen of Recife and Mauritsstad.

It was a historical precedent, the Board of Aldermen argued, that when a civil population on a town or city had succeeded in protecting itself from being overtaken by an enemy that that population was rewarded with privileges or advantages. This was a way for a prince of sovereign to express his gratitude. This was indeed the case in, for example, Friesland where the cities obtained a vote in the Frisian Diet in exchange for their efforts during the Dutch Revolt. The commonality (*gemeente*) of Recife proposed a list of 27 privileges that they would like to obtain in return for their perseverance under hardship. The privileges ranged from receiving their own Council (*vroedschap*) that would select their own Burgomasters, to the city's own legal jurisdiction, and to a lower impost on beer that had gone sour. The 27th privilege the petition requested was that the Jewish nation would enjoy 'the same privileges and regulations as within the city of Amsterdam'.⁸²⁹ This aligns well with the petition by Azevedo on behalf of the Jewish community described above. That the Jews and other inhabitants of Recife came together in drafting this petition for increased authority and autonomy further underlines how they transcended traditional borders of religion and came together to form an alliance when addressing themselves to their superiors in the Dutch Republic. The (far-reaching) privileges for the Jewish were supported by the non-Jewish population in Recife. Moreover, the Jewish nation in Amsterdam joined their cause and independently petitioned for the same affair to the Board of Directors.⁸³⁰ This shows how the interests of the population of Recife intersected with those of the Jewish population on both sides of the Atlantic.

Another important privilege the commonality requested was to erect guilds that would play an important role in the financing of the new urban authority. Apart from the continued loyalty the inhabitants of Recife further proposed to take care of important infrastructure in the city such as the bridge that connected Recife to Mauritsstad. One issue, though, as the commonality addressed in the 14th point, was that 'most [inhabitants] are merchants rather

⁸²⁹ 'de selve privilegien ende bepalingen en als die binnen der stede Amsterdam sijn genietende', NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 67, 3-Aug-1652 Concept petition from the Board of Aldermen of Mauritsstad [scan 174].

⁸³⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr, 5764, xx-Nov-1653 Copy minutes Board of Directors, d. 30-Sep-1653.

than jurists or politicians'.⁸³¹ A solution would be to appoint a capable Pensionary that could advise the city magistracy. In a separate petition, the commonality showed that they had their eyes on Jacob Hamel, who had faithfully carried out his duties as secretary of the city for over twelve years.⁸³² The delegates had kept this petition, dated 13 August 1652, with them for the entirety of their stay in the Republic but had awaited this moment, more than a year later in September 1653, to deliver it to the States General. The delegates must have thought that the rescue fleet was close to departure and powerful enough to save the colony. The delegates started to plan for the future. The Board of Directors also started planning for the future and drafted instructions for a yet to be appointed new High Government that would need to be comprised of a Governor-General and three ordinary members. In other words, it seemed like most people involved started planning for the future as they anticipated that Brazil would soon be rescued.

6.9. *IT IS ALL ABOUT THE MONEY*

In November 1653, the delegates brought bad news from the Admiralty of Rotterdam. Some of the promised funds still had not arrived. Further enquiries at the Receiver General confirmed that not all provinces had provided their share.⁸³³ The delegates, however, were no longer alone in their attempts to smooth the decision-making process. They were now joined by Michiel van Goch, whose resignation as member of the High Government in Brazil had just been accepted by the Board of Directors, and Otto Keye and Cornelis Caroen, who were representing the interests of the army in Brazil. This meant that the lobbying forces had expanded their alliance to the military and a politician, but that did not mean that the worries of the delegates were over. On 3 December 1653, the delegates wrote to the States General that its letter to the Admiralty of Rotterdam had not produced any meaningful results. The delegates then added they had been fighting for a rescue fleet to Brazil for over thirteen months now. They had not stopped laboring for the Brazilian cause by streamlining the correspondences between the various bodies in the Republic. However, by now they had

⁸³¹ 'dewijl meesten deel meer negotianten dan jurispudenten ofte politici sijn', NL-HaNA, 1.05.01.01, inv. nr. 67, 3-Aug-1652 Concept petition from the Board of Aldermen of Mauritsstad [scan 172].

⁸³² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 4-Sep-1653 Request from the Board of Aldermen in Brazil.

⁸³³ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 29-Nov-1653 Request from the inhabitants of Brazil.

gotten desperate and despondent: 'It will not be possible that we continue this tedious soliciting in the same manner much longer'.⁸³⁴ The positive vibe that the delegates had portrayed in September had nearly died out a few months later. Five days later, on 8 December, the States General resolved to allocate special funds for the equipping of the ships.

Further uplifting news arrived from the northern tip of Holland when the Admiralty of Noorderkwartier reported on 22 December that, following the 30,000 guilders from the States General, it was indeed in the process of rigging a ship for Brazil. Unfortunately, it would not be in the water before the frost would set in.⁸³⁵ It was this time the Admiralty of Noorderkwartier, rather than the Brazilian delegates, that suggested that the States General would urge the Admiralties in Rotterdam, Amsterdam, and Noorderkwartier to coordinate the dispatch of their ships so that they could be ready around the same time. Moreover, it is telling that this letter arrived through 'normal' correspondence and that the delegates did not function as a special broker to deliver this message.

The delegates meanwhile were predominantly occupied in Rotterdam still, where they now lobbied for Adriaen Joosten to receive the promised 8,000 guilders for his ship. That nine months later the master shipwright from Rotterdam had still not obtained the money that was promised to him, makes clear how difficult it was for the different bodies in the Republic in these years to find the necessary funds to equip the ships. While last time the States General had requested to committee on sea affairs to 'find' the money to him, the High-Mightinesses now ordered this committee to pay him.⁸³⁶ On 5 May, the delegates were happy to report to the States General that ships were ready in Noorderkwartier and Amsterdam. A ship from Groningen was soon to be ready as well. The only Admiralty that was causing problems still, was Rotterdam, that still had not finished equipping their second ship in the share of the Brazil fleet. Thus, the delegates requested the States General to provide the required 10,000 guilders for the Admiralty of Rotterdam.⁸³⁷ The States General obliged and further appointed a captain for the Rotterdam ship to make sure that by the time

⁸³⁴ 'Ende niet mogelijk dat wij op dien voet in deselve tedieuse sollicitatien langer continueren', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 03-Dec-1653 Request from the delegates from Brazil.

⁸³⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 22-Dec-1653 Missive from the Admiralty of Noorderkwartier.

⁸³⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5765, 26-Jan-1654 Request from the delegates from Brazil; NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 88v.

⁸³⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5765, 5-May-1654 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

the money arrived the captain would be ready to leave as well.⁸³⁸ The instruction letter for the fleet had also been prepared, so nothing stood in the way of a successful departure of the rescue fleet for Brazil.⁸³⁹

It would all be in vain, as on 22 May the first news reports that the colony had been lost arrived in the Netherlands. The WIC directors who reported this to the States General were non-committal as they were awaiting official reports, but everyone had to admit that this result had been in the air for some time, so that it was not all that unlikely to be true.⁸⁴⁰ Not long afterwards they learned that on 26 January the High Government had signed the capitulation of the colony without much of a fight. Even though the warehouses were actually supplied for ten to twelve months, the Portuguese blockade of Recife was far from water tight, and the residents of Recife had helped to restore the batteries on the waterfront, the soldiers had been so disheartened that hardly any resistance had been provided.⁸⁴¹

6.9.1. It is about the people

The lobbying mission of the delegates from Brazil did not concern itself with the Admiralty of Zeeland. Zeeland had been the first to have its ships ready, so it made sense from a pragmatic point of view that they concerned themselves with the Admiralties that were slower in equipping their ships. The Zeeland Admiralty, moreover, was the only Admiralty that had a board member who was also a WIC director. This individual also had a function administering the day-to-day business of the provincial assembly of Zeeland as *gecommitteerde raad*. His name was Johan Gijsseling and, more importantly, he had been a member of the High Government of Brazil in the early years of the colony. Undoubtedly his past in the Brazilian colony not only had earned him a golden chain (handed to him by Jacob Hamel) and a 25,000 guilders bonus on top of his salary, but also had left him with intimate personal ties and memories in the colony.⁸⁴² Although there is no hard evidence that Johan

⁸³⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 4846, fol. 97r.

⁸³⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5765, 10-Feb-1654 Instructions for the Brazilian fleet.

⁸⁴⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 22-May-1654 Missive from the WIC directors.

⁸⁴¹ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 89-90; Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 236-242.

⁸⁴² 'hebben door den Advocaet Hamel doen schencken ende aen den hals hangen aen den Heer Mathijs van Ceulen ende de Heer Iohan Gyselinck, elck een gouden keten weerdigh elck 2000 Guldens. Boven dien noch elck 25000 Guld. aen Gelde boven haer bedongen maent-gelt ende dat voor haeren goeden dienst aen de Compagnie in Brasiliën ghedaen', *Courante uyt Italien, Duytslandt, &c.*, no. 29 (21 July 1635).

Gijsseling was (singlehandedly) responsible for the swift decision in Zeeland to equip its share of the ships for Brazil or for the decision to supply the muskets to the Rotterdam Admiralty, it was certainly convenient for the WIC to have an individual so close to the decision-making process.

The Admiralty of Amsterdam had the idea of re-purposing the ships destined for the fleet of Admiral Tromp for the fleet for Brazil. The minutes do not provide a definitive answer as to where the idea originated. The primary change in 1653 was that Frans Hendriksz Herberts replaced Cornelis Cornelisz de Lange as the Gouda representative in the Amsterdam Admiralty Board after the death of the de Lange on 27 March. However, it would be too much ‘drawing bullseyes around bullet holes’ to conclude that it was Herberts who proposed this idea. In any case, it should be remembered that, just like with the mission of Hendrik Haecxs in the previous chapter, personal relations and societal capital remained important for political decision-making. And the individuals on a board could have far-reaching influence on the final decisions as became clear in the case when Friesland presided over the meeting of the States General. It is without a doubt that Gijsseling, as a member of the Admiralty, a deputy of the States of Zeeland, and a director of the WIC combined important functions that helped sway a board in favor of the WIC.

6.10. *THE LOSS OF BRAZIL*

The lobbying campaign of the delegates from Brazil provides a unique insight into the decision-making process in the Dutch Republic in the final years of the colony in Brazil. What becomes apparent through the repeated petitions, in particular the descriptions by the delegates of their interactions with other bodies in the Republic, is that the delegates circled around the offices of the various organizations in the Republic even when the archives of those organizations show no trace of the delegates. ‘All the pathetic and touching remonstrances brought to the collegiate boards both oral and writing’, as the delegates described their process, did thus not necessarily leave a trace in all the archives.⁸⁴³ In

⁸⁴³ ‘alle erbermelijcke ende beweechlijcke soo schriftelijcke als mondelinge remonstrantien bij ons deselve collegien toegebracht’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 23-Oct-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

particular the Admiralty of Rotterdam, where the delegates must have spent countless hours, does not mention Azevedo, Hamel, or Heussen, while they do mention 'the many widows, mothers, and other close friends' that petitioned them.⁸⁴⁴ This suggests that there were most likely many more lobbyists active in the Dutch Republic than what can be presently be accounted for through archival evidence. Lobbying was, thus, probably even more important than this chapter suggests.

Following the lobbying trajectory of the delegates furthermore helps to answer the question why Brazil was lost. The regular interactions between the delegates and the States General, and in particular the latter's willingness to send yet another letter or another delegation when requested, demonstrates that the States General cannot be hold responsible for the loss of Brazil. The High-Mightinesses generally did what the delegates requested in their petitions and their minutes show their willingness to 'push' for the rescue of Brazil when necessary. Other correspondences underline that everyone agreed that saving Brazil was important, but perhaps that the urgency was not always clear to those in the Republic. They understood that conditions in the colony were harsh, but rumors about a Portuguese fleet 'about to depart' to take Recife had been circulating for several years and did not seem that urgent. The Portuguese King was not considered a particularly powerful enemy and Portugal was still involved in the Restoration War with Spain (1640-1668). As one contemporary pamphlet put it: 'the Portuguese even run the risk to be taken by the Spaniards, which is a very urgent threat'.⁸⁴⁵ It seems that no other pamphlets on the issue of Brazil have been published between 1652 and 1654, which suggests that the delegates did not engage in outside lobbying. The public sphere was largely concerned with the war with England in these years, which provided the opportunity for the delegates to operate almost 'under the cover' of this urgent affair quietly laboring for a Brazilian rescue fleet in the political sphere.

The only province to really object to supporting the WIC in Brazil was Friesland. They withheld their payments for a rescue fleet pending their own chamber in the WIC. They had

⁸⁴⁴ 'veele weduwen, moeders, en andere naeste vrinden', NL-HaNA, 1.01.46, inv. nr. 148, fol. 116r.

⁸⁴⁵ 'En de Portugiesen lopen selfs perijckel door de Spagnaerden bemaghtight te worden, 't welck haer seer drycht', Knuttel 7454: Anonymous, *West-Indisch Discours, verhandelende de West-Indische saecken. Hoe die weder verbetert mogen worden, ten besten der gemeente en 't seekerst voor de Compagnie. Generalijck ontworpen by maniere van samen-spraeck tusschen een Middelburger en Haegenaer* (no place: no printer, 1653), 9.

been requesting this since anyone could remember, but it should be granted to the Frisians that for a very short time it seemed that they would finally obtain their chamber. The meeting of the Board of Directors in the fall of 1653 created detailed plans for a Frisian chamber, and the plans for a newly created WIC Audit Office (*Rekenkamer*) stipulated that it would exist of seven individuals, 'or eight persons, if a Frisian chamber shall be added'.⁸⁴⁶ This should, however, primarily be seen as a sign of the willingness of the other chambers to save Brazil as they, particularly the chamber of Amsterdam, had always objected to a Frisian chamber. It was of course financially disappointing that Friesland did not consent to pay for the rescue of Brazil, but the roughly 30,000 guilders of Friesland (just under ten per cent) paled in comparison to the several millions of debts of the WIC. Moreover, after the province of Groningen offered to guarantee the pay for the Frisian Admiralty for the ships this pressure was largely removed.

Money was the issue though that made the Rotterdam Admiralty not deliver the requested ships for the Brazilian fleet. Money typically came late in the Republic, but that would generally be bridged through short-term credit and would not necessarily lead to large problems. However, due to the first Anglo-Dutch War and the requested fleet of 100 ships, the Rotterdam Admiralty that already used all their credit. They already were late on their payments to several suppliers who 'scolded' them 'because they did not deliver on their words'.⁸⁴⁷ The only solution was 'a big sum of money', as one can read in the minutes of the Rotterdam Admiralty. It is too simple though to blame the loss of Brazil on the war with England. As became apparent through the Amsterdam Admiralty's solution to the lack of money, the funds for the war with England actually provided an opportunity to find the funds for the Brazilian fleet. The loss of Brazil is undoubtedly entangled with the first Anglo-Dutch War and certainly provided a distraction in The Hague, but it also created opportunities that otherwise would not have been available; the war provided the solution for the problem it created.

Brazil was lost because the Admiralties were unable to quickly provide the required ships. This was not due to slow decision-making or the decentralized nature of the Dutch

⁸⁴⁶ 'Ende soo wanneer de provincie van Vrieslant mede een camer sal werden toegevoecht, sal t voorm: collegie bestaen in 8 personen, waervan dito camer mede eene sal committeeren', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, xx-Nov-1653 Copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors of the WIC.

⁸⁴⁷ 'soo hard aangemaent ende om dat men niet en conde presteren het woort', NL-HaNA, 1.01.46, inv. nr. 148, fol. 116r.

Republic, but was simply due to lack of funds. The shortage of funds existed because the Dutch Republic was insufficiently able to efficiently raise the required capital. This partly happened because not everyone considered the Portuguese an enemy to take seriously and therefore did not necessarily prioritize the Brazilian affair over other affairs, or considered the Brazilian rescue fleet an opportune moment to renegotiate the structure of the WIC. The second reason was that the Dutch Republic, like other European states in this period, had insufficiently succeeded in streamlining the state budget; the financial revolution had not yet been fully completed. It was easy for the States General to promise the funds in an extraordinary subsidy, but it was not easy for the provinces to raise the required capital through taxes.

6.11. CONCLUSION

Like chapter 5, this chapter has focused on individuals crossing the Atlantic to lobby for their interest. In the time between the two lobby missions much had changed and the colony was in extremely dire straits, yet the practice of crossing the Atlantic remained the same. This highlights the apparent success attributed by the individuals in Brazil to the mission of Haecxs. After all, for a last resort, this was their mechanism of choice. This demonstrates the confidence the population in Brazil had for this lobby mission.

The episode of the Brazilian delegates demonstrates that petitions were used to convince political mandataries, and also to streamline the communications in the Republic. Moreover, it highlights the research potential of studying a lobbying campaign up close for new insights in historical events. Thirdly, this chapter demonstrates that petitions could function as a viable alternative to employing societal capital for lobbying. None of the three gentlemen that formed the delegates of Brazil were of the highest societal orders. Nevertheless, the mandate by the population in Brazil in combination with the medium of petitions allowed the delegates access to the meetings of the States General. The High-Mightinesses functioned as a lever for access to the Frisian Stadtholder. Thus, through petitions the (representatives of) the general inhabitants of Brazil obtained influence beyond the medium itself, and as such petitions could complement other lobbying options.

It was a unique campaign as it is the only instance of an interest group petitioning the different bodies in the Dutch Republic for a single cause so many times. The lobbying group was created for this purpose and was dissolved after the Brazilian colony was lost. The second reason why this lobbying campaign was unique is that it was financed through the collection of funds from the commonality in Recife. Petitioning was an expensive endeavor, but the population came together to provide the necessary funds when the WIC unable to provide financial support. Moreover, the lobbying campaign united the Christian and Jewish population in Recife in a lobby alliance that on certain issues branched out to the Jewish population in Amsterdam forming a trans-Atlantic coalition.

The trace of petitions left by the delegates highlights both the difficulties of lobbying for the delegates as well as the potential of their strategy. On the one hand, they realized that their repetitive petitions could be perceived as a nuisance to the people they addressed themselves to. 'We find ourselves forced to bother your High-Mightinesses once again', the delegates would write for example.⁸⁴⁸ On the other hand, by being on top of the political developments in the Republic they did succeed in smoothing the internal process of communication and thus information exchange and decision-making in the Republic. An example of this process indeed functioning very well, occurred when they proactively sought a decision from the States General if indeed Linteloo would not arrive in The Hague on time to leave for the mission to Friesland, by which the delegates gained at least two days.

In regard to their strategies, the delegates prioritized obtaining a favorable resolution from the States General, and subsequently tried to expedite the execution of that resolution with the different Admiralties. They identified (potential) obstacles and had a problem-oriented approach. They prioritized obstacles with a potential big impact over obstacles with a high chance of success. That means that they first addressed the issue of the Frisian province not consenting to pay for the WIC colony, and then prioritized the Admiralty of Amsterdam (who needed to provide the largest number of ships) over for example the Admiralty of Noorderkwartier. In addressing the different bodies in the Republic, they employed different rhetorical strategies. There was a coherent center of their arguments that emphasized the horrible state in Brazil, but each body had their own independent focus.

⁸⁴⁸ 'Soo vinden wij ons uit hoochdringenden noot geperst uwe Ho:mo: nochmaels moeijelijck te vallen', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 23-Oct-1653 Request from the delegates of Brazil.

When addressing the States General for example, they repeatedly emphasized the 'fatherly' responsibilities that the Republic had over its colonies. When they addressed the Amsterdam Admiralty, on the other hand, the delegates emphasized the potential blame the Admiralty would receive if Brazil would be lost due to this Admiralty's delay.

The Brazilian delegate's lobby campaign, and by extent their petitions, made a measurable difference. Even though the colony was eventually lost, the delegates can be credited for the relative speed of the decision-making process and rigging of the ships. Notwithstanding the structural limitations, on this occasion monetary demands for the first Anglo-Dutch War, the delegates succeeded in smoothing the internal communications of the Republic. In the end, it was this war that provided the political solution for the economic problem. The petitioners succeeded in adapting to the structural limitations and continued their campaign for the maintenance of Dutch colonial institutions in Brazil through military support. The delegates' medium of choice was a collection petitions. It was the petition that provided access to political arenas – especially when the delegates would not have had the societal capital required for repeated audiences. Through the petitions, the delegates made a tangible difference, seizing the opportunities that were available to them.

