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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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7. LOBBYING FOR MONEY IN THE AFTERMATH OF DUTCH BRAZIL

The return of soldiers and sailors from Brazil to the Republic marked the end of the largest military campaign in the Atlantic of the seventeenth century.⁸⁴⁹ Not everyone returned of course. Some colonels and other higher military, especially those married to local women, had decided to defect to the Portuguese during the revolt because they deemed it 'inconvenient' to continue to fight and preferred to take care of their goods, sugar mills, and family instead of 'fighting to the last man'.⁸⁵⁰ Other Europeans fled to WIC settlements in North America or the Carribean. About two hundred of the Brazilian allies fled to colonies in Guyana, and another group settled in St. Christophe and later Tobago.⁸⁵¹ Those who continued to fight were, after their surrender, robbed of most of their possessions. They were not even able to take their scarce remaining belongings back to the Republic. In one account of the return voyage, the entire deck of a ship leaving for patria was covered with people. After sufficient drinking water was brought on board for all these people, the ship was so top heavy that it was deemed unsafe to go to sea. A solution was found in throwing overboard some of the personal belongings of the passengers and more than 500 pounds of brazilwood.⁸⁵² Another account confirms that because of lack of space on board the ships and 'unreasonableness of the captains' the travelers had to leave everything behind on their homeward trip.⁸⁵³

How did soldiers claim arrears after their return from Brazil? What were their options? This may seem a straightforward question, but the events that occurred in The Hague after the

⁸⁴⁹ Compare for example V. Enthoven, H. den Heijer, and H. Jordaan, eds., *Geweld in de West: een militaire geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Atlantische wereld, 1600-1800* (Lieden/Boston: Brill, 2013); Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 115.

⁸⁵⁰ For example Casper van der Ley, colonel, and Johan Hick, lieutenant-colonel, Job Hick and Wenzel Smit, lieutenants, and Albert Gerritsz Wedda, captain, decided to surrender. See: M. van den Broek, *Journael ofte Historiæse Beschrijvinge van Matheus van den Broeck van 'tgeen hij selfs ghesien ende waerachtigh gebeurt is, wegen 't begin ende revolte van de Portugese in Brasiel, als mede de conditie en het overgaen van de forten aldaer* (Amsterdam: Gerrit van Goedesbergen, 1651), 17.

⁸⁵¹ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 90-91.

⁸⁵² l'Honoré Naber, "Het dagboek van Hendrik Haecxs," 301-303.

⁸⁵³ 'Ende voor soo veel noch bij den vijandt wiert overgelaeten, hadden sij supplianten geen geneegentheit het selven te vervoeren; soo door ongelegentheit van schepen als onredelijkheit der schippers', NL-AsdSAA, 5028, inv. nr. 540E5: "Verzoekschriften van voormalige ingezetenen van en belanghebbenden in Brazilië".

loss of Brazil show that this was not as easy as it seemed. Studying petitions requesting payment by soldiers and officers alike shows the interconnected importance of military personnel as laborers, the possibility for association and collective action, and the possibilities and impossibilities of petitions. For this chapter, it is important to realize that wages are not just simply wages; they were part of the total aggregate of income for soldiers overseas. Other sources of income included transatlantic smuggling as well as peddling trade.⁸⁵⁴ Moreover, it was not just the soldiers who relied on the payment of wages. There was a secondary market for WIC employees' future earnings which were transferrable via power of attorney.⁸⁵⁵ Soldiers were often required to acquire their own firelocks and other war material, but not everyone had the means and thus required borrowed money from relatives of their crimp.⁸⁵⁶ Their future earnings would form the collateral, which partly explains how a secondary market for future WIC earnings came into existence.⁸⁵⁷

How was the payment of soldiers' wages organized? There were several different systems for the organization of army pay in Early Modern Europe. What they generally had in common was the problem of financing early modern warfare as it was difficult for employers to find the necessary funds to pay wages on time. A second problem was the incentive for one or more individuals to increase the number of soldiers on paper in comparison to the "real" soldiers in order to pocket the difference in pay.⁸⁵⁸ The system of the Dutch Republic is generally heralded as being both more efficient and flexible compared to that of its contemporary rivals. Soldiers, as well as sailors, were generally paid on time.⁸⁵⁹ In the system of the Dutch Republic army captains were responsible for the upkeep of their units and were paid for the number of men in their unit. The captains received this money from a military solicitor who advanced the wages while soliciting payments by the various

⁸⁵⁴ M. Fusaro et al., "Entrepreneurs at sea: trading practices, legal opportunities and early modern globalization," *The International Journal of Maritime History* 28, no. 4 (2016): 776.

⁸⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 779.

⁸⁵⁶ For example, Jan Jansz. Cuyper from Delft borrowed 150 guilders from his brother in law Pieter Cornelisz from Delft when Jan left as a soldier for Brazil in 1639. Pieter could draft two months' wages each year from the WIC on Jan's behalf. See: Stadsarchief Rotterdam (NL-RtSA), 18 Notarissen te Rotterdam, inv. nr. 135, Act 254.

⁸⁵⁷ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 117.

⁸⁵⁸ G. Parker, *Spain and the Netherlands, 1559-1659* (London: Collins, 1979), 160-161; D. Parrott, *Richelieu's Army: War, Government and Society in France, 1624-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), chapter 4.

⁸⁵⁹ Dekkers, "Labour conflicts," 385.

provinces.⁸⁶⁰ The solicitors were businessmen of some wealth who earned a profit by receiving a monthly sum from the army unit for their services as well as interest in case a province was late on its payment. This business became common practice during the Twelve Years' Truce (1609-1621) and by 1624-1659 there were dozens of different military solicitors.⁸⁶¹ A benefit of this system for the soldiers was that the burden of not receiving any pay was in this way deflected to civilian individuals instead of soldiers.

When studying soldiers claiming arrears, is it possible to consider them as laborers seeking their payments? For a long time, the activities of soldiers were not regarded as work by labor historians. The output of soldiers was considered destructive. Work, on the contrary, was an activity yielding surplus value. However, in 2013, an edited volume building on earlier work by Jan Lucassen and Bruce Scates made a convincing case that what soldiers do actually constitutes work.⁸⁶² Firstly, because soldiers spent the majority of their time in barracks which allowed them to also do some work in nearby agriculture or infrastructure. Secondly, because (ideally) the end result of warfare is territorial gain, and (in a premodern economy) territorial growth equals economic growth.⁸⁶³ While Zürcher acknowledges the exceptionality of soldiers, he concluded that 'ultimately an army is built on the factors of capital and labor just like any other industry'. The claims of soldiers' wages should thus be considered as laborers claiming wages. The collective actions of salaried workers, including soldiers and sailors, ranged from peaceful negotiations to lively protests and ritualized violence.⁸⁶⁴ This seems to confirm David Parrott's argument that military organization should not be considered 'as some exclusive prerogative of would-be absolute monarchs, but as a sphere of negotiation between rulers and their subjects'.⁸⁶⁵

⁸⁶⁰ O. van Nimwegen, "The transformation of army organisation in early-modern western Europe, c. 1500-1789," in *European Warfare, 1350-1750*, ed. F. Tallett and D.J.B. Trim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 169-171.

⁸⁶¹ Brandon, "Masters of War," 67-70, 215.

⁸⁶² J. Lucassen, "The Other Proletarians: Seasonal Labourers, Mercenaries and Miners," *International Review of Social History* 39, no. S2 (1994); B. Scates, "The price of war: labour historians confront military history," *Labour History* 84 (2003).

⁸⁶³ E.J. Zürcher, "Introduction," in *Fighting for a living: A Comparative History of Military Labour 1500-2000*, ed. E.J. Zürcher (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2013), 11.

⁸⁶⁴ C. Lis and H. Soly, "'An Irresistible Phalanx': Journeymen Associations in Western Europe, 1300-1800," *International Review of Social History* 39, no. S2 (1994): 13.

⁸⁶⁵ Parrott, "War, state, and society," 87.

What were the options for soldiers that sought arrear payments? The WIC as well as the VOC were, in contrast to the States General, notoriously late on their payments. This led to riots in 1629, 1635, 1652, and 1678.⁸⁶⁶ The sailors' revolt for pay of 1652 is of particular interest as it shows a sophisticated level of organization; something that resembles collective action. The sailors used an inn near the West India Company offices as a sort of "war room" from where they organized their actions.⁸⁶⁷ Similarly, in 1678, around one hundred women armed with makeshift weapons demonstrated in front of a house in Amsterdam where sailors for the Danish fleet were recruited. The wives' requests for payment to their husbands before the recruitment for a new campaign were regarded well-grounded by the city government, which ordered swift payment by the recruitment officer.⁸⁶⁸ Wives and mothers were not the only ones claiming arrears though. The Rotterdam Admiralty further specified 'undertakers or delivers of the deceased and wounded officers and sailors' that protested for money the Admiralty was unable to pay.⁸⁶⁹ Riot and revolt were one option for (families of) soldiers or sailors seeking to express their grievances, mutiny and desertion were another. In the army there was surprisingly little mutiny, but relatively high rates of desertion.⁸⁷⁰

Desertion by soldiers in the Atlantic, especially in Dutch Brazil, was relatively high compared to Europe.⁸⁷¹ It is a little bit of a mystery as to why this is the case. Wim Klooster suggests that the absence of a military solicitor might explain the difference.⁸⁷² However, as will be clear from the rest of this chapter, that is not entirely true as there were several military solicitors looking after several divisions of the army in Brazil.⁸⁷³ An alternative explanation might be that it was a combination of the extreme dire perspectives, absence of farmland that could be pillaged or looted, and the possibility of receiving a signing fee when defecting to the Portuguese enemy.

⁸⁶⁶ Dekkers, "Labour conflicts," 406.

⁸⁶⁷ Davids, "Seamen's Organizations," 162.

⁸⁶⁸ Dekkers, "Labour conflicts," 406-407.

⁸⁶⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.46, inv. nr. 148, fol. 116r.

⁸⁷⁰ Lucassen, "The Other Proletarians," 185.

⁸⁷¹ K. Fatah-Black, "Desertion by sailors, slaves and soldiers in the Dutch Atlantic, c. 1600-1800," in *Desertion in the Early Modern World: a comparative history*, ed. M. van Rossum and J. Kamp (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 102-105.

⁸⁷² W. Klooster, "Marteling, mouterij en beeldenstorm: militair geweld in de Nederlandse Atlantische wereld, 1624-1654," in *Geweld in de West: een militaire geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Atlantische wereld, 1600-1800*, ed. H. Jordaan, H. den Heijer, and V. Enthoven (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 336-337.

⁸⁷³ Other than de la Porte, this included de Cock for example.

An alternative to riots, mutiny, and desertion was to go on strike. In 1635, for example, the soldiers on Curaçao requested extra pay for their activities as lumberjacks and construction workers on the fortifications. When the colonial government refused this request, they promptly went on strike. The sting was taken out of the situation by the commander through a promise of plenty of Spanish wine.⁸⁷⁴ As demonstrated in chapter 6, the soldiers in Brazil also refused to go back on the battlefield after the first battle of Guararapes unless they would receive their wages.⁸⁷⁵ In comparison to riots, revolts, strikes, and mutiny, desertion is much less of a collective undertaking. However, individual or paired desertions could occasionally lead to small groups, or even collectives, deserting.⁸⁷⁶ Zürcher generalizes that collective action amongst soldiers is something that might correlate to soldiers from an urban background, while desertion seems to be linked to soldiers with a rural background.⁸⁷⁷

A fifth option was to go to court, an option that historians of the Early Modern period have hardly explored. A book chapter by Andrea Addobbati, focusing on seventeenth-century Livorno, casts some light as to why this might be the case. He states that most agreements between employers and wage workers were settled orally, thus leaving very little archival traces.⁸⁷⁸ One of the examples he found concerns 41 sailors who collectively sued Captain William Ell in 1657 for his debts.⁸⁷⁹ Richard Blakemore has provided an overview of wage litigation by sailors in England from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century. The behavior in court of wage laborers in this period should be understood from ‘within the legal system, not outside, or against it’, according to Blakemore.⁸⁸⁰ Moreover, he shows that collective law suits were possible in the English legal system – as long as the case

⁸⁷⁴ Klooster, "Marteling, muiterij en beeldenstorm," 335.

⁸⁷⁵ Chapter 6. See also: Hoboken, *Witte de With*, 92.

⁸⁷⁶ J. Kamp and M. van Rossum, "Introduction: Leaving work across the world," in *Desertion in the Early Modern World*, ed. M. van Rossum and J. Kamp (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), 10.

⁸⁷⁷ Zürcher, "Introduction," 41.

⁸⁷⁸ A. Addobbati, "Until the Very Last Nail: English Seafaring and Wage Litigation in Seventeenth-Century Livorno," in *Law, labour, and empire: comparative perspectives on seafarers, c. 1500-1800*, ed. M. Fusaro, et al. (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 43.

⁸⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 47-49.

⁸⁸⁰ R.J. Blakemore, "The Legal World of English Sailors, c. 1575–1729," in *Law, labour and empire: comparative perspectives on seafarers, c. 1500-1800*, ed. M. Fusaro, et al. (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 101-102. Especially Rediker had argued that seafarers preferred to take matters into their own hands, bypassing the legal system. See: M. Rediker, *Between the devil and the deep blue sea: merchant seamen, pirates, and the Anglo-American maritime world, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 149-151.

was heard in a court administering civil law and not common law. Thus, there was a preference from the 1670s onwards, to go to the Court of Admiralty instead of the mariners' court. Moreover, two-thirds of the law suits for wages involved groups of sailors, combining all social levels and intelligent cooperation in witness reports to maximize their chance of success.⁸⁸¹ Virtually nothing on Dutch wage litigation in this period has been published.⁸⁸² Moreover, there is no secondary literature on the possibility of joint court cases within the early modern legal system in the Dutch Republic. It seems though that at least since Charles V (r. 1506-1555) it was possible to join an ongoing lawsuit (*interventie ende voegen*).⁸⁸³ Moreover, there were no regulations that prohibited having power of attorney (*procuratie*) for multiple people. Regulations for the clerk of the court (*griffier*) stipulated that it would cost eight stivers (as opposed to four) to have power of attorney for several people, indicating that it was something that was affordable.⁸⁸⁴ Anecdotal evidence from the pleading records (*dingtaalregisters*) of the Court of Aldermen in Amsterdam between 1700-1730 suggests that it was not uncommon for one person to litigate on behalf of multiple individuals that subsequently shared in the outcome.⁸⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the soldiers returning from Brazil claiming their arrears evidently preferred petitioning over a court case.

Lobbying for wages of soldiers was part of a system of negotiation between employer and employee, as well as between ruler and subject. In this arena of negotiations, in particular on negotiations regarding arrear payments, the subject of petitions seems to have been generally overlooked by scholars of labor history. The soldiers from Brazil were of course not the only employees to petition for salaries. Jan van Huis, who had translated documents from Latin, French, Spanish, English, and Italian to Dutch for the States General, petitioned no less than three times for his financial compensation. For his argument, he relied on the proverb 'labor must be rewarded'.⁸⁸⁶ A second example is from the bodes of the

⁸⁸¹ Blakemore, "The Legal World," 112-116.

⁸⁸² Personal correspondence with C.M. (Marco) in 't Veld from the VUB, who further provided with me with references below.

⁸⁸³ P. Merulæ, *Manier van procederen, in de provintien van Holland, Zeeland ende West-Vriesland, belangende civile zaaken* (Delft: Adriaan Beman, 1705), 445-446.

⁸⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 273-285, 689.

⁸⁸⁵ This was a third option on top of *procuratie* or *interventie*, according to personal correspondence with C.M. in 't Veld from the VUB.

⁸⁸⁶ 'spreekwoort als Aerbeijt moet geloont sijn', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 7482, xx-xx-1652 Request by J. van Huis.

States General that requested payment when they performed duties for the Stadtholder.⁸⁸⁷ These two examples illustrate that it was not uncommon for laborers to petition for their wages, and that this detailed study of the lobby by soldiers returning can be fruitful as a starting point for a general idea of lobbying for wages. This chapters investigates how the soldiers sought arrear wages through petitions.

7.1. RETURN TO THE REPUBLIC

Upon arrival in the Republic in July 1654, the members of the High Council and the generals of the military corps were arrested pending trial for treason. None of the cases really came off the ground. Boxer alleges that this was because 'it was the authorities in Holland, rather than their subordinates in Recife who were primarily responsible' for the loss of Brazil.⁸⁸⁸ Whether or not the responsibility laid with the principals in the Republic is not at stake here, but Boxer's argument can be substantiated with a petition filed in 1655 to the Court Martial by A. van Adrichem. He filed the petition on behalf of Sigismund von Schoppe who requested an 'expedite decision' from the Court Martial and a 'definitive sentence', because he deemed it unjust to accuse someone and hold them in jail without sentencing them.⁸⁸⁹ He received a rather mild sentence: forfeiture of pay from the date of the surrender.⁸⁹⁰ An additional 32 army officers from all over Europe and their corresponding soldiers were summoned to appear at the Court Martial on 7 May 1655 and received the same sentence.⁸⁹¹ The members of the High Council were also investigated, but since their guilt could not be proven they received their freedom.⁸⁹² In a lengthy plea, the High Council argued that it had been tough on them too to make the decisions they made, including the departure from Brazil. Several times the situations had been so dire and the Company warehouses had been so empty, that they 'feared to go on the streets, as people shouted: "Bacon! Pork meat!"' to

⁸⁸⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 7478, 4-Oct-1618 Request for the bodes of the States General and Council of State.

⁸⁸⁸ Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 243.

⁸⁸⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5765, Request on behalf of von Schoppe by A. van Adrichem [01-May-1655].

⁸⁹⁰ Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 244.

⁸⁹¹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5765, Summon for Court Martial [22-Mar-1655].

⁸⁹² Wätjen, *Das holländische Kolonialreich*, 175-176.

them.⁸⁹³ Their decision to buy low quality Muscovite bacon instead of ‘normal Dutch bacon’ was thus given in by pressure through public opinion.

The 6,000 soldiers who had been sent to relieve Brazil in 1647 were hired by the States General, and not by the WIC. The bond of loyalty between the recruits and the States General was confirmed through a printed oath that was circulated among the men. However, as early as July 1649, the army had sent a representative across the Atlantic in the person of Colonel Guillaume de Haulthain in company of Simon van Beaumont from the High Council to administer their interests in The Hague.⁸⁹⁴ Very quickly van Beaumont started reporting increasingly worrisome news from the colony though as he wrote that the soldiers and other inhabitants in Brazil found themselves stuck ‘between the merciless enemy and perishing of hunger’.⁸⁹⁵

7.2. CLAIMING WAGES

Claiming wages for soldiers who had been active in Brazil was a tiresome activity. Before Colonel Haulthuin had returned to Brazil in 1649 with twelve ships, he had received the promise of prompt payment for the soldiers. Since none of the promised pennies arrived, the army in Brazil decided to send a letter to the States General in 1650 requesting payment. Again, it neither received payment, nor heard anything from the States General. It was as if the military sollicitors ‘knocked on a dead man’s door’.⁸⁹⁶ With the soldiers’ and captain’s pockets almost empty, and given the inability to obtain sufficient credit in Brazil, the army decided again to dispatch representatives across the Atlantic in an attempt to find credit, advancement of payments, or acceptance of bills of exchange on past earnings. They sent Pieter Keerweer, who joined forces with rittmaster Hendrik Adolf van Louhuijsen (representing colonel von Schoppe), and lawyer Johan de Cock (representing colonel Haulthuin). The three contacted several military sollicitors that they approached for credit in

⁸⁹³ ‘wij sijn tot verscheijden malen in sodanigen extremiteijt geweest dat de straten naulijcx meer hebben durven gebruijcken, werdende achteraeen geroepen: ‘speckvleijsch, speckvleijsch’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 09-Oct-1654 Defence by the High Council.

⁸⁹⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, 21-Jun-1649 Letter from Sigismund von Schoppe to the States General.

⁸⁹⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, 09-Aug-1649 Missive from Simon van Beaumont.

⁸⁹⁶ ‘dat mede al voor een dootmans deure is geclopt’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, , 10-Jul-1653 Remonstrance from the Brazil militia.

the Republic, but found no-one willing to pay advances in order for the army 'to keep their heads above water'.⁸⁹⁷ van Louhuijsen, De Cock, and Keerweer were able to achieve was a joint effort with a designated lobbyist, or military solicitor, for the officers in Brazil: Anthony de la Porte. He did not supply them with credit or advances for the soldiers, but he did promise to advocate on their behalf. This confirms the notion in the literature that military solicitors not just provided credit, but also looked after the interests of whoever they represented.⁸⁹⁸

There is not much information available on de la Porte other than that he had been the solicitor of the officers in Brazil from at least as early as October 1648, and that he later became the secretary of the Generality Mint.⁸⁹⁹ Van Louhuijsen en de la Porte presented one petition together in 1652 in which they accused the States General and the Council of State of no longer caring for the military in Brazil, and that all they did was redirecting them to the WIC. Notwithstanding the advice by the Committee of West Indian Affairs to pay for the soldiers, the provinces did not take any action.⁹⁰⁰ Moreover, the States of Holland refused to pay any further shares until the other provinces had paid theirs. The province had held this position in relation to the WIC on and off since 1634, but it was not just Holland that was behind on WIC payments. When the States General inventoried the status of payments in 1649, none of the provinces had paid more than half of their shares of subsidies to the WIC. Three of the provinces (Friesland, Overijssel, and Guelders) had even paid less than a quarter of their dues. Friesland maintained its position that it wanted a director's chamber and Overijssel demanded a general redress of the Company in exchange for their subsidies. Though, the other provinces seemingly did not demand something in return for their financial support.⁹⁰¹ The result was that by September 1652, the payment in arrears for the soldiers accumulated to 2,379,293.78 guilders, of which only 816,998.58 (34.4 per cent) had

⁸⁹⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 10-Jul-1653 Remonstrance from the Brazil militia.

⁸⁹⁸ Nimwegen, "Transformation of army organisation," 170-171.

⁸⁹⁹ Knuttel 7872: Anonymous, *Corte en bondige deductie van redenen, dienende tot narechtinge aen hare Hoog Mogenden de Heeren (...)* ('s-Gravenhage: Henricus Hondius, 1657), 49-50; A.A.J. Scheffers, "Om de kwaliteit van het geld: Het toezicht op de muntproductie in de Republiek en de voorziening van kleingeld in Holland en West-Friesland in de achttiende eeuw" (Unpublished PhD Dissertation, Leiden Univeristy, 2013), 152.

⁹⁰⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 7482, 05-Sep-1652 Petition from Louhuijsen and de la Porte.

⁹⁰¹ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 136-138.

been raised thus far. The 1,200,000 for which the Generality would negotiate a loan was far from complete too, as they had only obtained 76,806.25 guilders (6.4 per cent) so far.

The documents do not clarify why van Louhuijsen, De Cock, and Keerweer were unable to obtain credit or advances. One reason might be that at this point it was generally expected that the colony would be lost no matter what. Stories about hunger and deprivation amongst the soldiers had been circulating in the Republic even before these soldiers were shipped out.⁹⁰² The news of the loss of the second battle at Guararapes most likely did not fund any further confidence. However, whether or not the colony would be saved in the end would not necessarily compromise the financial commitment of a military solicitor. Instead, the way this army in Brazil was financed might explain the hesitation. The generality army, or the Dutch States Army, would be paid directly from provincial revenues through a repartition share.⁹⁰³ The army for Brazil, however, was financed from the generality budget. Although the share of the budget would be divided according to the same repartition system, a military solicitor that advanced pay or provided credit would have to obtain payment from the Receiver-General instead of a provincial treasury (*comptoir*). First of all, this would delay payments even more than normally, but secondly the generality had many more creditors queueing up to get paid. This meant that advancing wages for soldiers in Brazil was a much riskier investment than the wages of soldiers in the Republic.

On 27 September 1652 Anthonij de la Porte sent a letter to the officers in Brazil, in which he stated that unless any order to pay would be issued, the soldiers should not perform any further military actions.⁹⁰⁴ In other words, the army's broker suggested that the army should go on strike if the wages would remain unpaid. This indicates that soldiers' collective action (such as strike) was not always as spontaneous or a bottom-up process. Instead, it suggests that the soldiers and officers, or at least the experienced military solicitor, realized that going on strike in Brazil was a powerful tool for arrear payment negotiation.

Because of the unwillingness of the States General to follow up on its promise of payment, the merchants that had been selling to the soldiers on the credit of their future wages were instructed by their principals in the Republic to stop their services. Bills of exchange were refused and sent back 'with protest'. As a result, the private traders no longer

⁹⁰² Klooster, "Marteling, muieterij en beeldenstorm," 334.

⁹⁰³ Brandon, "Masters of War," 67.

⁹⁰⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 10-Jul-1653 Remonstrance from the Brazil militia.

visited Brazil, making the situation for the soldiers as well as the civilians even more dire. For eleven weeks in a row the soldiers went without bread, beer, wine, meat, bacon, butter, cheese, and oil, surviving of a combination of two pitchers (*kannen*) of manioc and brackish water.⁹⁰⁵ With soldiers fainting by the hundreds, the officers offered their resignation to the High Council. Instead, the Council offered the army one last attempt to lobby in the Republic in hope of better days. Therefore, they dispatched two captains, Otto Keye and Cornelis Caron, who arrived at the States General in July 1653.

The soldiers who had returned to the Republic during these years because they were wounded and incapable of fighting were perhaps more fortunate than their colleagues who remained in Brazil. The friends, widows, and orphans who had said goodbye to their friends, husbands, and fathers and who had remained behind in the Republic jointly petitioned on 24 September 1649 after they had learned who had died in the second battle of Guararapes. The beneficiaries of a soldier named Diederick Saffou received the lowest amount, 45 guilders, while those of Lieutenant Colonel Lowerecht received 4,330.25 guilders.⁹⁰⁶ Wives of sailors in Brazil petitioned the Admiralty for payment around the same period, but received only half of their husbands' salaries. They turned to the States General for assistance who swiftly ordered payment. Nevertheless, the president of the States General complained two months later that the sailor wives had visited his house demanding payment and the return of their husbands.⁹⁰⁷ Another petition for the payment of the soldiers mentions 'the swarm of widows, wives, and children in The Hague' who demanded payment on behalf of their breadwinners.⁹⁰⁸

Soldiers who survived and returned, approached their WIC chambers for payment, which responded that they were not the ones that had to pay them, but did provide them with proof of employment. The soldiers then turned to the Receiver-General who also sent them home without money. Ultimately, they turned to the States General, as was the case with four soldiers who all requested amounts between forty and eighty guilders, and who had found a lawyer that drafted a petition for them free of charge.⁹⁰⁹ Other soldiers also

⁹⁰⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 10-Jul-1653 Remonstrance from the Brazil militia.

⁹⁰⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, 24-Sep-1649 Petition of the widows, orphans, and friends of the deaths in Brazil.

⁹⁰⁷ W. Klooster, "De bootsgezellen van Brazilië," *Tijdschrift voor Zeegeschiedenis* 33, no. 2 (2014).

⁹⁰⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 04-Apr-1653 Petition from the Brazil militia.

⁹⁰⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, 22-Nov-1649 Petition four soldiers from Brazil.

petitioned the States General, received a positive apostille, and took their petition to the Receiver-General to receive their cash. Those are obviously no longer in the archive, but an advice by the Council of State reveals that the many soldiers petitioning the States General were considered an inconvenience. Therefore, argued the Council of State, the States General should adopt a resolution allowing payments to returning soldiers, so that the Receiver-General was charged to make payments to these poor souls.⁹¹⁰ When five soldiers and officers who had been captured by the Portuguese at Guararapes in February 1649 finally made it to the Republic in March 1651 and petitioned for salary, the States General turned to the Council of State once again. The Council of State responded, in January 1653, that honoring similar requests by other soldiers and officers in the past had created the precedent of payment for these supplicants as well. However, the Council of State also suggested that the States General should in the future no longer accept these types of petitions as to not spend too much time on such requests.⁹¹¹

When Mathijs Borger, a freed corporal, from Den Bosch and Nicolas Periso, a sailor from the Champagne region, returned to the Republic on 9 March 1653 and they requested their payment, the States General postponed a decision.⁹¹² Neither of the two would subsequently receive their payment, and neither would those serving in the army that was still in Brazil when they returned. In fact, their fight for payment would continue the following years.

7.3. *TRAVEL PENNIES*

It took until April 1656 until the money was actually found to pay the soldiers. As soon as this news became public, the soldiers and officers in The Hague jointly petitioned to receive their pay before Easter that same year.⁹¹³ Then they found out that they had to claim their wages in the WIC chamber that had 'paid' their monthly allowance for the last seven years in Brazil. This was a solution to prevent soldiers from claiming their wages in multiple

⁹¹⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5761, 24-Nov-1649 Advice from the Council of State.

⁹¹¹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 17-Jan-1653 Advice from the Council of State on the petition of five soldiers.

⁹¹² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 20-Mar-1653 Petition from an unpaid corporal; NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5764, 20-Mar-1653 Petition from an unpaid sailor.

⁹¹³ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, xx-Apr-1656 Petition from the present officers and soldiers from Brazil.

locations, and to prevent the Exchequer's office from being flooded by petitions. It also had the consequence that it functioned as a threshold for recruits who were seeking their payment. Furthermore, it was an added bonus that it was considered a humiliating punishment for the soldiers who had lost 'the royal conquests in Brazil'.⁹¹⁴

In order to understand the severity of this threshold it is important to imagine the situation of the soldiers upon their return in the Republic. For several months in Brazil they had been undernourished and the latest reports alleged that the WIC had only sent clothes for twenty-five percent of the soldiers. They had spent several weeks on overcrowded ships *en route* to Europe. Most of them originated from towns outside the Republic and could therefore not rely on city welfare or a social network to supply them with funds for travel or for clothes to dress themselves. The soldiers relied on the States General to support them in their quest for payment. Therefore, the *Binnenhof* swarmed with barely dressed, nearly starved soldiers petitioning for a 'travel penny' (*reispenning* – a small note of credit that would allow travel to a specific location). Some of the notes on small torn-off pieces of paper that functioned as a reminder for the States General to make a decision on an earlier petition, serve as a testimony of the number of petitions. Moreover, the high pressure of work as a result of the large number of petitions can be seen in a reminder of a petition that apparently had gotten lost on the desks of the States General's clerks.⁹¹⁵

The petitions for travel pennies peaked in November 1656. In a way, these petitions are different from most petitions discussed in this dissertation as they do not lobby for a policy change, but deal with a one-on-one relation between the ruler and subject. The subject (soldier) requested something (a travel penny) from the ruler (States General). Moreover, a large part of the soldiers was not as literate as the other petitioners that supplicated their request to the States General. Furthermore, these petitions provide the only tangible evidence on the petitions itself that it passed through someone's hand before being read in the meeting. The petitions were submitted with a small noted stating *pro deo* or *gratis* in the corner of the paper; indicating it was submitted free of fees.

The majority of petitions for travel pennies was submitted by groups of individuals. The largest group is that of eleven lower officers (Sergeants, Corporals, and Cadets (*Adelborst*))

⁹¹⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 20-Nov-1656 Petition by Stoffel Tomassen and Adriaen Pauwels.

⁹¹⁵ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 20-Nov-1656 Reminder to resolve on a petition for the States General.

who all had to travel to Zeeland and made use of a solicitor that drafted their petition free of charge.⁹¹⁶ It is striking that the petitioners are very heterogeneous. Soldiers could petition together with officers for example. Besides, travel pennies for different WIC chambers could be combined in one petition. Jacob Terlij from Schotland was a Sergeant who petitioned together with Hendrick Bamburgh for example.⁹¹⁷ Furthermore, people with different backgrounds came together to petition: Francois Mittrij from France who had to travel to Zeeland petitioned together with William Crauw from England who had to travel to Hoorn.⁹¹⁸ Considering that 64 per cent of the recruits was not Dutch it is perhaps unsurprising that joint petitions contained more than one nationality.⁹¹⁹ Nevertheless, one petition included no less than three different 'nationalities': Lambert Mathijsz from Liège, Pieter Courenge from La Rochelle, and Hans Nieuborch from Lübeck.⁹²⁰ It is possible that these soldiers and officers teamed up because they had served in the same regiment. However, another example shows a corporal and a soldier who each served under different captains.⁹²¹ One might expect the lawyers and solicitors who drafted some of the petitions to function as a central point that combined several individuals in one petition, but as several petitions were handed in on the same day this seems an unlikely explanation. Therefore, these petitions show the army networks that transcended army divisions, language barriers, religion, and army hierarchy.

This point is further substantiated by petitions from innkeepers who requested payment for housing military personnel from Brazil during their solicitations.⁹²² In particular a petition from Engeltje Jans de With from Amsterdam is interesting in this respect. She requested close to twelve thousand guilders for hosting fifteen members of the Brazilian military. 'Her' army officers and soldiers came from the WIC chambers in Amsterdam,

⁹¹⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from eleven lower officers.

⁹¹⁷ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 15-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from Jacob Terlij and Hendrick Bamburgh.

⁹¹⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from Francois Mittrij and William Crauw.

⁹¹⁹ B.R.F. Miranda, "Gente de Guerra. Origem, cotidiano e resistência dos soldados do exército da companhia das Índias Ocidentais no Brasil (1630-1654)" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, Leiden University, 2011), 387.

⁹²⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from Lambert Mathijsz, Pieter Courenge, and Hans Nieuborch.

⁹²¹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from Jan Jansz van Amersfoort and Hendrick Maertensz.

⁹²² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition from several inn keepers in The Hague.

Zealand, and Delft, originated in different countries in Europe, their different expenditures show a widespread hierarchy, and they had returned on board of different ships.⁹²³ In other words, there was seemingly nothing that organically connected them. What united these men of different geographical regions, religions, regiments, ships, languages, and social class was their shared interest for payment of their army wages. This is in contrast to for example a *vaandrig* (relatively high officer), sergeant, a writer, and two soldiers who were captured together by the Portuguese and jointly petitioned.⁹²⁴ They were united through their shared experience of being captured, which further provided them with the same narrative.

That being said, the petitioners did not go outside their job categories. Even though the abovementioned innkeepers shared the same interests as the army men of Brazil, they did not join forces. Though, this might be explained through the fact that the innkeepers were petitioning for incurred debts, not for arrear payments. When provisions contractors, suppliers of bricks, a baker, or the owner of a fishing boat petitioned for incurred debts, they did not join forces either.⁹²⁵

7.4. SHARED FEATURES

What the petitions for travel pennies have in common is their rhetoric. They emphasize their large efforts in delivering the petition. Benjamin van Sijgen, a captain, made a total of five visits to the *Binnenhof* to present his petition for example.⁹²⁶ They also emphasized their hardship and dire situation. We are ‘in such a state that we have neither money, nor clothes, nor linen to clean ourselves or cover our naked bodies’, one petition emphasized.⁹²⁷ A majority of petitions included variations on the words ‘naked and barren’ and ‘without a stiver in this world’.⁹²⁸ It was furthermore advisable for soldiers to emphasize that they had

⁹²³ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 11-Apr-1656 Petition from Engeltgen Jansz de With to the WIC committee of the States General.

⁹²⁴ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5763, xx-Dec-1652 Memory on a petition from five captured militaries.

⁹²⁵ Klooster, *The Dutch moment*, 90-92.

⁹²⁶ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition from Benjamin van Sijgen.

⁹²⁷ ‘in sodanigen staet dat noch gelt, noch cleederen, off linnen om haer te verschoonen off haere naeckte leden te bedecken’, NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from Francois Mittrij and William Crauw.

⁹²⁸ Examples include: ‘sijn naeck ende bloot, sonder eenen stuijver in handen te hebben’ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656, Petition for a travel penny from Collaert Teerlin van Vlaenderen,

not automatically turned to the States General to obtain travel pennies but had sought other solutions first. Michel Chevalier, a soldier, emphasized for example that he 'was a stranger to this country that did not have any friends' and therefore turned to the States General.⁹²⁹

Other army men, such as the soldier and cadet Hans Quacker and Albert Jansz van Quackelburgh had during the winter found a warm refuge in the homes of the widows Janneke Gerrits and Diewertje Jans in Amsterdam who had even advanced them around 45 guilders each. Apparently, Quacker and van Quackelburgh had most likely not relied on a circle of friends though, as the two widows complained that the soldiers had left without paying them back after receiving their salary.⁹³⁰

Following an advice from the Council of State, the States General negotiated a fund of 100,000 guilders that it used discretionary to relieve some of the creditors of soldiers, and some of the soldiers themselves. Engeltje Jans de With for example withdrew guilders from the accounts of some of the soldiers she hosted.⁹³¹ Engeltje Jans de With only had to wait for two weeks after her petition to receive payment, and the same was true for a doctor named Matheus Grausius who received just over 1,437 guilders after his petition. Others, however, waited almost two years since they started petitioning. For example the sixteen 'higher and lower officers, and the general soldiers' who jointly petitioned in December 1654.⁹³² Willem van Lobbrecht, a lieutenant-colonel, received just under 4,282 guilders, Otto van IJlem, a captain, received just over 1,552 guilders, and Coert Schlesing, a cornet (*vaandrig*), received 804 guilders – to give three examples of the petitioners that received pay.⁹³³ On average the Receiver General paid out 897 guilders per person.

In sum, access to the States General for soldiers of little means was guaranteed by lawyers who drafted petitions *pro deo* on their behalf, although generally speaking

Rogier Kindt van Marcken, and Adam Wijnandts van Haarlem; 'naeckt ende beroijt sonder een stuijver in de werelt te hebben', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 13-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from Lambert Mathijsz, Pieter Courenge, and Hans Nieuborch.

⁹²⁹ 'van alle wereltsche middelen berooft, ende niets heeft om van te leven, oock bij geene herbergier crediet can bekomen alsmede zijnde een vreemdeling die alhier geen eenige vrienden heeft', NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 19-Nov-1656 Petition for a travel penny from Michel Chevalier.

⁹³⁰ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 09-Nov-1656 Petition from Janneke Gerrits and Diewertje Jans.

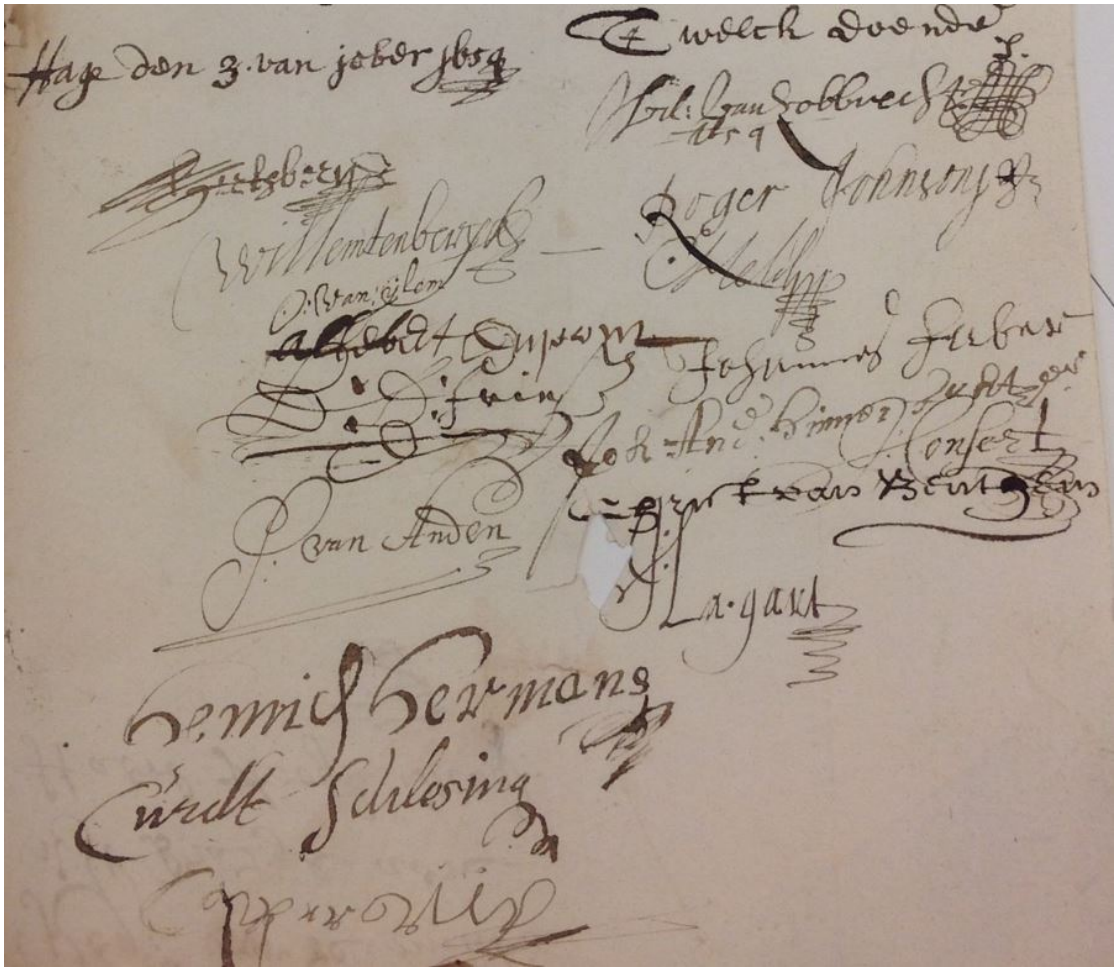
⁹³¹ In the account books it can be seen that 257 guilders and 16 stivers were drawn at the expense of Sijmon Lievens van Leeuwarden, which is the exact amount that Engeltje requested on his behalf, see: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 25-Apr-1656 Overview of payments for soldiers.

⁹³² NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5765, 03-Dec-1654 Petition by sixteen army men.

⁹³³ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5766, 25-Apr-1656 Overview of payments for soldiers.

individuals and groups did not require a professional to petition correctly. Moreover, the members of the former army in Brazil who petitioned were very heterogeneous and had nothing else that united them other than their shared interest. Even though the army had a long tradition of military solicitors that dealt with the States General on their behalf and the solicitors initially had a strict divide who lobbied for whom, the later petitions show a great sense of cross-class solidarity across different nationalities. This cross-class solidarity had already existed in Brazil, but was discouraged and later even punished by the High Council.⁹³⁴ Captains and military in more senior ranks are absent from the petitions for travel pennies, but it is unlikely that this was because of a lack of solidarity. Instead, the higher ranking military officers probably did not rely on the States General for credit to travel to another city to claim their wages.

Figure 7-1: Sixteen signatures on the petition on 3 December 1654



Source: NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 5765, 03-Dec-1654 Petition by sixteen army men.

⁹³⁴ Kn. 7872: Corte en bondige deductie van redenen, 20.

7.5. THE PRINTED PETITION FROM THE ARMY

The unity portrayed in the petitions delivered to the States General was in sharp contrast to the petition that was printed by the army lobby in September 1657. This petition was euphemistically called a 'short and brief deduction of reasons (...)', but is in reality 51 pages long and lists 160 points.⁹³⁵ At first sight, this petition seems very innovative. On the title page, it reads: 'delivered on the ____ of September 1657', with an open space where an individual that handed in the petition could fill in the day that the petition was delivered to the States General. It is not difficult to imagine hundreds or thousands of copies of this petition handed to soldiers and officers who had to fill in the date and sign at the end, and could hand this over to the States General. A printed petition for individuals requesting the same goal was unprecedented at this time.

The petition was printed by Henricus Hondius junior, the son of a printer with the same name.⁹³⁶ Hondius had settled in The Hague, in due course becoming the States General's official printer, after his return from Brazil where he had been a sugar planter.⁹³⁷ His petition from 1669 seems to be the actual first printed petition delivered to the States General.⁹³⁸ This practice was subsequently copied by others, but apparently only by professional printers with the means and modes of production to efficiently create a printed petition.⁹³⁹ The absence of a printed petition from the Brazilian army in the archives of the States General, in combination with the presence of other printed petitions only more than a decade later that were limited to petitions from printers, gives reason to believe that the petition was never intended to be handed to the States General, but instead served to influence the public opinion and was thus part of outside lobbying.

What did the petition try to achieve? It said to represent the captains, lieutenants, and cornets who had served in Brazil and requested their pay until the end of their commission instead of the day they surrendered to the Portuguese. It had been three years since the army

⁹³⁵ Ibid.

⁹³⁶ M. Keblusek, *Boeken in de hofstad: Haagse boekcultuur in de Gouden Eeuw* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1997), 29.

⁹³⁷ Meuwese, *Brothers in Arms*, 185. See also: <https://rkd.nl/nl/explore/artists/436828> .

⁹³⁸ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 7490, 20/09/1669 Petition by Hendrick Hondius.

⁹³⁹ NL-HaNA, 1.01.02, inv. nr. 7490, xx/xx/[1670] Petition by Johannes Ramazeyn; NL-HaNA, 3.01.04.01, inv. nr. 1371-II, xx/xx/[1670] Petition by Jacobus Scheltus.

had returned from Brazil, but this was one of the issues that still had not been resolved. It starts off with a brief history of the efforts by the army to receive their pay: the commissions of Haulthain in 1649 and Keye and Caroen in 1653, and joint petitions in September and December 1654. After the States General had corresponded with the Board of Directors they decided to reject further petitions dealing with the details or conditions of the payment of the army in Brazil. Notwithstanding the tireless efforts from the petitioners, it was only on the first of August 1657, that the High Mightinesses responded once again. The officers hoped for a positive resolution, but learned that the States General had decided to pay them in unpassable and unknown currency that none of the creditors accepted. Therefore, the petitioners found themselves forced to hand a petition to each of the lords of the States General outside of the meetings in order to explain their case.⁹⁴⁰

One of the primary issues was the decision to pay the army in light money (*licht geld* or Brazilian Guilders) instead of heavy money (*heavy money* or Dutch Guilders). Different versions of light and heavy guilders were used throughout the different Dutch colonies, and they were considered unnecessarily complicated.⁹⁴¹ It suffices to remember that Brazilian guilders were worth roughly twenty-five per cent less than Dutch guilders. It is of course understandable that the Brazilian soldiers and officers were not excited when they found out that the guilders they would be paid in were light and not heavy – making their pay cut twenty-five percent. They deemed this unlawful because they were hired by the state, and not by the Company. Therefore, the defense of the WIC that the soldiers in Brazil had always been paid in light money did not fly. The petitioners' resentment increased when they learned that the High Council was paid more in Brazilian guilders to compensate for the loss in value. Michiel van Goch received 2,480 Brazilian guilders which was the same as 2,000 guilders from Holland. It had been von Schoppe who had negotiated the payment plan with the High Council. The officers and soldiers became further enraged when they found out that von Schoppe had insisted on payment in heavy money for himself, the colonels, the lieutenant-colonels, and majors.

This was not the only criticism the petition voiced against the military and colonial leadership. Other criticism focused specifically on Hendrick Haecxs, 'one of the Gods of

⁹⁴⁰ Kn. 7872: Corte en bondige deductie van redenen, 2-5.

⁹⁴¹ F.S. Gaastra, *De Geschiedenis van de VOC* (Zutphen: Walburg Press, 2002), 144-149.

Recife'. The petitioners alleged that he was a usurer who had withdrawn 20,000 guilders from the WIC on top of his normal payment. This money he had used to supply the soldiers with credit instead of salary. Moreover, when the abovementioned captain Benjamin van Sijgen suggested that Haecxs – a former commercial agent in Moscow – had probably something to do with the abysmal Muscovite bacon, van Sijgen was promptly incarcerated for slander. The petition is loaded with this kind of (what we would call today) populist rhetoric, positioning poor soldiers vis-à-vis the elite. It was, in the words of the petitioners, 'an unchristian divide practiced by the High Council' where they 'took what belonged to the regiments and gave it to themselves and the higher officers' instead.⁹⁴² This aspect further supports the idea that the targeted audience of this petition was not the States General, but that it aimed to influence public opinion.

The third issue tackled in this petition was that the army allowances (*mondgeld*) had been paid in light money by the WIC. The question this brought to the fore was whether allowances should be considered salary or not. The trajectory of this debate reveals an interesting aspect of decision-making in the Republic. A few soldiers who had been captured by the Portuguese at the second battle of Guararapes had addressed themselves to the States General to receive their pay initially in 1651. The states had put the petition in the hands of the commission for West Indian Affairs. As the committee could not easily reach a decision they went to the States of Holland for advice.⁹⁴³ The provincial assembly examined all the relevant documents and concluded that the Council of State should have a final say in this. This council in turn re-examined all the documents. It decided that because the advertisements to attract soldiers made no distinction between light and heavy money in their description of the allowances and wages and because the wages were paid in heavy money, the allowances should be paid in heavy money as well.⁹⁴⁴ Six years later, the petitioners expressed their dismay about the States General still not adopting this advice.

⁹⁴² 'het on-christelijck onderscheijft bij de hooge regeringe gepracticeert (...) wat een groote en ongehoorde on-rechtveerdicheijt zy den remonstranten hebben ontrocken, het gene sy aen haer eyghen selven, ende de hoofden reghementen hebben ghegeven', Kn. 7872: Corte en bondige deductie van redenen, 15.

⁹⁴³ Note: Willem Paets, or Paedts, was the Burgomaster of Leiden and the father in law of the registrar of the States General: Nicolaas Coenraadsz Ruysch. P.J. Blok, P.C. Molhuysen, and F.H. Kossmann, eds., *Nieuw Nederlands Biografisch Woordenboek* (Leiden: 1903), [Nicolaas Coenraadsz Ruysch].

⁹⁴⁴ Kn. 7872: Corte en bondige deductie van redenen, 43-44.

What makes the printed petition of additional interest is that it supports its argument with facts. At the end of the argument there are 12 appendices with authenticated copies from petitions, resolutions, and testimonies in front of notaries. In addition to this, the petition included several anecdotes in the text. The most striking anecdotal evidence the petitioners included is that of a comparable case that was brought to court in La Rochelle in France in 1653. Not only was it a similar case, it even included the same defendants. As the ship *Prins Hendrick te Peert* from the WIC chamber Delft returned from Guinea on the African coast it found itself in danger because of the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652-1654). In order to protect the cargo, the captain Govert Corsten Zant sought refuge in the harbor of La Rochelle. While waiting for the war to end, his principals in the Republic ordered him to fire the crew in order to save money. When the captain tried to pay the crew in local, French, money, which was worth thirty per cent less than money from Holland, the crew protested and sued the captain. A judge in La Rochelle ruled that a captain should pay his crew in the currency of the place where they were hired and left from.⁹⁴⁵ With examples like these, the petitioners tried to show the uniform, natural, and self-evident claims they made. This was combined with a repetitive rhetoric of, and an appeal to, Christian compassion. This once more emphasized the obvious 'right of the Remonstrants'. By this they did not mean the right to petition (although that is never disputed either), but instead their rightful claim according to customs, natural law, and Christian values.

7.6. CONCLUSION

Why did the soldiers choose to lobby instead of going to court to receive their pay? The first reason is that the military had a long tradition of employing military solicitors to act as brokers between the army and their commissioners. The second reason, which also becomes clear from the petition, is that it remained a mystery to the petitioners why they did not yet receive their salary in heavy money (instead of light money), and for the period that ended the day of their return in the Republic (instead of the day of surrender in Brazil). The third reason is that petitioning was normal practice for arrear payments. Soldiers were not the only ones, but their practice was shared by ministers, comforters of the sick, surgeons, clerks,

⁹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

and even a street sweeper seeking payment of their salaries.⁹⁴⁶ There had been plenty of successful lobbying in the past resulting in resolutions to pay the petitioning soldiers and officers. Yet, not enough came through. This was not a lobby to influence decision-making, but a lobby to enforce a previous decision; it was a lobby to honor a contract. The fourth reason, and this is more speculative, is that it was more convenient to petition than to go to court, and probably cheaper considering that petitions could be drafted *pro deo*.

It seems likely that from 1657 onwards the lower officers were stuck in the middle. Even before leaving Brazil, the higher officers had through von Schoppe arranged payment in heavy money, but the middle to lower officers and soldiers were left out of this arrangement – notwithstanding the decisions by the States General and advices from bodies such as the Council of State. The soldiers and lower officers such as sergeants had no other option than to accept a twenty-five per cent pay cut, because ‘beggars aren’t choosers’ – literally. After several years below subsistence, as becomes clear from the petitions for travel pennies, the soldiers were happy to receive whatever they could get their hands on. The captains, lieutenants, and cornets had the means to not immediately accept the payment conditions and tried to achieve more through outside lobbying in a printed petition.

When comparing the search for arrear payments from the soldiers to other wage laborers seeking their wages it appears that soldiers indeed can be considered laborers.⁹⁴⁷ By the time they arrived in the Republic it was too late for strikes, desertion, or mutiny to express their grievances. It was quite surprising that the soldiers did not resort to riots. While still in Brazil desertion happened regularly. Mutiny would not have solved their problem of arrear payments as they were far away in Brazil and relied on support to get home. Those who did not rely on support to get back to Europe, such as sailors, were more likely to rise in mutiny. Strikes were considered, and also encouraged by strategists in the Republic, but these did not put enough weight in the scale to force swift payment. The absence of riots by naked and hungry soldiers at the *Binnenhof* is perhaps most surprising in this regard, especially when considering the intersectional solidarity shown in the petitions. The sailors’ revolt of 1652 in Amsterdam resulted in both a pardon ‘to keep the citizens quiet and

⁹⁴⁶ Winter, *WIC ter kamer Stad en Lande*, 38-41.

⁹⁴⁷ Zürcher, "Introduction."

preserve public order' and eventually in payment of their wages.⁹⁴⁸ The petitions did not even contain an implicit threat of violence if its requests were not met, even though the implicit threat of a strike was mentioned in earlier petitions. Without starting a collective court case, the only non-violent option for the soldiers was to petition collectively.

⁹⁴⁸ H. de Schepper and M. Vrolijk, "The Other Face of Struggle Against Violence: Peace and Order by Clemency in the Netherlands, 1500-1650," in *Janus at the millennium : perspectives on time in the culture of the Netherlands* ed. T.F. Shannon and J.P. Snapper (Dallas: University Press of America, 2004), 286.

