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## **The second Anglo-Dutch war (1665-1667) : international raison d'état, mercantilism and maritime strife**

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## CHAPTER 7

# The Raid on the Medway: victory, defeat and international complications

## English financial difficulties and Dutch commercial recovery

In 1667 the English crown was still faced with severe financial shortages. Plans for the rebuilding of London were drawn up. The costs would be tremendous and money poured in only very slowly. Domestic and overseas trade slumbered because of the disaster and the war with the Dutch Republic and France. Many merchants had lost goods or had temporarily fled London to escape the plague. Shipping products to and from England was dangerous because of enemy privateering and naval activity. Due to the hampering of commerce taxation failed to raise sufficient revenue. The government did its utmost to borrow money but potential sources were rare as the regime was judged to be no longer creditworthy.

Setting out a fleet at least as large and well-found as that of the late summer of 1666 was necessary if the Dutch were to be decisively defeated, and so finally forced to submit to a favourable peace treaty. In 1667 this proved to be impossible though. Charles told James that no battle fleet would be equipped during the campaigning season as finances did not allow this. There would be no serious confrontations as in the previous two years. All large men of war were to be laid up in naval ports. Most ships would remain at the royal docks at Chatham. Only a squadron of small, fast vessels would be employed to hunt down as many enemy merchantmen as possible. This would still consume considerable amounts of money. More was saved by operating with minimal crews. Coastal defences were built or improved in order to protect England from Dutch and French attacks.<sup>1</sup> Obviously this was a serious loss of face to a major naval and political power. The other players in the game of international politics would notice this sign of temporary weakness. It would allow Dutch and French privateers and men of war to intercept English shipping without any opposition causing the depression of English trade to continue.

1 CSPD 586 James to the Navy Board 4-4-1667, 5 Coventry to the Navy Board 12-4-1667, 118 Charles to James 3-6-1667, 130-131 Coventry to the Navy Board 8-6-1667; Bryant, *Letters*, 200-201 Charles to James 3-6-1667; Boxer, *Anglo-Dutch Wars*, 37.

From their side Dutch merchants took advantage of the English fleet not being present at sea. Many ships ventured to undertake voyages causing Dutch trade to make a significant recovery in 1667. Already in 1666 commerce had improved due to the periods of English absence. This process continued the next year. Jonathan Israel has shown that in 1665 the total of 181 Dutch ships passed through the Sound. In 1666 this number rose to 460 and in 1667 even to 496. Pre-war numbers, however, were not yet reached. In 1664 the amount had been 692.<sup>2</sup>

The total revenue of the customs, paid to the five admiralties, is another good indication for the state of Dutch maritime commerce. There are some problems with the data provided by Becht though. Merchants attempted to get round these taxes. Westermann claimed that only 80 percent of the lawful due amount was actually paid and that Becht made some errors in the calculations.<sup>3</sup> It would be logical to assume however, that Becht has been consistent in his method. There were no major changes in the system of custom duties during the 1660s. This allows using the statistics as relative percentages, providing a clear image of the trend of trade. In the figure the average amount per year during the period 1655-1670 is used as index because then the economic trend is taken into account.

Table 1: Index of the total revenue of the convoy and licence, 1660-1670

Year	Index	Year	Percentage
1660	123.4	1666	64.6
1661	108.5	1667	84.7
1662	108.6	1668	120.4
1663	112.8	1669	100.9
1664	91.5	1670	99.0
1665	57.4	1655-1670	100.0

Source: Becht, *Statistische gegevens*

Figure 1 shows that the Second Anglo-Dutch War did not damage Dutch maritime commerce on a structural basis. The disruption was severe but merely temporary. As soon as possible traders took advantage of brief spells of naval inactivity and sent out their merchantmen. Yet the brief period of economic expansion during the early 1660s was temporarily brought to an end by the war. The prices of the VOC stocks provide a similar picture. In September 1666 they were back at 400 percent. In September 1667 they rose to 462 percent almost reaching pre-war levels.

### Peace negotiations and the question of the Spanish Netherlands

In February 1667 Giustinian wrote to the Doge explaining how François Paul de Lisola, the diplomatic delegate of the Emperor, hoped to prevent a peace agreement

<sup>2</sup> CSPD 374 Richard Watts to Williamson 7-1-1667; Israel, *Dutch primacy*, 213-216.

<sup>3</sup> Westermann, 'Statistische gegevens', 4-5.

between England and the Dutch Republic, believing that the war prevented France from taking steps against the Spanish Netherlands. According to De Lisola this situation should be maintained.<sup>4</sup> More than anything he feared French territorial ambitions leading to war in the German Empire. He published his *Bouclier d'Etat et de Justice contre le dessein de la monarchie universelle* in order to arouse suspicion against Louis's intentions.<sup>5</sup>

De Witt was worried about French plans concerning the Spanish Netherlands, assuming that sooner or later Louis would launch his attack. He therefore suggested to D'Estrades that an independent republic should be created in these provinces that would be protected and guaranteed by both France and the States General. D'Estrades warned Louis and De Lionne that the Dutch would not easily agree with French territorial gains in the Spanish Netherlands. De Witt's concerns were certainly justified. Rumours about secret Anglo-French talks spread throughout the diplomatic sphere and were confirmed by various sources. D'Estrades did his best to deny it, but De Witt believed that there was no smoke without fire.<sup>6</sup> This put him in a very complicated situation: his hands were tied to the war but he would have to free them in order to check French aggression. Ending the war must not be done at all costs though.

Ever throughout the war Franco-Dutch relations had been complicated. Commercial disputes had already played a part in 1665, but these increased in 1667 when Colbert launched an economic war against the Dutch Republic. France was an important market for Dutch products and re-exports. Colbert believed these products should be excluded because this would benefit French merchants and the crown. The example of the English, who had already closed off their market with the Navigation Laws, was now followed. French mercantilist pressure was probably even more disruptive for Dutch trade because the French market was of higher importance than the English one.<sup>7</sup> Taking over certain industries was another goal Colbert hoped to achieve. The French aimed to push the Dutch out of the silk industry and threatened to raise the duties on Dutch cloth. This would make exports to France almost impossible. De Witt was advised not to retaliate as this would only backfire on the Dutch economy. It would endanger the re-export of French salt and brandy to Norway and the Baltic in Dutch ships. Meanwhile Colbert attempted to attract Dutch artisans in order to become self-sufficient in certain trades and to establish new exporting activities.<sup>8</sup> France had now really joined the ranks of mercantilist competitors and obviously the Dutch were the main opponents.

These commercial disputes with the French put a strain on Franco-Dutch rela-

4 CSPV 125-126 Giustinian to the Doge 1-2-1667.

5 Translated in English as *The buckler of state and justice against the design manifestly discovered of the universal monarchy*.

6 Brown, *Letters*, 26-28 D'Estrades to De Lionne 14-2-1667; CSPV 118 Giustinian to the Doge 4-1-1667; Rowen, *De Witt*, 623.

7 Israel, *Dutch Republic*, 776-785.

8 CSPV 133 Giustinian to the Doge 22-2-1667; Fruin, *Brieven aan De Witt II*, 379 and 381-382 Jacob Clouck to De Witt 14-3-1667; NA States General 6783 Boreel to De Witt 25-3-1667; Elzinga, *Voorspel*, 219-229.

tions. Yet military assistance against England was still required. In May an official agreement arranged the joining of both fleets as had been proposed and attempted in 1666. They would meet up in the Channel in order to continue the war.<sup>9</sup> On the surface Louis complied with the obligations the alliance demanded from him. This caused England to doubt his real intentions. Arlington was not certain whether France would aim for peace in order to attack the Spanish Netherlands, or whether all forces would be directed against England. Yet in March De Lionne told Henry Jermyn Earl of St Albans, the representative in Paris, that Louis would press the Republic for a peace treaty that would benefit England.<sup>10</sup> In April France concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with Portugal. Obviously this was intended against Spain as well.<sup>11</sup> It could even provide a direct *casus belli* in case Spain and Portugal resumed their conflict.

More and more the diplomatic and political isolation of Spain took shape. It was clear to all participants in the European diplomatic arena that France was planning and preparing its upcoming campaign against the Spanish Netherlands. Only England and the Republic would and might be able to support Madrid. Yet the war prevented both from doing so. England was still tied to its Portuguese ally as well. To Louis the next logical and necessary step would be to win over Charles. The English king and politicians hoped for an advantageous peace and were probably prepared to sacrifice the Spanish Netherlands for this. Then only De Witt needed to be persuaded to accept French territorial gains.

In April the French promised St Albans that they would urge their allies to undertake no more naval actions against England. In exchange for a favourable peace the French would be free to invade the Spanish Netherlands. Louis ordered D'Estrades to support the English cause as Charles could possibly ally with the German Emperor, but this danger did not seem imminent. Anglo-French co-operation grew closer in May when St Albans was assured that Louis was content with the arrangement.

Arlington told Temple that Charles was inclined to give up the Spanish Netherlands if Louis was prepared to provide the diplomatic assistance which he needed to overcome Dutch obstinacy with their refusal to make concessions. England would not support Spain, although an Anglo-Spanish treaty of friendship was signed in May; this applied mainly to situation in the West Indies.<sup>12</sup>

9 NA SG 12574.132 Lok.F, 5-5-1667; NA SG 12587.174 SKF, 5-5-1667.

10 Bebington, *Letters*, 141-143 Arlington to Sandwich 10-3-1667; CSP Clar 589 St Albans to Clarendon, 19-3-1667.

11 CSP Clar 595 Thomas Maynard to Clarendon 5-4-1667; Bodl Carte MS 75 f375 Arlington to Sandwich 5-5-1667.

12 CSP Clar 602 and 605 St Albans to Clarendon 27-4-1667 and 7-5-1667; Bodl Carte MS 75 f377 Coventry to Sandwich 5-5-1667; Brown, *Letters*, 135-138 Louis to D'Estrades 6-5-1667, 162-167 D'Estrades to Louis 19-5-1667; Bebington, *Letters*, 163 and 164 Arlington to Temple 20-5-1667 and 27-5-1667; PRO SP 103/73 23-5-1667 Anglo-Spanish treaty of friendship; NA SG 7061 LS, Van Reede van Renswoude to the States General 2-6-1667; Sonnino, *Louis XIV*, 6-9; Lossky, *Louis XIV*, 132.

In Brussels, the governor-general Castel Rodrigo was desperate as French troops assembled along his southern border. He officially informed the States General that a French violation of the Peace of the Pyrenees would be imminent. He stressed that Spain was by no means the aggressor in the conflict. To counter this diplomatic offensive Louis had his lawyers draw up an official legal document defending his wife's rights on the Duchy of Brabant.<sup>13</sup> He had copies sent to the States General and Charles. Obviously the statement was intended to provide a justified excuse for the forthcoming invasion. The legal grounds were shaky. The Right of Devolution only applied on Brabant and was matter of private rather than constitutional law. Many people understood this. Also at the Peace of the Pyrenees Louis had declared that he would not uphold any claims on behalf of his wife. However it had not been Louis's intention to convince the public but to put a case that acquiescent states would accept. Castel Rodrigo and Spanish diplomats did what they could to dispute the French argument.<sup>14</sup>

Meanwhile Spanish military preparations were made as well. Troops from Italy were transported to the port of Ostende. Soldiers were recruited and funds collected. Yet on the thirty-first of May De Lionne reported to D'Estrades that a large French army had crossed the border and was heading to Charleroi. Castel Rodrigo urged the Dutch to take steps and told them that Louis would be claiming Northern Brabant, part of the Dutch Republic, as well.<sup>15</sup>

Already in 1666 careful diplomatic approaches had been initiated by both the English government and the Dutch Republic, initially using Swedish representatives as go-between. They negotiated the location of the peace conference with London and The Hague. Charles suggested that this Dutch city might host the event. De Witt refused this because he felt that the English could exploit the Orangist sentiment of the Dutch public. In March they agreed on Breda. Charles announced that he would send Denzil Hollis and Sir Henry Coventry to represent England in Breda.<sup>16</sup>

Despite the official negotiations the Dutch Republic prepared its fleet against England for the forthcoming campaigning season. France's efforts to persuade the States General not to do so were ignored. In previous years Louis had hoped that the Dutch and the English would keep each other occupied. His own involvement in the

13 *Traité des droits de la Reine Très Chrétienne sur divers Etats de la Monarchie d'Espagne.*

14 NA SG 7061 LS, Sasburch to the States General 1-5-1667, De Gamarra to the States General 24-5-1667; Brown, *Letters*, 138-142 Louis to De Courtin and D'Estrades 9-5-1667; PRO SP 78/123 f87 St Albans to Arlington 11-5-1667; *A deduction wherein is proved by most clear arguments that the right of devolution hath no place among sovereign princes of the low Countreys and that the delay of paying the French queen's dowry doth not annull the renunciation which she made at her marriage* (London 1667).

15 NA SG 7061 LS, Sasburch to the States General 11-5-1667; NA SG 12588.85 SKS, Sasburch to the States General 1-6-1667; Brown, *Letters*, 192-193 De Lionne to D'Estrades 31-5-1667, 198-202 Castel Rodrigo to the States; General 20-5-1667.

16 NA SG 12576.84 Lok.E; Brown, *Letters*, 18-19 and 75-76 Charles to the States General 10-2-1667 and 18-3-1667, 28-31; D'Estrades to De Lionne 17-2-1667; CSPV 144-145 and 146-147 Giustinian to the Doge 29-3-1667 and 12-4-1667; Bodl Carte MS 75 f368 Arlington to Sandwich 31-3-1667.

conflict now obstructed his plans. Louis hoped to achieve peace as soon as possible seeing that renewed operations would only prolong the war and might endanger his own fleet. He was not entirely certain that the English would not attempt to confront his precious men of war. The English understood this situation very well and hoped to benefit from it. Sir Henry Coventry tried to stall any constructive negotiations talks by demanding impossible conditions. The English government saw the opportunity to exploit De Witt's need for an early treaty in order to concentrate on moves to check French ambitions concerning the Spanish Netherlands. This deadlock could just provide England with an opportunity to obtain an advantageous treaty. Hampering negotiations would only increase political pressure on the Dutch and the French. It seemed that suddenly England had become a valuable partner in international politics again. Meanwhile the French diplomats defended Louis's decision, going back on his earlier promise, not to send out the fleet for the moment. Of course they tried to save face and invented reasons for this manoeuvre.<sup>17</sup>

An international stalemate had been reached and a breakthrough could only be made with military means. France and England seemed to have the advantage in this and the Republic and Spain were both in a difficult situation. France could now finally benefit from its military superiority. England had to wait and continue to let political pressure on the other states increase. Spain could only try to defend its territory and hope for foreign intervention. The Republic wanted to bring an end to France's conquests but would have to sign a peace agreement with England first. De Witt believed he knew how to free the Dutch Republic from this situation.

### The Raid on the Medway

On the seventh of June the Dutch fleet, again commanded by De Ruyter, put out to sea. On the fourteenth the Dutch undertook the journey across the North Sea. On the seventeenth a final council of war was organised in the Thames Estuary. De Ruyter told his officers that their task would be to sail up the river Medway and do what damage they could. Seventeen men of war, five yachts and four fireships were sent to burn or capture English ships, stores and wharves. The bulk of the fleet would wait in the estuary to intercept any approaching English squadrons. This way the retreat would be safeguarded. On the nineteenth Lieutenant-Admiraal Van Ghent, with by Cornelis de Witt present as official plenipotentiary of the States General, undertook a futile attempt to sail up the River Thames.

On the twentieth the fort at Sheerness was attacked and taken by marines landed to carry out this action. The fortifications were destroyed because it would be impossible to defend them against any substantial enemy force. Significant quanti-

<sup>17</sup> CSPD 108 Colonel Anthony Gilby to Williamson 29-5-1667; Brown, *Letters*, 193-197 and 241-250 D'Estrades to Louis 2-6-1667 and 21-6-1667, 204-213 Louis to ; D'Estrades and De Courtin 8-6-1667; CSP Clar 615 St Albans to Clarendon 15-6-1667; NA SG 7061 LS, Van Reede van Renswoude to the States General 16-6-1667.

ties of rope, tar, guns and masts were taken as prize. On the twenty-second captain Jan van Braekel broke the chain that stretched across the Medway. That day the *Unity* and the *Royal Charles* were captured. The flagship that had been so important in the naval encounters of the previous year was now taken without a fight. The *Sancta Maria*, the *Matthias* and the *Carolus Quintus* were burned. On the twenty-third a number of Dutch vessels passed Upnor Castle and the brand-new *Loyal London*, the *Royal Oak* and the *Royal James* were successfully attacked with fire-ships. All three had been laid up and were completely undefended. Next day the complete Dutch fleet returned to the Thames Estuary with the captured prizes, before any proper opposition could be organised.<sup>18</sup>

In the meantime, Charles had ordered the Lord Lieutenants of the surrounding counties to send their militias to the coast to anticipate any Dutch attack. William Coventry ordered the Navy Board to quickly equip a number of fireships to burn the Dutch men of war. Albemarle was given command of all defences. His task was almost impossible. There were few guns available and reinforcements did not arrive in time as the guns were reserved for defending the Thames approaches to the City of London. Many soldiers, guards, artisans and labourers had fled leaving Albemarle with few hands to help out. Consequently some men of war were lost that could have been protected. A number of ships had been sunk in order to block the passage to Chatham. Albemarle ordered more vessels to be sunk on the Chatham side of the chain. He also told Peter Pett, Commissioner of the Navy Board, to tow the *Royal Charles* upstream. This was not done however, because there were no pilots and sloops available. The *Sancta Maria* was supposed to be sunk behind the chain but this never happened because it grounded before it reached its place. All Albemarle's attempts to organise defence were in vain as many people neglected their duties or had already fled. Even Charles and James, who gave directions at the sinking of the ships, could not help this. Peter Pett was later accused of negligence and locked up in the Tower. Others had failed but he was set up to be the scapegoat, whereas in detail the incompetence of every part of the English defence had led to a disaster.<sup>19</sup>

The result of the naval raid was disastrous to English military and political prestige. The material damage was enormous but the political consequences were even worse. Some days later Arlington wrote to Sandwich that he would see 'the affronts and spoyle the enemy hath made upon us att Chatham and from all your letters what a consternation it putt upon this towne and the countrey about it. God bee thanked wee are reasonably well recovered out of this (...).' Gilbert Burnet later wrote that 'the damage sustained by this action was not greater than was the disgrace of it, and the king's behaviour in a time of such imminent danger was not much applauded for.' Pepys too criticised the king for his lack of responsibility. On

18 CSPD 185 John Clapham to Pepys 24-6-1667; Scheffer, *Roemruchte jaren*, 164-176; Van der Moer, 'Een nabrander van de tocht naar Chatham', 564-566.

19 CSPD 167-168 Charles to the Lord Lieutenants 20-6-1667 (several letters), 166-167 Coventry to the Navy Board 20-6-1667; Scheffer, *Roemruchte jaren*, 168-176.

the thirtyfirst of June he wrote in his diary that 'Sir H. Cholmly come to me this day, and tells me the Court is as mad as ever, and that the night the Dutch burned our ships, the king did sup with my lady Castlemain [his mistress] at the Duchess of Monmouth's, and there were all mad in hunting of a poor moth.' Charles and his ministers, responsible for the disaster, would have much to answer for during the next session of Parliament. The king had lost much of his popularity with the people.<sup>20</sup> The public demanded Parliament to be called in session.<sup>21</sup>

The English public panicked during the action. People in London demanded their money from the banker-goldsmiths. Soldiers had to protect these smiths from the angry mob when they refused to pay up. Many people fled with their possessions to other places. Strange and incorrect rumours only added to the confusion and panic. One Richard Forster wrote to one James Hicks that four Dutch men of war had been burned. Sir John Skelton believed that the French had landed an army near Plymouth. Other people stated that Sir Edward Spragge, commander of the fort at Sheerness, was an Irish catholic and a traitor. Clarendon was another popular scapegoat. He had had nothing to do with the war or the failure of English defences, yet anything that went wrong was usually blamed on him. He had also opposed the recalling of Parliament and had just built an expensive new house which a mob attacked. The windows were broken and angry vandals destroyed the trees in his garden.<sup>22</sup>

To prevent any future attacks and any more public discontent the City of London decided to help finance the new fortifications at Sheerness and Gravesend. A £10,000 loan was provided and a commission from the Court of Aldermen would supervise the construction.<sup>23</sup>

In the evening of the twenty-fourth of June a new council of war was organised at the *Zeven Provinciën*. One squadron under Van Ghent would attempt a landing at the Shetlands and then escort the VOC homebound fleet to the Republic. Other squadrons were sent out to patrol the coastal waters. The bulk of the fleet blocked the English coast. De Witt had ordered that several more attempts should be done to land troops, raid other forts and towns and cause more damage. On the twelfth of July the Dutch fleet attacked Landguard Fort near Harwich. Marines and sailors landed and tried to storm the fort. The attack was beaten off successfully and the Dutch retreated.<sup>24</sup> This was the last significant military encounter of the Second Anglo-Dutch War. The next confrontation would be in Breda where negotiations were held.

20 Bodl Carte MS 75 f394 Arlington to Sandwich 30-6-1667; Gilbert Burnet, *History of his own time* (First London 1724), 91-92; Evelyn, *Diary*, 21-6-1667; Rogers, *The Dutch in the Medway*, 135.

21 Pepys, *Diary*, 25-6-1667.

22 CSP Clar 616 Clarendon to St Albans 25-6-1667; CSPD 189-190 25-6-1667, 192 Richard Forster to James Hiches 25-6-1667, 197 Sir John Skelton to Williamson 26-6-1667, 206 John Maurice to Williamson 28-6-1667, 207 Richard Watts to Willaimson 28-6-1667 and 246-247 Jason Thruston to Viscount Conway 9-7-1667.

23 CSPD 256 11-7-1667; CLRO Rep 72 f133 19-7-1667, f139b 26-7-1667 and f146 2-8-1667.

24 CSPD 259 and 266 Silas Taylor to Williamson 12-7-1667 and 14-7-1667; Van der Moer, 'Een nabranden van de tocht naar Chatham', 566-578.

### The war in the West Indies

In other parts of the world the war continued however. In December 1666 the Admiralty of Zeeland sent commander Abraham Crijnssen to the West Indies with seven ships. Pieter de Huybert, pensionary of Zeeland, had decided to organise this expedition because he believed significant damage to the English could be done and high profits be made. Zeeland's rivalry with Holland caused the States of Zeeland to set out their own squadron. The States of Holland had shown very little interest in the Zeeland proposal and so they decided to take the initiative themselves. On the twenty-fifth of February 1667 Crijnssen arrived at the Surinam coast outside the fort of Paramaribo with about 1,000 men. The colony was taken after a hard fight. Governor Byam had even armed the black slaves in order to defend Surinam. The Dutch force was too strong, and Byam had to surrender. Crijnssen confiscated all goods and ships that belonged to the Royal Adventurers trading into Africa. The company had sold slaves to the West Indian colonies and had now suffered yet another blow.<sup>25</sup>

In October Surinam was recaptured by an English expedition force under William Willoughby, brother of the late governor of Jamaica, and Sir John Hartman. The conquests had taken place long after the conclusion of the Peace of Breda, however. Charles therefore ordered Willoughby to restore Surinam once again and to give the Dutch all their goods back.<sup>26</sup> The colony remained in Dutch hands.

Crijnssen continued his journey northwards to the colonies at the American east coast. In July he carried out a raid on Virginia. Five of his ships sailed up the James River and burned the naval vessel *Elizabeth*. Eighteen English merchantmen were captured, sinking some of them because Crijnssen could not spare men to operate them. There had been hardly any resistance against his attack and the damage to Virginia had been considerable.<sup>27</sup> New Amsterdam was not attacked because Crijnssen aimed for prizes rather than territory. The number of captured merchantmen made further actions almost impossible and so he returned to the Dutch Republic. The colony of New Amsterdam remained in English hands.

In August some 1,200 English troops, officially employed by the king, attempted to recapture the island of St Christopher. Their efforts were to no avail. Yet according to the Anglo-French peace treaty the English half would be restored anyway. The last naval clash took place when Sir John Hartman attacked a French convoy near Nevis. He destroyed some twenty ships. After negotiations the English received Antigua and Montserrat back as well. Arcadia would remain French.<sup>28</sup>

25 Bodl Rawlinson MS A175 f342-353 Byam's journal of Guyana; CSPC 448-449 6-3-1667; PRO SP 103/47 6-3-1667; Warnsinck, *Abraham Crijnssen*, 3-40.

26 CSPC 487-488, 584-585 Charles to William Willoughby 18-7-1668.

27 CSPC 475 Thomas Ludwell, secretary of the Council of Virginia, to John Berkeley 4-7-1667.

28 CSPV 181 Giustinian to the Doge 30-8-1667; CSPV 188-189 Caterin Belegno, Venetian representative in Madrid, to the Doge 19-10-1667; BL ADD MS 61913 31-7-1667 Anglo-French peace treaty.

### The peace treaty of Breda

In March St Albans and Van Beuningen had met in Paris and had begun unofficial preliminary talks. They carefully explored the demands of both parties and discussed the conditions of the upcoming peace conference. During their conversations it had soon become clear that the issue of Run would not easily be solved as both sides continued to claim the island. The East India Company had taken great interest in this discussion because the directors felt that the Dutch reconquest had not been fair.<sup>29</sup> It had appeared that the official discussions, starting late May and taking place in the Great Hall of Breda Castle, would be very difficult as some of the same issues that would be on the agenda had not been resolved during the 1662 negotiations. Yet St Albans had already suggested to Clarendon that the island should be given up in order to achieve peace.<sup>30</sup> The conference was attended by the Dutch Republic, England, France, Denmark and Sweden. The talks were bilateral and resulted in separate peace agreements between the different belligerent powers.

The States General, advised by De Witt, decided to send van Hieronymus van Beverningk from Holland, Pieter De Huybert from Zeeland and Allard Jongestall from Friesland as their representatives to the conference at Breda Castle. They were instructed that no goods and prizes that had been taken during the war should be restored. This principle of *uti possidetis* was vital in the guidelines they received. The gentlemen were to avoid all discussions about this issue. They should arrange the general and free exchange of prisoners. Only the costs of maintenance would be paid for.<sup>31</sup> Obviously De Witt would keep a close eye on the negotiations and advise on all main issues. He hoped that the Navigation Law could be abandoned or at least weakened.

De Witt told the delegates to act resolutely and not to give in to any demands they thought unreasonable. The gentlemen were determined to conclude a profitable deal and were not at all indulgent towards their English colleagues. Pepys noted in his diary on the tenth of June that 'Sir H. Cholmly (...) tells me that he is told by secretary Morris that he believes we are, and shall be, only fooled by the French; and that the Dutch are very high and insolent, and do look upon us as come over only to beg a peace; which troubles me very much, and I do fear it is true.' The attitude of the Dutch delegation may have been caused by the distrust they had for intentions of the English. A number of members of the English embassy travelled to various places in the Dutch Republic trying to gather useful information about Dutch naval activity. Pierre du Moulin, for example, wrote to Arlington that 'what their (the Dutch) intention is now, is kept here very secret only 'tis confidently re-

29 Brown, *Letters*, 58-61 De Lionne to D'Estrades 4-3-1667; Sainsbury, *Calendar*, 301 Henry Muddiman to Sir David Stradling 26-3-1667.

30 CSP Clar 589-590 St Albans to Clarendon 23-3-1667.

31 NA SG 8535 Instructions of the Dutch delegates; NA SG 3913 Secrete Notulen, Instructions 18-4-1667; Rowen, *John de Witt*, 626-627.

ported that 20 merchant ships have been hired to follow ye fleet and carry both provisions and men, who they say are ready in ye Mase.<sup>32</sup>

The English diplomats Sir Henry Coventry and Denzil Hollis were instructed by Arlington and Clifford to drive a wedge between France and the Republic. Playing divide and conquer would produce a more advantageous treaty. Parliament was not due to meet until October and constitutionally had no right to deal with foreign policies, including peace treaties, but the state of royal finances required a favourable session and an advantageous peace must be secured. During the initial stages of the Breda negotiations English diplomatic tactics were based on the assumption that nothing was likely to happen at sea to alter the balance of advantage in the war. The negotiators were told to bring in as many of the old disputed points as possible and to represent the interests of the East India Company. This would complicate matters as the merchants were permitted to send representatives to Breda who would be allowed to advise Coventry and Hollis. The EIC delegates would not participate in the actual negotiations but remained behind the scenes. This way the king hoped to oblige the important company. Robert Thomson and Thomas Papillon were instructed by the company's directors to obtain Run. They were told to convince both ambassadors to do their utmost best for commercial interests.<sup>33</sup>

The English embassy demanded restitution of Run and compensation for the vessels *Bonne Esperanza* and *Henry Bonadventure*. The Dutch refused to give in on these points. Meanwhile Courtin and D'Estrades, the French delegates, tried to persuade Van Beverningk and his colleagues that the 1662 agreement should serve as the basis for the treaty and that a quick peace should be concluded. Louis wanted to focus on his own project in the Spanish Netherlands instead of the war against England. To the Dutch it seemed the French provided no assistance in the negotiations. De Witt, informed by Van Beverningk, interpreted this attitude as betrayal leaving the Dutch to defend their own position and interests. He would rather continue the war without French help than be forced to give in. The situation seemed to have reached a deadlock as the English representatives held on to their demands and delayed negotiations. He had however, a strong naval argument available to solve the awkward dilemma. The fleet was at sea and ready to deal the decisive blow. On the twenty-fourth of June the news of the Raid on the Medway arrived in The Hague and Breda.

The attack had turned the odds completely and the English diplomats withdrew from the negotiations in order to consult with London. They could not continue the discussions without new instructions from London. De Lionne judged that the English did not have a leg to stand on and would have to make concessions. In Paris St Albans suggested that the compensation for both ships would have to be given

32 Pierre du Moulin to Arlington 11-6-1667 (?), [http://www.deruyter.org/CHATHAM\\_early\\_June\\_1667.html](http://www.deruyter.org/CHATHAM_early_June_1667.html).

33 CSP Clar 595 Clarendon to St Albans 4-4-1667, 606-607 Instructions; Sainsbury, *Calendar*, 298-300 23-3-1667, 305 1-4-1667, 314-315 28-4-1667, 319-322 Instructions, 336-337 The EIC to Thomson and Papillon 10-6-1667.

up. This would be realistic and the East India Company told its representatives to return home as it would be impossible to obtain any point.<sup>34</sup> Whitehall informed its embassy that peace had to be concluded swiftly. The English were in no position to continue the war or even to prolong it. The Dutch fleet still patrolled the Channel and was ready to undertake another offensive against English forts, towns and shipping. On the tenth of July the draft treaty was completed and Coventry went to London for ratification. Charles was particularly alarmed by two of the clauses. The lenient interpretation of the Navigation Act, allowing Dutch merchants to ship German goods to England, was a serious blow. English refugees, opponents of the king's regime, in the Seven Provinces would not be prosecuted or extradited.<sup>35</sup> Yet, he had to swallow his pride and anger and give in. The political and financial situation did not allow any further delays. He authorised Coventry to conclude the treaty. On the thirty-first Coventry returned in Breda and the peace agreement was signed. The publication and proclamation took place on the twenty-fourth of August.<sup>36</sup> There were many celebrations in the Republic as the public felt that an honourable peace had been achieved.

The agreement was very favourable to the Dutch Republic. De Witt and his colleagues had got it their way on many points. No compensation would be paid for any sustained losses and no prizes or goods would be restored. The Dutch delegation had aimed for this. Run and Surinam remained in Dutch hands. Obviously this was good news for the VOC and the WIC. New Amsterdam was kept by the English, however. The West Indische Compagnie had asked the States General for restoration of the New Netherlands, but it was sacrificed for the other two territories that were deemed more important. The principle of *uti possidetis*, a common feature of seventeenth century negotiations, had been the guiding line to the Dutch delegates at Breda and so they had not wanted to return the conquered colonies. Yet to the English this was an important advantage since the loophole in English monopoly on the North American trade was now closed permanently, although Dutch traders continued trading illegally with the colony. The Staple Act, intended to facilitate English shipping to and trade with its American colonies, could now finally be enforced effectively and the much desired colonial staplemarket created.<sup>37</sup>

The flag salute would be respected. All Dutch ships had to lower their colours when they met an English men of war. The much detested procedure was obviously not compatible with the principle of *mare liberum*. Dutch had demanded recognition of this right to freely sail the seas. Yet without French support it proved to be impossible to have the tradition removed. The French would not back up the

34 Brown, *Letters*, 273-276 De Lionne to D'Estrades 6-7-1667; CSP Clar 617 St Albans to Clarendon 1-7-1667; Sainsbury, *Calendar*, 349-350 The EIC to Thomson and Papillon 15-7-1667.

35 Pepys, *Diary*, 18-7-1667.

36 CSPV 174-175 and 176-177 Giustinian to the Doge 26-7-1667 and 2-8-1667; CSPD 328 Joseph Carlisle to Williamson 5-8-1667; Bodl Carte MS 81 f218 24-8-1667.

37 Den Heijer, *Geschiedenis*, 88; Ormrod, *Commercial empires*, 40 and 310-311.

Dutch delegation and so the point had to be surrendered to the English. Although this was not in the official text, the Navigation Act was relaxed too and interpreted with more flexibility. Germany would be recognised as natural hinterland of the Republic. Dutch ships were allowed to transport German commodities to England without violating the Navigation Act. These products would be treated as if they were Dutch. De Witt had hoped for the whole protectionist legislation to be removed. Clearly this was unacceptable to the English government and the mercantile community. The German concession was all that could be achieved.<sup>38</sup>

No letters of reprisal and marque were to be issued without proper juridical process. This would prevent random privateering and maritime disputes that could harm relations. Foreign privateers would no longer be allowed to sell their Dutch and English prizes and goods in each others ports. This would make sure no maritime friction would develop again as had happened over Portuguese and Swedish privateering during the 1650s and early 1660s. Many English ships had been employed in the privateering business. Their captains had received foreign licences and had used them to capture many Dutch merchantmen. This resulted in much friction in the Seven Provinces.

It would take some time for the news of the peace agreement to spread. After publication all hostilities in Western Europe would cease. This meant that no privateering in the North Sea was allowed after the fifth of September. The Channel to Cape St Vincent would be fair hunting ground until the fifth of October. The first of November was the deadline for the Mediterranean and the Atlantic up to the Equator. The rest of the world would use the twenty-fourth of April 1668 as final day. This arrangement gave opportunity to privateers to continue their practises and make as much profit as possible.<sup>39</sup> Obviously it caused confusion and abuse as well. On the twenty-ninth of September the *Waekende Craen* was brought up to Dover. This time however, the privateer was prosecuted and the vessel was released. The *Postilion* went through the same procedure.<sup>40</sup>

Many prisoners were still locked up and were waiting to be released and exchanged. In January the Admiralty of Zeeland proposed official exchange rates. A captain would be worth ten ordinary sailors. A lieutenant or clergyman was four and a master would be three. All boys up to fourteen years old would be released. In July there were still many prisoners detained though. The States General had ordered their representatives to agree on an arrangement for this issue. This did not happen and in October Johan Meerman, commissioner from Holland in charge of the exchange program, was still busy with the subject. He proposed to Charles that all prisoners would be released immediately without financial compensation. The ad-

38 Ormrod, *Commercial empires*, 38.

39 NA SG 57681 LWIC, The WIC to the States General 25-3-1667; Browning, *English historical documents*, 879-880 Peace treaty of Breda 31-7-1667; BL ADD MS 61913 31-7-1667; BL ADD MS 18738 f130; CSPD 338 John Lysle to Williamson 8-8-1667.

40 NA SG 5907II LE, 9-9-1667 and 11-9-1667; PRO PC 2/59 f569-570 21-9-1667.

miralties refused to pay for the costs of the many Dutch prisoners and there was discussion over the quality of the care that had been provided. The admiralty of Zeeland even threatened to employ all their prisoners on VOC ships and send them to Asia. Charles seemed reluctant to give in and so Meerman wrote to De Witt telling him that all English prisoners should be relieved of any money or possessions they had left. Finally in December the problem was solved and the sailors returned home without their belongings or money. They had suffered many months extra in captivity because of the financial dispute.<sup>41</sup>

### The Dutch Republic at the end of the Second Anglo-Dutch War

The Peace Treaty of Breda was certainly favourable and honourable to the Dutch Republic. Most of the old disputes that had not been solved in 1662 were now settled in favour of the Dutch. The VOC had maintained its rights in the Indonesian archipelago and would not have to pay any compensation. The WIC had lost New Amsterdam but had gained the potentially rich colony of Surinam. English settlers had built plantations producing sugar. The WIC hoped it could profit from shipping and selling this lucrative commodity. The Act of Navigation had been relaxed and so Dutch ships were now allowed to transport German goods to England. These conditions finished off the discussions, some of which had plagued Anglo-Dutch relations for decades. It seemed that both sides had now agreed on the mercantilist issues. Obviously the two notorious ships became matter of discussion again at several occasions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but that was the exception to the rule.

There were other advantages beside these commercial gains though. The sovereignty and territorial integrity of the young Republic had been seriously challenged. The peace treaty reconfirmed the status of the Republic as a strong, independent participant in the arena of international politics. John de Witt had been the pivot in the Dutch war effort. The victory at Chatham greatly contributed to his status and position. It was his finest hour. The war had also demonstrated that Dutch *raison d'état* could be defended with naval means. However in the highly competitive atmosphere the Raid on the Medway and the peace agreement meant only temporary security. There were already new and very serious challenges to deal with. Maintaining the territorial integrity of the Spanish Netherlands was another guideline of Dutch foreign policy; the States General now at least had the opportunity to concentrate on this peril.

The outcome of the war increased De Witt's influence and improved his domestic position towards the supporters of William III as well. It allowed the fac-

<sup>41</sup> PRO PC 6/1 f204 26-1-1667; PRO PC 2/59 f492 21-7-1667; NA SG 8534 Verbaal Breda, 31-5-1667 Dutch delegates to the States General; NA SG 5907II LE, Meerman and Boreel to the States General 9-12-1667, Downing to Charles 18-12-1667; Scheurleer, *Brieven*, IV 498-507 and 508-510 Meerman to De Witt 28-10-1667.

tions in power to resist certain demands. The situation was complicated however, by the French invasion of the Spanish Netherlands. The war against Münster and this French invasion demonstrated the weakness of the impossibility to maintain a strong army and navy simultaneously. The French invasion did also have internal political repercussions, giving the opposition the opportunity to propose the appointment of William to be supreme commander of the army. The proposal by Zeeland and Friesland also gained public support in other provinces. De Witt reacted by introducing a number of resolutions in the States of Holland. John Maurice of Nassau-Siegen, a relative of the Prince, would become field marshal of the army. The Prince himself was invited to join the Council of State in order to gain more political experience and knowledge of military matters. But the Perpetual Edict, introduced by Gillis Valckenier and Caspar Fagel, meant the abolition of the office of stadholder in the province of Holland. It also stipulated that the States of Holland would never again allow the commander of the army or the navy to also be the stadholder of any other province. The military and political leadership would be separated permanently. Valckenier, one of the mayors of Amsterdam, and Fagel, Pensionary of the city of Haarlem, hoped to pose as proper republicans and supporters of De Witt and his regime, yet they also secured their future interests with the Prince. They had saved William's military chances. By providing the Prince with military and political training, the States of Holland committed themselves to appointing him in an important function or command in the future.<sup>42</sup> Although the public saw the edict as a major check, disappointing the Orangists, historians have been divided on its effects. Robert Fruin believed the act to be a concealed defeat for what he called the States Party. The Prince had been given an inch and would soon be taking a mile. Pieter Geyl saw it as a compromise that left room for future negotiations with the House of Orange.<sup>43</sup> Certainly De Witt did not try to exploit his tactical success, for in the longer run the Prince's ambitions could not be ignored indefinitely. De Witt understood this and had opposed the Edict.

### England at the end of the Second Anglo-Dutch War

To England the peace treaty had been a necessity. The plague, the Great Fire and the naval confrontations had caused a major depression in trade bringing an abrupt end to a short period of economic growth. The newly established Royal Adventurers trading into Africa and the Fishing Company both went bankrupt. The East India Company had lost the struggle for the Indonesian archipelago and its precious spices. The Merchant Adventurers had not been able to do any trade for a couple of years. Altogether the war had been disastrous for English com-

42 Rowen, *John de Witt, 676-682*; Groenveld, *Evidente factiën*, 50-51.

43 Geyl, *Orange and Stuart*, 269-272; Geyl, 'Wording van het Eeuwig Edict'; Fruin, 'Prins Willem III in zijn verhouding tot Engeland', 9-11.

merce. Its outbreak had been received with enthusiasm. In three years time the conflict had grown very unpopular. Public sentiment in England had altered completely.

Courtiers and politicians saw their investments perish. Individual traders and companies had lost ships and possessions, and their activities had come to a practical standstill towards the end of the war. Consequently the mercantilist debate altered its tone. A direct military confrontation was clearly not the way to defeat Dutch primacy in world trade. Outside Europe the Dutch were usually stronger and well able to take advantage of any conflict. European trade did not automatically flow to England as many mercantilists had hoped. The complete failure of the aggressive approach was very clear for all to see.

In practical terms this meant that many groups and individuals in the City no longer supported their former political allies at court. The large coalition that had supported the war now fell apart. Many traders and companies doubted whether their commercial interests were compatible with the king's policies. Politicians believed these issues to be less opportune. They now focussed on their own and the king's position. The factions at court carefully distanced themselves from the political failure and their former City-based allies. Parliament would want to confront the king and his ministers. Towards the end of the war many courtiers and politicians like Arlington, Clifford and Coventry were already preparing for this moment. Their careers were at risk and only careful positioning and manoeuvring could protect these. The groups around these and other courtiers continued to function as factions, yet they did not all share the same political agenda. Their cooperation had been based on pragmatism and opportunism. Most major politicians still preferred their own approach.

For the moment anti-Dutch mercantilist interests disappeared as a political issue. Instead economic competition with France became more and more prominent. In more theoretical terms this meant that government support of maritime trade needed to be re-evaluated and discussed for the future. There were still debates about whether government should support free trade or regulated companies. The nature and extent of economic encouragement remained another question that needed answering.

The factions and persons who had favoured the war had not reaped the rewards they had hoped for. Many naval officers had died and others had received less prize money than they had anticipated. Mercantilist merchants had witnessed the destruction of English commerce. Often they had sustained considerable financial losses themselves during and because of the war. The king and the politicians at court did not profit from any gains either. Charles had had to borrow huge sums from the EIC, the City of London and individual bankers to continue the war effort. His financial position was weaker than ever. Some £5,25 million had been spent and £2,5 million of that sum had to be paid back. Prizes had not brought the rewards that had been expected. The number of captures was disappointing and Dutch privateers had done remarkably well. Only some 450 vessels had been tak-

en and condemned, compared to 1500 during the First Anglo-Dutch War. This contributed considerably to the economic depression.<sup>44</sup>

The political damage was also considerable. Facing Parliament during the next session would not be a pleasant experience for Charles. His popularity and reputation had decreased significantly. His ministers were less capable of manipulating and steering the Commons. More and more they and their ambitions were distrusted by MP's and common people. Opposition against the king's policies had grown. Country MP's and factions introduced their own plans and even threatened to oppose the monarch.<sup>45</sup> Others had always supported the war but now distanced themselves from this failure. It was therefore a severe crisis in Charles's kingship. He had lost power and influence to Parliament and this would complicate his government in the years after. The courtiers who had supported the war gained nothing. Falmouth had been killed during the Battle of Lowestoft. James had won that battle but had then been relieved of his command. Clifford had failed in his diplomatic missions in Scandinavia and won little. Arlington's foreign politics had failed completely. Altogether the war had been a complete failure and there were yet consequences to be faced and debts to be paid.<sup>46</sup>

In May Southampton had died. His function of Lord Treasurer was reorganised and would from now on be done by a commission. Albemarle, Ashley, Clifford, Coventry, Sir John Duncombe and Downing were ordered to reorganise the royal revenue. Southampton had failed at the job and this had had some disastrous consequences during the war. The treasurer of the Navy Board, Sir George Carteret, stepped down and was succeeded by the Earl of Anglesey.<sup>47</sup> It seemed many people of the older generation would have to pay for the failure of the war, Clarendon above all.

In July a short session of Parliament had been scheduled so that the Commons could vote supply if the war continued. But news that the treaty had just been signed allowed Charles to prorogue it until October. This put a temporary stop to the allegations that money voted for strengthening of coastal defences had been diverted to create a standing army.<sup>48</sup> Robert Bowyers wrote to Robert Southwell that 'great matters [are] expected when the parliament sits, much wrong hath been done, God Almighty find out the author and bring them to condign punishment.' He also wrote that the public knew very well who was responsible: the Earl of Clarendon. Clarendon had never been popular and now the crowd screamed for blood.<sup>49</sup> One pamphlet stated that 'From Dunkirk House there lately ran away, a traitor, whom

44 Rommelse, 'English privateering', 27-29.

45 Jones, *Charles II*, 71-72; Keeble, *Restoration*, 164-168.

46 BL ADD MS 40839 f73b-76 James to the Committee for the reducing his Majesties expence 30-8-1667; CSPD 268 15-7-1667, 357 Coventry to Pepys 13-8-1667; Chandaman, *English public revenue*, 207-211.

47 Keeble, *Restoration*, 104-105; CSPD 348, July 1667.

48 Jones, *Charles II*, 74.

49 Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Egmont*, 17-18 Robert Bowyers to Robert Southwell 19-7-1667.

you are desired to stay. (...) Be kept throughout the land, that all may know, treason still works the traytors overthrow.’<sup>50</sup> Charles realised that the crisis could engulf himself and the monarchy, but Clarendon provided him with the obvious scapegoat.

Authors stirred up more sentiments of anger towards the Lord Chancellor. Catholics were also natural scapegoats for all that had gone wrong. Many people believed some popish plot had caused the embarrassment of the Raid on the Medway. Others criticised Charles for negligence in the hour of need. The king knew certain measures and sacrifices were almost unavoidable for his own survival and kingship. Many politicians and courtiers conveniently forgot about their responsibility in the causing of the war and were all too happy with Clarendon’s role.

Clarendon did no longer attend the sessions of the Privy Council after his wife died in August. James then visited him at home and told him that Charles wanted him to resign as Lord Chancellor. Clarendon refused and next day he and James discussed the matter with the king at court. He finally gave in and handed over the seals of office. Later Charles wrote to Ormond telling him the reason of the dismissal: ‘the truth is, his [Clarendon’s] behaviour and humour was grown so insupportable to myself, and to all the world also, that I could not longer endure it, and it was impossible for me to live with it and do those things with the Parliament that must be done or the government will be lost.’ In December he informed Henrietta Anne that ‘there can be nothing advanced in the Parliament for my advantage till this matter of my Lord Clarendon be over, but after that I shall be able to take my measures so with them, as you will see the good effects of it.’<sup>51</sup>

Charles had to sacrifice his old servant because he was so unpopular with the public and he had so many enemies at court and in Parliament. The conservative lawyer had alienated many prominent politicians and courtiers who now pressed for his dismissal. Many of them were jealous of his political influence and eagerly supported the political elimination. Many younger MP’s felt he obstructed their way to political power and financial gain. He had become obsolete for Charles’s policies and was a liability. His personality and his actions caused political damage to the regime. The king required an united Privy Council and Royalist party in Parliament to face the governmental crisis. Clarendon’s presence jeopardised these political necessities. His dismissal allowed new stars to take their place at the political firmament. Charles hoped to continue juggling factions and individuals in order to re-shape politics and save his position.<sup>52</sup>

Clarendon unwisely did not accept that once dismissed as Chancellor in August he should withdraw entirely from public life. By indicating that he expected to attend in the Lords, presumably to defend his policies but not the war itself of which he had disapproved, he provoked ferocious attacks from the factions led by Coven-

<sup>50</sup> *A hue and cry after the Earl of Clarendon* (London 1667).

<sup>51</sup> Bryant, *Letters*, 204-205 Charles to Ormond 25-9-1667, 205 Charles to Henrietta Anne 10-12-1667.

<sup>52</sup> Hutton, *Restoration*, 275-278; Gilbert Burnet, *History*, 94; Evelyn, *Diary*, 6-9-1667.

try and Buckingham, both of whom had every reason to wish to silence him. The House of Commons then tried to impeach the Lord Chancellor. Charles agreed with the impeachment in order to silence his quarrelling servants and to soothe Parliament. Buckingham and Bristol, Clarendon's old enemies, drafted the articles of accusation of treason. Clarendon was said to have accepted bribes and had committed injustice. He was even said to have caused the division of the fleet in 1666. The committee, however, concluded that these claims did not lead up to treason. He was then charged with the betraying of state secrets to France. The House of Lords refused to accept the accusations causing a deadlock which was finally ended when Clarendon accepted exile and retreated to France. Charles had threatened to have him tried and condemned to death.<sup>53</sup> He finally give in to the pressure.

Clarendon had always denied all allegations and stated that 'the great misfortunes of the kingdom have proceeded from the war, to which it is notoriously known that I was always most averse, and may vanity say I did not only foresee but did declare the mischiefs we should run into by entering into a war before any alliances made with neighbour princes.'<sup>54</sup> He had indeed always opposed the war and now ironically enough he became the main political victim. He had advised against the confrontation and now he served as a scapegoat in order to allow political and social reconstruction.

Another main interest of Parliament was the mismanagement of the war. The financial and political state demanded a thorough investigation and MP's, Royalists and former Republicans alike, were determined to show their dissatisfaction with the way government had handled matters. A large number of issues had to be discussed by the Commons Committee on Miscarriages. At the Battle of Lowestoft the pursuit had been aborted, preventing an even larger victory. Sailors had been paid with tickets rather than money. Many of them had still not been paid in 1668. The attack on the VOC fleet at Bergen had failed. The two VOC prizes had been looted. In 1666 the fleet had been divided because of bad intelligence causing the defeat in the Four Days Battle. The fleet had been laid up in 1667 allowing the Dutch to strike at Chatham. And finally, provisions and ammunition had not been supplied in time and in correct quantities. The individuals who were responsible started accusing and blaming each other and so the king's party in Parliament swiftly disintegrated.<sup>55</sup>

They all tried to free themselves of all responsibility and guilt. They would have preferred not to discuss the issue at all. The Second Anglo-Dutch War had been a major fiasco in English politics. The king's regime and many others surely felt the effects of failure. They now hoped to leave it behind them as soon as possible but Parliament did not easily forget.

53 Hutton, *Restoration*, 283-284; Keeble, *Restoration*, 105-107; BL ADD MS 35865 f9.

54 Browning, *English historical documents*, 194-197 the Earl of Clarendon's apology.

55 Hutton, *Restoration*, 282; Rodger, *Command of the ocean*, 77; Bodl Rawlinson MS A 195 f6 Miscarriages during the war before the commission.

