

Base building by invitation

The Origins of American military bases in the
Netherlands 1945-1960.

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1. Introduction

In 2015, Politico reported on its website that the United States had about 800 military bases in 70 different countries.¹ They ranged from large complexes that stored military vehicles, airbases, logistic stations to small military listening posts. While the full extent of the American Empire of bases is impossible to fully examine for an outsider, the parts of the American Empire of bases that are public show that the United States has military interests all over the globe. Most bases are in either Western Europe or Asia. But just how were these bases established and why would states want other stronger states to establish a military presence within their borders? Geir Lundestad argued that the American presence in Western Europe was as much the result of a changed post war situation as an invitation by the European states to strengthen their ties with the United States and to create a stronger front against the Soviet Union.² The title of this thesis is derived from the title of his article because the American presence in the Netherlands was one that was also based on invitation from the Dutch government.

The Second World War was a watershed that changed the global order. European powers were no longer the dominant forces in the world. The world instead was divided between two new superpowers: the United States and the Soviet Union. Both powers had ideologies and goals that conflicted with each other. Europe became an important stage in the conflict between these two super powers. The Cold War was a conflict that was fought both militarily, although indirect through proxy wars, economically and ideologically. This thesis will examine an important aspect of the Cold War, i.e. the establishment of military bases in Western Europe by the United States. The Netherlands had since the end of the Napoleonic Wars always taken a position of neutrality. The country had been spared the horrors of the First World War thanks to its position of armed neutrality. At the beginning of the Second World War, the Netherlands once again declared that they would remain neutral in the conflict. However, this position of neutrality changed when on 10 May 1940 Germany invaded the Netherlands. On the 5 May 1945, the Netherlands was liberated by the Allied powers from German occupation. The Netherlands was faced with a new global order, it had to adapt to this order to survive. For the first time in more than a hundred years, the Netherlands did not return to a position of neutrality. To the contrary, the country actively participated in a large transnational defense network that would eventually become NATO and allow foreign militaries to establish overseas bases on their territory.³ The goal of this thesis is to examine base politics in the Netherlands of both the United States and the Netherlands itself.

¹ David Vine, "Where in the World Is the U.S. Military?," *POLITICO Magazine*, accessed June 15, 2017, <http://politi.co/1Px622J>.

² Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe 1945-1952," *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no. 3 (1986): 263–77.

³ Appendix 1 has an overview of all the American bases in the Netherlands.

With the establishment of American bases came base politics. Base politics is the interaction, bargaining and military cooperation between the basing state and the host nation. This thesis focuses on base politics. Base politics is a vague concept as it can refer to both the social developments that arise from overseas bases, such as conflicts between municipalities and bases established in there, and the politics of basing, how bases are established and how it influences the relationship between the host state and the basing state. This thesis focuses on the latter and examines how bases politics worked in the Netherlands after the Second World War. The thesis is a case study about base politics in the Netherlands in the Early Cold War. The period examined is 1945-1960. This periodization was chosen because it marks both the start of the process that led to American bases in the Netherlands, the end of the Second World War, and because it ends just before a major shift in American base politics, with the rise of a more anti-American sentiment because of the Vietnam War and changed political dynamics in the Netherland.

While there has already been done a lot of research into military bases, most of the recent research focusses on the role of American military bases after the Cold War. The aim of this thesis is to explore the origins of American bases in Western Europe during the early Cold War. It will examine the Netherlands specifically, because the current state of research regarding American military bases in the Netherlands is limited. The central question in this thesis is why did the United States establish overseas bases in the Netherlands between 1945 and 1960 and why did the Government of the Netherlands agree with this. The sub questions that will be explored in each of the chapters are as follows; the second chapter will answer the question why would states build overseas bases. The third chapter, what was the American basing policy up to 1945? The fourth chapter, why did the Truman administration establish military bases in Europe? The fifth chapter, how did Eisenhower's New Look shape military bases in Western Europe? The sixth chapter, what was the larger European context that shaped Dutch policy to invite the United States to establish military bases in the Netherlands? The seventh chapter, what was the larger European context that shaped Dutch policy to invite the United States to establish military bases in the Netherlands? To explore the research questions, theory, secondary literature, and primary sources will be used. Both the Truman and Eisenhower administrations will be examined. The Dutch side of the thesis will built on sources from the Dutch National Archives, mainly the Willem Drees Collection and the European Defense Community Collection.

Existing literature

While the literature on American bases is extensive, the literature that was selected for the thesis was done based on the impact the literature has had and how relevant it is to the Early Cold War and the Netherlands. Probably the most up to date and important book on American bases in Western Europe during the Cold War is *United States military forces and installations in Europe* by Simon Duke.

While the book was written in the 1989 it is the only book that has a complete overview of American bases in Western Europe. Duke examines the military bases in each country and determines why these countries are strategically important to the United States.⁴ Duke also wrote a bundle of essays with other authors who examine the political dimensions of base politics in each of the countries Duke discusses in his other book.⁵ Stacey Pettyjohn's article for the RAND corporation places the history of American bases in a larger historical perspective by examining American military bases from the American Revolution up to the present day.⁶ *Circling the Earth* by Elliot V. Converse examines American basing plans during the Second World War.⁷ James Schnabel's *The Joint Chiefs of Staff* examines the relationship between the different armed services during the first Truman administration.⁸ There are several important theoretical books on base politics and the history of American overseas military bases. While most of these books focus on either the non-western world or on the post-Cold War era, there are three important ones that are relevant to the scope of this thesis. Harkavy's book focusses on the question why states would build overseas bases. He analyzes this from a realist perspective and compares several different historic empires and their basing strategies.⁹ Calder's book builds on Harkavy's work in that it examines not the strategic aspects, but the political aspects. He examines why certain military bases were successful and others were not.¹⁰ The third book, and most recent theory on overseas bases is Michael Allan's dissertation where he develops his own game theory on access diplomacy and tests Calder's theory using quantitative analysis.¹¹ The most recent publication on American bases is *Base Nation* by David Vine. Vine Examines the effects that American bases had on the global system, American diplomacy and the perception of the United States in the hosting states. He comes to the conclusion that American bases have harmed the United States in the long run.¹² Regarding the development of post-Second World War American security policy there is a very active scholarly community who recently published a couple of very interesting books containing different essays on the Truman administration. An important examination of the Early Cold War is *A Preponderance of Power* which examines the power relations from late 1945 and

⁴ Simon W. Duke, *United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 1–5.

⁵ Simon Duke and Wolfgang Krieger, *U.S. Military Forces in Europe: The Early Years, 1945-1970* (Westview Press, 1993), 1–6.

⁶ Stacie L. Pettyjohn, "U.S. Global Defense Posture, 1783–2011," 2012, 3–9.

⁷ Elliott V. Converse, *Circling the Earth: United States Plans for a Postwar Overseas Military Base System, 1942-1948* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2005), 1–8.

⁸ James F. Schnabel, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1945 -1947*, History of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I (Washington, DC, 1996), 1–8.

⁹ Robert E. Harkavy, *Bases Abroad: The Global Foreign Military Presence*, SIPRI Monographs (Oxford: Oxford University Press the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), 1989), 1–8.

¹⁰ Kent E Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 3–10.

¹¹ Michael Anthony Allen, *Military Basing Abroad: Bargaining, Expectations and Deployment*, n.d., 4–15.

¹² David Vine, *Base Nation: How U.S. Military Bases Abroad Harm America and the World*, First Edition edition (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2015), 1–14.

examines why the Truman administration began the Truman doctrine.¹³ The most recent publication is *Origins of the National Security States and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*.¹⁴ Michael Hogan has also written another in depth analysis of the Truman administration in his work *A Cross of Iron*.¹⁵ John Lewis Gaddis examined the strategy behind containing the Soviet Union in his book *Strategies of Containment*.¹⁶ Norman A. Graebner examined Truman's legacy in his book *The National Security*. Graebner is more concerned with the theoretical background of Truman's policy than the previously mentioned books.¹⁷ Sadly on Eisenhower the scholarly works examining his security policy is limited. The most important book is Bowie's *Waging Peace*, which examines Eisenhower's New Look policy.¹⁸ Eisenhower's two-part biography by Ambrose does, however, give some more insight into how Eisenhower's ideas developed and why he made certain policy decisions.¹⁹ On transatlantic relations probably the most important scholar is Geir Lundestad. Lundestad argued in his famous paper about Empire by invitation that the Western European states invited the United States to Europe to establish its empire because the European states benefitted from the security, economic, and institutional benefits this brought. He later developed his thesis into two books. *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, which examines the transatlantic aspect of this relationship and "*Empire*" by *Integration* which examines the role of the United States in the establishment of common political institutions in Europe.²⁰ Lundestad also did a more general examination of the American Empire in his book *The rise and decline of the American Empire*.²¹ Kaplan's *NATO 1948* is probably the most detailed study on the negotiation between the United States and the Western Union Defense Organization on the establishment of NATO.²² *The Rise and Fall of the European Defense Community* is the most detailed study on the military relationship between the United States and the European

¹³ Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford University Press, 1992), 1–3.

¹⁴ Michael Hogan and Mary Ann Heiss, *Origins of the National Security State and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman* (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2015) 1–11.

¹⁵ Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron: Harry S. Truman and the Origins of the National Security State, 1945–1954*, 1 edition (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 3–10.

¹⁶ John Lewis Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of American National Security Policy during the Cold War* (Oxford University Press, 1986).

¹⁷ Norman A. Graebner, *The National Security, Its Theory and Practice 1945–1960*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 3–7.

¹⁸ Robert Richardson Bowie and Richard H. Immerman, *Waging Peace: How Eisenhower Shaped an Enduring Cold War Strategy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1–7.

¹⁹ Stephen Edward Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect: 1890–1952*, vol. 1, Touchstone Book (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), 1–10.

Stephen Edward Ambrose, *Eisenhower: The President*, vol. 2, Touchstone Book (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1985), 1–14.

²⁰ Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945: From "empire" by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1–14.

Geir Lundestad, "*Empire*" by *Integration: The United States and European Integration, 1945–1997* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 1–4.

²¹ Geir Lundestad, *The Rise and Decline of the American "Empire": Power and Its Limits in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 1–7.

²² Lawrence Samuel Kaplan, *NATO 1948: The Birth of the Transatlantic Alliance*, ed. Morris Honick (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 1–3.

states after the formation of NATO during the early Eisenhower administration. While, the book focusses on the European Defense Community treaty, this treaty was one of the foundations, even though it failed, of American military forces in Europe.²³ Sadly when it comes to the Netherlands there is very little literature about the establishment of American bases in the Netherlands. Most of the literature that is available is either more general about the relationship between the United States and the Netherlands or examines other aspects. The most relevant book is Ine Megens' *American Aid to NATO Allies the Dutch Case*. This book is an examination of the military relationship between the United States and the Netherlands during the period this thesis describes. While her focus is not on military bases specifically, it does examine the larger context in which the bases were established.²⁴ Perhaps the person most instrumental in bringing American forces to the Netherlands is prime minister Willem Drees. His 2014 biography contains an important examination of his policy towards the United States and his attempts to create a closer bond between the United States and the Netherlands.²⁵

There are roughly two types of literature in the debate about American overseas military bases. Because American military bases has become an active scholarly field since the attacks of 11 September 2001, there is a sharp divide between the literature written prior to 2001 and the literature written after. The main body of research written on American bases prior to 2001 comes from the late 1980's and early 1990's when archives were opened on military bases during the Early Cold War with a focus on Western Europe. Most of this literature focusses on why the American bases were established and what their strategic goals were. While there was some literature that was critical of American bases abroad, after 2001 a large amount of literature was published on American bases. The differences between the earlier literature was that the focus in newer literature is less on Western Europe and more on the non-western world. The military base at Okinawa for example became a prime focal point of these studies. Also, the negative aspects of military bases were examined in more detail. David Vine's book in particular falls into this category as it examines the negatives effects military bases have on American diplomacy and the perception of the United States in the host countries. Military bases harm America's image abroad, create huge costs for the United States and do not always increase security in the regions they are in. Moreover, bases are not always established without the consent of the host state, for example in Germany and Cuba.²⁶ Chalmers Johnson also comes to similar conclusions about military bases as Vine regarding the negative impact on American diplomacy and the costs to the American people.²⁷ The main debate in the literature has been about the effects of American bases on American diplomacy and how bases were established. The differences in

²³ Kevin Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defense Community, Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defense, 1950-1955* (London: MacMillan, 2000), 1–13.

²⁴ Ine Megens, *American Aid to NATO Allies in the 1950s the Dutch Case* (Groningen, 1994), 1–11.

²⁵ Hans Daalder and Jelle Gaemers, *Premier En Elder Statesman, Willem Drees 1886-1988. De Jaren 1948-1988* (Steenwijk: Balans, 2014), 227–36.

²⁶ Vine, *Base Nation*, 321–38.

²⁷ Chalmers Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire: Militarism, Secrecy, and the End of the Republic*, 1st edition (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2005), 310–29.

the debate between the earlier literature and later literature can be attributed to both the time period that the studies focus on, older studies focused more on the Early Cold War, while later studies focused more on the Late Cold War and the post-Cold War period, and which military bases they examine. Bases in countries that are in the non-western world tend to face more hostility and bases in countries that were former enemies of the United States, like Germany or Japan, are perceived more like occupying garrisons. This thesis aims to contribute to this debate by examining an unusual case study, the Netherlands which actually invited the United States to establish military bases in their territory.

Primary Sources

The sources that were used for this thesis are varied and come from a number of different places. Because of nature of the topic, there is no centralized archive or location where the sources are available. Sources from both the American and Dutch governments were used. Perhaps the most important source is the *Foreign Relations of the United States* series that is a collection of diplomatic correspondence between the American government and embassies. The public and private papers of the presidents Truman and Eisenhower are also used to examine the policies of each of the presidents and create a deeper insight into why certain decisions were taken. The documents from the CIA reading room were used to give insight into the number of military forces in Europe and how the United States perceived the threat from the Soviet Union. While the objectivity of the CIA documents can be called into question on the Soviet threat, because the CIA had reason to motivate the American government to take certain actions, the quantitative reports on American troop numbers can be seen as objective. While these reports were created to be part of policy advisements to the United States government, the numbers in these reports were accurate because were based on data from the department of defense. The final source of American policy documents is the Declassified Database at the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies. This database contains documents that the United States government had declassified. The most important document that was used for this thesis is a report about the development of American overseas bases during the Eisenhower administration by Frank Nash. The NATO online archives were also used, but they contained less content than was expected. On the Dutch side of things, the documents that were used were from the Dutch national archive, the Drees Collection which contains diplomatic correspondence between Drees and other heads of government, the European Defense Community archives which contain documents about European and American defense cooperation, and the Ministerraad archives which contain documents from the various ministers. Most of the sources from the National Archive were either policy memo's or agendas and minutes from various meetings. The final source for the Dutch side was the Parliamentary archive. This digital archive contains all the correspondence between the Dutch parliament and the government and the minutes and reports of the various parliamentary meetings.

Structure

The thesis can be roughly divided into two parts. The first part of the thesis will explore the global political developments that led up to the establishment of American bases in Western Europe. The second part will focus on the Netherlands specifically, and explore how domestic policies in the Netherlands affected the development of American bases, and how domestic politics in the Netherlands were affected by the presence of American bases. It is always difficult to measure how certain policies influence other policies and to this end a short chapter at the beginning of this thesis will explore several theories that will be used as a guide throughout this thesis.

The second chapter of this thesis will examine the different theories that have been used to interpret the sources. While theory is a helpful tool for the interpretation of sources, it might create tunnel vision and a specific focus on only certain aspects of base politics. This chapter will examine using the theory, why states establish overseas military bases. This chapter also aims to clarify how the theory will be used and what theories are relevant for this thesis. The third chapter will focus on the history of American bases leading up to the Second World War. The fourth chapter will focus on American military policy after the Second World War and the demobilization of troops from Western Europe. It will also focus on possible watersheds that led to the creation of a National Security policy of the United States that included American overseas bases in Western Europe. It will examine the origins of the Truman doctrine and how this influenced the development of overseas bases. The most notable watersheds that will be examined are the Berlin Blockade of 1948-1949 and the Korean War. The chapter will examine the shift in policy that led the Truman administration to reinforce existing garrisons in Europe and establish new bases. The fifth chapter will examine the Eisenhower administration and how this new administration created an overseas base policy and related national security policy. The sixth chapter will examine the broader European context of American basing which is important to a better understanding of American bases in the Netherlands. It will have a larger focus on European politics in relation to overseas bases of the United States. The seventh chapter will examine bases in the Netherlands and how they were established. It will specifically examine the negotiation of the status of forces agreement with the Netherlands. It will pay special attention to the relationship between the Netherlands and the United States. The conclusion of this thesis will tie all the chapters together and will summarize and conclude the research question.

2. Base politics

Base politics is an important concept in this thesis. Why do states allow other states to build military outposts in their territory? The chapter will serve as an introduction to base politics and how the relationship between overseas bases and foreign policy has been theorized. It will start by tracing the history of the concept to its origins and examine how the concept has developed. It will then examine the most important theories that have been developed around the concept. The final part of this chapter will examine how the concept is relevant for the central argument of this thesis and how the theories will be used to examine base politics in the Netherlands during the early Cold War. The key focus of this chapter is to examine how theory regarding base politics has developed and how this theory is relevant for the research of the thesis. The central question in this chapter is why would states build overseas bases?

Origins of Base politics

While the concept of base politics was not developed until the 1980's, the origins of the concept can be traced to Kenneth Waltz's neorealism. Neorealism argues that states are primarily concerned with their own survival. Neorealism argues first, that states are the result of humans banding together through in-group cohesion. Second, states are egoistic in nature, because realism assumes that humans are egoistic, they will try to look out for their own self-interest. Third, the international system is anarchic in nature, there is no higher authority than the state. Fourth, as derived from all this, international politics are power politics. States compete for control and resources in an anarchic international system.²⁸ While at first it might seem that this will result in a free for all between states, an interesting aspect of neorealism is that it leaves open the possibility for states to bandwagon. Bandwagoning is the process of a weaker state willingly submitting to a stronger state. At first it might seem that this conflicts with the self-preservation of the weaker state. The weaker state loses some of its power and resources, but in return it can call on the stronger state to help defend them. When it comes to base politics, this might partially explain why certain states willingly allow for stronger states to build military bases on their territory. The weaker state might lose some sovereignty, but in return is protected by the stronger state. While this explanation is interesting, it is very simplistic in nature and does not account for other aspects that might influence the relationship between basing state and host state. Neorealism for example does not account for the fact that the basing state also has to invest resources into the host nation. The fact that a basing nation has interest in deploying garrisons into a host state also exemplifies that the host state has a certain amount of leverage over the basing nation. Another aspect that is ignored is the perception of the basing nation and the host nation. If the basing nation is seen as an oppressive power in the host nation, as was the case in the deployment of

²⁸ William C. Wohlforth, "Realism," in *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations*, ed. Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008) 132-133.

American bases in post-World War II Japan, the relationship influences the politics of both the basing state and the host nation. Chalmers Johnson's book *Blowback* exemplifies this as it analyzes the blowback from the American policy after 2001 in the Middle East, which had the establishment of bases as a primary feature.²⁹

Strategic relevance of overseas bases

One of the first real in-depth studies into base politics was Robert E. Harkavy's *Bases Abroad*. This book examined the effect that bases had on diplomacy. The book was written in the context of the Cold War and examines both the effect the bases had on the relationship between the host state and the basing state but also between the two power blocs. Harkavy examines both the United States and the Soviet-Union. Harkavy examines several kinds of foreign military presence.³⁰ For this thesis only naval facilities, air force facilities and nuclear related facilities, although in the case study of the Netherlands in the examined period nuclear facilities were marginal. Nuclear weapons storages were only established in the Netherlands in 1961. The extend of the stationing of nuclear weapons is not clear as there are no assessable sources regarding the extend of the nuclear weapons. Harkavy mainly examines and theorizes the ways bases function in diplomacy and why the decisions were made to establish a specific base at a specific location. For example, the reasoning for a naval facility in a host nation that shares an inland sea with a competing power of the basing state may be to deter this competing power from extending and projecting their power in the region of the inland sea.

When it comes to naval bases, Harkavy states that these are the most versatile. Naval facilities are diverse because they can be constructed to perform a large variety of tasks, from the stationing and repairing of fleets, deterring hostile powers from attacking the region the base is in, or by proving vital supply lines to support bases or armies further inland. When it comes to the decision to establish an overseas naval base, there are three criteria according to Harkavy. The first is the location of a base. The location of the base is important for its strategic value and the function that the base should perform. Establishing a major base near an important trade route or chokepoint will allow the basing state to project its power in that region. The second criterion is the availability of facilities. Most naval bases are not constructed from scratch and rely on existing infrastructure and facilities of the host state. Good facilities might result in the base being more permanent as they allow for more complex repairs, re-armament and opportunities from navy personnel to relax. Good access to important canals or good sea access is also part of this criteria. The third criterion is the political situation in the host state. Both internal and external factors are relevant. Host states need to ensure that their position is not threatened by the establishment of a naval base. Their relationship with other states in the region

²⁹ Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback: The Costs and Consequences of American Empire*, First Edition edition (New York: Holt Paperbacks, 2004), 12–20.

³⁰ Harkavy, *Bases Abroad*, 17–23.

also affects this decision.³¹ How do naval bases influence diplomacy? Harkavy states that there are two ways in which naval bases can have an effect on diplomacy. The first is presence. Having a presence in a region can deter rivals from expanding their influence in that region. It also shows that the basing state is determined to control the region. By patrolling a region with ships, supported by bases, basing states can declare their intent that the region is under their supervision. The second way naval bases influence diplomacy is through coercive diplomacy. By establishing a naval base in a region that the basing state wants to improve their influence in, the basing state can put pressure on countries in the region to align themselves with the goals of the basing state. The United States used this tactic in the early Cold War to project their influence over India and ensure that they would not support the Soviet-Union.³²

On overseas airbases, Harkavy states that they became increasingly important throughout the early Cold War. The Second World War was the first conflict that had seen large deployments of aircraft in combat roles and non-combat roles. Airpower had been important to the Allies' achieving victory over Japan and Germany and airpower played an important role in the post-Second World War world. Airpower also changed during the course of the Cold War. With specialized aircraft at the start of the Cold War and more versatile aircraft near the end of the Cold War. Because each plane served a specialized role, air forces in Western Europe and the United States during the Second World War deployed aircraft on a large scale and this required large airbases. Air forces during the Cold War became more versatile and because of this, fewer aircraft were necessary.³³ This change is also reflected in airbases. Airbases at the start of the Second World War were relatively large and numerous, depending on the role of the base, compared to later bases. Overseas air bases are established to deploy forward-based tactical aircraft. These aircraft fill a variety of roles, such as the delivery of nuclear weapons or reconnaissance. Harkavy describes several different types of air bases, but most of them evolved out of the changes in air force technology and deployment patterns in the latter half of the Cold War. Four types of bases are interesting because they existed in the early Cold War. These types of bases are not mutually exclusive, as airbases can serve multiple purposes. The first is fighter aircraft bases. These bases deploy squadrons of fighters for either air to air combat or ground support. The second type of base is the bomber base. In the early Cold War, these bases were more important because the range of bombers was limited. Because these bombers could deliver nuclear weapons, the United States has been very secretive about the deployments of nuclear capable bombers. The third type of facility is the transport aircraft base. This base serves as a supply base that supplies other bases and deployments of troops in its region. These bases are primarily useful when supplies need to be transported over long distances. The fourth base is the reconnaissance and communications base. These bases deploy aircraft that can fly at high altitudes to spy on rivals. They

³¹ Ibid., 26–41.

³² Ibid., 59–65.

³³ Ibid., 73–80.

were important in the 1940's and 1950's but in the course of the 1960's and 1970's their role diminished because of advancements in satellite technology.³⁴ How do overseas airbases influence diplomacy? Harkavy states that there are two ways. One is the presence in the region. Just like with naval bases, being present in the region can influence the policy of rivals and other minor powers in the region. While less visible and therefore less intimidating than maintaining naval power in the region, flying aircraft close to a rival's airspace can send a powerful message. Another way in which airbases influence diplomacy lies in the fact that aircraft are more easily deployable than ships. Ships have to navigate around landmasses while aircraft can fly over them. A basing state that wants to deploy air bases in a region only needs to acquire access to the airspace of other states in the flight route. This allows basing states that do not have easy access to a region by sea to gain access to regions that they would not normally have easy access to.³⁵

Chalmers Johnson's *Sorrows of Empire* adds another interesting aspect to military bases, their role in gathering intelligence. While the scope of the book is huge, with a focus on the non-western world and post-Cold War era, Johnson examines the relationship between American militarism and the expansion of military bases across the world. Johnson states that American overseas basing strategy after the Second World War had four main objectives. The first was to project American military power across the globe, the second was to prepare for a possible war, the third was to serve as a guarantee to retaliate in the event of a nuclear attack, the fourth was to function as symbols of American power. Johnson also adds interception of telecommunication as an objective of the American basing strategy.³⁶

Base politics

One of the more recent and comprehensive studies and theories regarding American overseas bases is Kent E. Calder's *Embattled Garrisons*. This book, in contrast to Harkavy's book, examines American bases from a more constructivist perspective. Both the relationship the United States has with the country and the strategic value of the base determine the success of an overseas base. Base politics is the central concept in his theory. Base politics has four defining traits that characterize it. The first is the two level character, the interplay between domestic politics of the host state, basing state and the international agreements between the host state and basing state. The contents of the agreements between the basing state and the host state are often rooted in the domestic politics of the base state. The second is the divergence between the elites of the host state and mass political dimensions. A ruling elite in a country might want a basing state to establish a base in its country, but local communities or large groups of the country's population might disagree. The third are the unique institution features. These are the unique relationships that are established between the overseas bases,

³⁴ Ibid., 80–88.

³⁵ Ibid., 93–101.

³⁶ Johnson, *The Sorrows of Empire*, 168–185.

local governments, NGOs and national governments of the host state. The final trait is the psychological dimension of the host nation. If the basing state has a favorable image in the host state, then overseas bases might be more successful.³⁷ Calder stresses that a better understanding of base politics comes from the analysis of the subnational. Actors on both the national and subnational level shape the eventual outcome of both the signed status of forces agreement and the success and longevity of the base.³⁸ Calder divides groups that can influence national policy of the host state into anti-base actors and pro-base actors. Anti-base actors are either against the base on ideological grounds, nationalistic grounds, they see the overseas base as an intrusion into the states national sovereignty, or pragmatic, actors who feel that they have been put at a disadvantage because of the overseas base. The base pattern, if the overseas bases are established in close proximity to one another or in densely populated areas, influences the strength of the opposition. While most of the time base politics are a matter of the elite, large scale opposition is usually triggered though catalysts. Catalysts can be an incident at the base that affects the surrounding area negatively, or the arrival of nuclear weapons at a base.³⁹ There are also pro-base actors. These actors tend to be politicians in positions of power in the national government, businesspeople who operate internationally, expatriates and occasional citizens with stakes in the establishment of a base.⁴⁰ The local regimes in the host countries are also important. When the basing state is seen as a liberator in the host state, such as in most parts of Western-Europe, resistance to overseas bases will be low. A shared institutional history also influences the perception of the basing state in a positive way. Democracy however, tends to influence the establishment of overseas bases in a negative way. This is dependent on the centralization of power in the democracy. A highly decentralized democracy with power delegated to subnational state actors will offer more resistance to the establishment of overseas bases and there is a higher change of tension during the time the base is present. This tension has implications for the policy of the host state towards the basing state. The national government has to accommodate at least some of the concerns of the local government. A centralized democracy will be less susceptible to influence from subnational levels of government. Tensions between local communities and overseas bases will less likely impact the policy of the national government towards the basing state.⁴¹ Finally, Calder examines the financial aspect of overseas bases. Both the expenses of the basing state in maintaining the base and the costs or benefits of the host state in allowing the base are important. While host states do not pay for the operational costs of the base, host states in Western Europe have to contribute,

³⁷ Kent E Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007) 63-69.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 79-82.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 84-88.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 92-96.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 97-125.

through NATO, to the American presence. This can be financially or through access to facilities or infrastructure.⁴²

The most recent theory regarding base politics is Michael Anthony Allen's examination of bargaining processes regarding base politics. He tries to examine the diplomatic negotiations of access diplomacy through game theory and statistical models.⁴³ Allen's model builds partially on the theory created by Calder and uses his variables to predict outcomes of basing negotiations. While this model is not really useful for historical research, it is interesting to see how he operationalizes his variables to examine the negotiation process. Interestingly, his statistical research finds several statistical relations between variables that Calder also uses in his theory. Western European democracies, according to his model, are more likely to accept overseas bases if they perceive the United States as an ally and there is a huge power disparity between the United States and the host state.⁴⁴

Methodological approach

Why are these theories that are described relevant for this thesis? While most of them focus on the post-Cold War era and some even on the post-9/11 era, they provide meaningful insight into the inner workings of base politics. Each of the theories described provides a different perspective on the development of (American) overseas bases. Harkavy's theory described the geopolitical circumstances that impact the strategic decision to establish a base. Calder examines how national policy of the host state is influenced by domestic politics and actors. Calder also added the aspect of perception of the basing state to the equation by examining how the basing state is perceived in the host state. The research by Allen partially confirmed this through statistical research. Each of these theories provides interesting starting points from which this thesis will investigate why the United States established overseas bases in the Netherlands.

The question remains, how will these theories be used to guide thesis in a limited way? First the theories will serve as a guide to finding interesting sources regarding base politics. Because there has not been a detailed study of American bases in the Netherlands, there remains a large catalogue of sources that have been unexplored. The theory will serve as a guide to these sources. Calder points to actors that are relevant when it comes to policy making regarding bases. Documents created by these actors might provide interesting insights into the process that led to the United States establishing military bases in the Netherlands. The second way in which the theories will be used is by using their explanatory power. While this does carry the risk that the theory will lead the research in a certain direction, thereby ignoring relevant sources or alternative explanations, the explanatory power of Harkavy's theory regarding the geopolitics and function of bases will be used. This is primarily

⁴² Ibid., 206-208.

⁴³ Allen, *Military Basing Abroad: Bargaining, Expectations and Deployment.*, 6-34.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 129.

because this thesis is not interested in the way the bases operate but in how they were established and how they affected domestic politics.

Conclusion

So why do states build overseas bases? According to the theories described above, the most important arguments for building overseas bases are the strategic location of certain areas and the possibility of gaining advantages over rival. Building military overseas bases is not without risk however. Calder's theory describes why certain bases are successful and other are not. There has to be a certain common ground between the basing state and the host state. If goals and interests of both states don't align, then the overseas base will not be established or be very short lived.

3. American base politics prior to 1945

American interest and basing priorities changed over the course of the twentieth century. While America did have overseas bases prior to the Second World War these bases were quite different from the priorities and interests that developed post war. In this chapter the basing policy up to 1945 will be examined. The central question is what was the American basing policy up to 1945.

On December 8 1941, president Franklin Delano Roosevelt of the United States stated in his speech to congress that the previous day would be a day that would live in infamy. On December 7 1941, the Japanese empire attacked the American military base at Pearl Harbor, thus declaring war on the United States in the process. While Roosevelt might not have comprehended on December 8 how big of a watershed the attack on Pearl Harbor would be for American foreign policy, the day that would live in infamy became an important lesson for American policy makers after the Second World War. The attack on Pearl Harbor propelled the United States into a new role. A role that would eventually result in the United States establishing multiple overseas bases in Europe.⁴⁵

Wilson and base politics

Before the implications of the attack on Pearl Harbor can be understood, the American foreign policy and security policy leading up to 1941 needs to be examined. Before the American involvement in the Second World War, the United States had maintained a position of 'isolationism'. This isolationism however, is often misunderstood. The United States did not isolate itself from the world but instead maintained a position of neutrality and non-intervention towards most European wars and politics. The main goal of the United States was to limit European involvement in the western hemisphere as well as to extend their influence over South America. The United States also expanded their influence into the pacific by colonizing islands and establishing military outposts.⁴⁶ The main policy of the United States in the period leading up to the First World War was to prevent entanglement in European politics. This did not mean a position of neutrality as President Theodore Roosevelt continued to expand the influence of the United States in the western hemisphere and Asia, with his primary focus being the defense of the western hemisphere from European influence. Before the start of the First World War, the United States was concerned with possible German involvement in South America. When war erupted in Europe, the United States maintained its position of non-involvement with European politics, while keeping a close eye on the development of the war and Japanese expansion in the pacific, who took advantage of the weakened central powers' holdings and colonies in Asia to

⁴⁵ Douglas Stuart, "Preparing for the Next Pearl Harbor Harry S. Truman's Role in the Creation of the U.S. National Security Establishment," in *Origins of the National Security State and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*, ed. Michael J. Hogan and Mary Ann Heiss (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2015), 17–20.

⁴⁶ George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower. U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 351–63.

expand.⁴⁷ The war on the one hand, strengthened the isolationist tendencies of the United States, on the other hand, policymakers, especially President Wilson, saw the continuing war as a disaster for the world that would eventually have repercussions for the United States. Wilson himself, while cautious towards the United States involving itself in larger global affairs, was also an internationalist who believed in international cooperation between states and organizations. In early 1917, Wilson tried to negotiate a peace settlement between the Entente and the Central Powers, however, on January 31 of that year, Germany announced that it would be pursuing a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare. The United States was forced to respond to this by arming its merchant ships. Eventually, the infamous Zimmerman telegram, in which Germany tried to persuade Mexico to declare war on the United States to keep them occupied, attacks by submarines on American merchant ships and a growing anti-Germany sentiment in the United States forced Wilson to act. When the Entente launched a disastrous summer offensive in 1917, the Russian Revolution broke out in the autumn of the same year, which forced Russia out of the war, it seemed that Germany might win the war.⁴⁸ The addition of American forces made it possible for the Entente to launch an offensive in 1918. During the war, Wilson had already made plans for a new liberal world order. While he was able to realize some of these plans, like the establishment of the League of Nations, Wilson could not ensure that the United States would play a prominent role in them. Instead, the United States continued its pre-war policy of non-involvement with European politics and focused its attention to Asia. This focus on Asia and the Western Hemisphere continued up until the Second World War.⁴⁹

So how did these changes in American politics change the American basing strategy? Starting with the election of Theodore Roosevelt, the United States policy shifted to a naval strategy that would focus on a single area of operations. This meant in order to achieve its goal of a western hemisphere free from European influence, the United States needed to focus on the Atlantic Ocean. Basing in the United States was primarily focused during his presidency on naval facilities on the Atlantic coast. During and after the First World War, the United States established colonies in the Pacific. Most of the islands that were colonized served little purpose other than that they could provide a strategic position in the Pacific region. The bases themselves were mainly for the resupply of the American Navy. Because of the strategy that either focused the American fleet in the Pacific theatre or the Atlantic theatre, most bases were not large hubs of military activity. Most of the bases operated only with a skeleton garrison that would not be sufficient in the event of a large attack by a foreign power but would be sufficient to deter other rival powers in the region, most notably Japan and Russia, that sought to claim the islands.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 378–83.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 398–410.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 410–35.

⁵⁰ Pettyjohn, “U.S. Global Defense Posture, 1783–2011,” 31–38.

Roosevelt and base politics

The election of Franklin Delano Roosevelt brought with it another large shift in American foreign policy. Roosevelt introduced the so called ‘Good Neighbor’ policy that focused on nonintervention and economic cooperation with South America. Isolationism had become an important aspect of Roosevelt’s policy as public opinion in the United States after the First World War had become unfavorable towards the decision of Wilson to intervene in the war in Europe.⁵¹ Certain historians of the Revisionist School during the interwar period argued that the United States had been tricked by the British into joining the war and argued a narrative of an innocent nation that was manipulated into doing the dirty work of others.⁵² While Roosevelt pursued this policy of isolationism, events outside the control of the United States shaped the events that would lead up to the United States. In Asia, Japan continued to expand its control over China and other parts of Asia. In Europe Benito Mussolini became the leader of Italy and Adolf Hitler was elected Chancellor of Germany. While Roosevelt did support a more active role for the United States in the global theatre during the 1930’s, nationalist, isolationist and right-wing extremists influenced the Senate into opposing Roosevelt’s ambition to join the World Court and to play a role in the League of Nations. In 1935, Germany began its rearmament and Italy invaded Ethiopia. These events shook American politics and Roosevelt gambled that by drafting legislation that would ensure the United States would remain neutral, he could control the forces that wanted an extreme form of isolationism. This gamble backfired and instead of flexible legislation that Roosevelt could control, the Senate passed legislation that would impose embargos on loans to states that would declare war. At the same time, Roosevelt needed the support of the isolationists to maintain his New Deal policies. The invasion of Ethiopia brought with it another problem for the United States. Ethiopia had become a symbol for African Americans as a symbol of defiance against western colonialism, as it had never been colonized by western states. Roosevelt was in a difficult position. He wanted to deter Italy from further conquest while on the other hand maintain the appearance of non-interventionism. While Roosevelt was cautious towards Japan, he did not expect the Japanese to declare war on the United States and therefore focused on Germany and Italy instead.⁵³

These politics had an influence on American base deployments. American bases that were given the most resources were those that were strategic to the defense of the western hemisphere from European intervention. Army chief of Staff George Marshall argued that the biggest threat to the United States would be a German invasion of the Western Hemisphere. The State Department argued that attacks from Germany might not only be militarily but also through propaganda, espionage, sabotage and blackmail. While Roosevelt did not believe that the Japanese would declare war on the United States, the United States Navy did reinforce the strategic Pacific base of Pearl Harbor.

⁵¹ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower. U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*, 500–501.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 502–10.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 517–37.

However, because of budgetary reasons, the United States did not reinforce most of its other Pacific bases. Pearl Harbor was the exception. The strategy adopted by the United States had two objectives. The first was to deter the Axis powers from trying to influence countries in the western hemisphere, the second was to prevent Germany from operating its navy effectively in the Atlantic Ocean.⁵⁴

Conclusion

American basing policy and security policy up to 1945 had mostly focused on protecting the Western Hemisphere from European interference. Small military bases had been established in the Pacific but the Atlantic side of the United States had remained vulnerable. Without the ability to create a buffer zone, the United States was vulnerable from possible attack from Europe. The basing pattern reflected this, with the United States focusing on the Pacific militarily by building bases and by trying to remain neutral towards European politics. The pattern of overseas military bases was therefore spread out across the Pacific with a focus on Asia. The Second World War would change this and result in the United States adopting a drastically different military and security policy.

⁵⁴ Pettyjohn, "U.S. Global Defense Posture, 1783–2011," 39–49.

4. The Truman administration and base politics

The Truman presidency is arguably the most important for the establishment of the post war order. While the early administration was characterized by an unclear post war order and the position of the United States in this order, Truman pragmatically created a new role for the United States. The threat of the Soviet Union and communism forced the United States to take an active role in world politics and this launched the country into a position in which it could no longer afford the luxury of isolationism. This chapter will examine the changes that the Truman administration made to its security policy and examine what the American interests were in establishing military bases in Western Europe after the Second World War. The central question in this chapter is why did the Truman administration establish military bases in Europe?

The changed world order

The attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 forced the United States out of its position of neutrality. The United States declared war on Japan and joined the Allies in Europe to stop Germany. The framework of the post war order that would shape security policy in Europe has its origins in the Second World War. The United States itself reformed its approach to the outside world during the war. The United States, Great Britain and the Soviet Union formed a partnership in 1941 to combat the Axis powers. While the alliance was necessary to combat the Axis, there was a huge distrust between its members. This distrust was especially high between the United States and the Soviet Union, who shared huge ideological differences. Britain and the United States had conflicting visions of the future of the British Empire and trade. Another issue that was divisive was the aim of the war. Stalin had made it clear he wanted to expand the Soviet Union westward and annex parts of Poland and the Baltic States. Stalin also wanted a buffer zone in Eastern Europe. Britain, and other colonial powers in Europe who had joined the Allies, like the Netherlands, wanted to maintain their empire after the war. The United States entered the war with the principle of self-determination and the idea that colonies should be made ready to participate in a network of global trade.⁵⁵ The war also saw the United States take on a huge role in the world. Roosevelt was certain that in order to guarantee peace after the war, the involvement of the United States in key regions across the world would be necessary. In 1944 it was clear that victory for the Allies was assured. The question of what kind of post war world should be created once the Axis were defeated became important at the different conferences of the Allies that were held during 1944 and 1945. For the United States this meant that it had to reevaluate its military position towards the rest of the world. The attack on Pearl Harbor had left a mark in the American establishment. The military approached the post war planning with urgency. They argued that the United States should be better prepared for war. While in 1944, the United States did not view the

⁵⁵ Herring, *From Colony to Superpower. U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*, 538–55.

Soviet Union as a direct threat, the liberation of Poland by the Soviet Union revealed the problems with the Allies. Stalin had installed a communist government and despite appeals by the United States that the liberated countries should be able to choose their own path, Stalin suppressed other political movements in Poland. The final conference of the war between the three great powers was at Yalta. While Stalin agreed to join the United Nations, he would have almost free reign over the areas he secured in Eastern Europe. Roosevelt died on April 12 1945 and Truman became president, in Great Britain Attlee became Prime Minister, the Big Three were no more. When Truman ordered the newly developed atomic bomb to be used against the Japanese, the global shift in power was complete and a new world order had begun to take shape with the United States and the Soviet Union being the two great powers left standing.⁵⁶

Circling the earth

During the war American policy makers and planners were already busy with the creation of a post war order. While there were many aspects to this creation of a new post war order, an interesting part of this was the military role the United States would take on after the war. Early postwar planning in 1944 assumed that the post war order would be one of cooperation. Institutions like the United Nations would give the great powers that would emerge after the war the tools they needed to create a more stable world order. The United States however, was concerned with the rise of the Soviet Union as a great power after the war. The huge victories in Eastern Europe against the Germans solidified the Soviet Union as one of the major powers that would shape the new European order after the war. What concerned American planners was the decline of Great-Britain and France as major European powers and the possibility that the Soviet Union would fill the gap that this left. Planners in 1944 therefore already stated that the post war order in Europe would have to involve the United States in order to prevent a Soviet dominated post-war Europe.⁵⁷

The original plans regarding the military role of the United States post-war, drafted during the war, was to have a series of airbases in key strategic locations. Airpower had proven to be important during the war and the idea was that having sufficient airpower in a region would deter rivals. None of the plans that were created during the war included large ground deployments in Europe.⁵⁸ There was also conflict between the different branches of the military about these plans. The American military up to this point had been highly decentralized and because of this, there could be no central policy implementation because all of the different branches were independent.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Ibid., 579–94.

⁵⁷ Schnabel, *The Joint Chiefs of Staff and National Policy 1945 -1947*, 7–8.

⁵⁸ Converse, *Circling the Earth*, 51–60.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 61–65.

The redefinition of national security

When Truman became president, his immediate concern was the defeat of Japan and post war reconstruction. While the United States was largely spared from the devastation of war, many American servicemen had lost their lives. When Japan was defeated, Truman wanted the American servicemen and women to return home as soon as possible. Because the United States was not as concerned with the possibility of war breaking out with the Soviet Union, military spending decreased and the overall size of the armed forces was reduced. The Truman administration had not foreseen that it would need to garrison forces all around the world. While not as small as pre-Second World War levels, the demobilization of the armed forces reduced the investments in the military to a level that it has not been at since.⁶⁰ While there was the general opinion in Washington that the Soviet Union could become an aggressor, it was not yet clear what type of enemy they would become. In a statement made on September 19, 1945, Truman stated that the task of occupation was to be done “with the minimum number of men. There will be no padding in our armed forces.”⁶¹ Pearl Harbor, however had left a permanent mark on American politics and the idea that the United States could be attacked in the future was not farfetched. The need to organize the military more effectively and to prepare for a possible future attack became an important issue during the second half of the 1940’s.⁶²

The way in which national security was organized during and before the war was haphazard and illogical. Most of the branches of the armed services were isolated entities that did not have clear lines of communication and planning with other branches of the armed services. Air force, navy and army were not even part of the same political department. Roosevelt had tried to organize the military more effectively through the Joint Chiefs of Staff, but this was an informal form of cooperation between the different heads of the branches of the military. There were often disagreements between the different branches and this made proper decision making and war planning nearly impossible. The only reason it had worked during the war was the need for cooperation to win the war and the personal relationship between all of the different heads of the military and the president. Roosevelt had ensured that the different heads would be able to cooperate with one another. When the war ended however, the need for cooperation became less clear. The United States however had a tradition of suspicion towards the state and a strong military department would increase the power of the federal government. There was a growing sentiment however, that unification of the armed services, or at the very least better coordination between the armed services, would be a necessity to be prepared for another Pearl Harbor like attack.⁶³ The earliest plans after the war involved a large reorganization of

⁶⁰ Hogan and Heiss, *Origins of the National Security State and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*, 69.

⁶¹ United States Government Printing Office, *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States, Harry S. Truman, 1945: Containing the Public Messages, Speeches, and Statements of the President, April 12 to December 31, 1945* (U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999), 327–28.

⁶² Norman A. Graebner, “The Sources of Postwar Insecurity,” in *The National Security Its Theory and Practice 1945-1960*, by Norman A. Graebner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 3–10.

⁶³ Hogan, *A Cross of Iron*, 23–24.

the armed forces under a supreme single commander with a single command structure. This would create a large national security department that would result in a powerful federal government. Notable proponents of unification of the armed services under a single department or full unification with a single command structure were general George Marshall and general Eisenhower. The US Navy however, opposed a unified department of defense that would include all branches of the armed forces. Instead of unifying the armed forces, the navy, personified by Navy Secretary Forrestal, argued that cooperation between the armed forces would be the key to ensure that another Pearl Harbor would be avoided.⁶⁴ Forrestal drafted a proposal for a security state that would focus on quickly repurposing the civilian infrastructure to serve military needs in the event of a war without a large armed force. The underlying concern was that the United States would turn into a garrison state if a large department of defense was set up.⁶⁵ The idea of armed forces that answered to separate authorities instead of a supreme commander was a powerful one that mostly resonated among politicians and policymakers who were afraid of a strong federal government. Forrestal's plan addressed this concern. A supreme commander would result in a strong centralized military authority that would, informally, have enough power and influence to override civilian authority. In 1947 a compromise was reached. The different branches of the armed forces would remain separate and civilian oversight would be established in the form of a department of defense. Another important aspect of the 1947 National Security Act was the establishment of a National Security Council that would consult with the president to determine the long term strategic objectives of policy as well as briefing the president on matters of national security.⁶⁶

The debate around the national security policy is interesting because it highlights two aspects of the American position in the global order after the Second World War. The first is that the United States was forced into the position of leader of the western world because it emerged from the war as the most powerful state. This belief that the United States would have to take on the role of a global power was adopted by most of the policymakers in Washington, contrary to the more isolationist tendencies that became dominant after the First World War. The big difference between the two world wars that can explain this difference is the fact that the United States was attacked in the Second World War. This attack showed that even if the United States tried its best to isolate itself from the world at large, the United States is always connected to this world. The second aspect is the debate around the role of the United States in the post war order. How should the United States organize its security, what are the roles of allies, where is the next big threat going to come from and how much power should federal authorities have. These questions would come to dominate American politics in the late 1940's.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 24–40.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 41–54.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 54–68.

As was previously mentioned, Truman's goal after the defeat of Japan was the demobilization of the armed forces as soon as possible. Besides demobilization, Truman also wanted to balance the budget of the United States and thus he tried to reduce the armed forces to the size they had previously been prior to the war. Truman wanted to maintain the occupation of Germany and Japan with as little resources as possible.⁶⁷ The price of peace for the United States however would be high. This cost was not paid in lives lost or resources but in a new-found responsibility of the United States towards the rest of the world. In 1946 and 1947, it became clear to the United States that they would have to take an active role, reluctantly, in Europe to ensure that the Soviet Union would not dominate Europe.

American goals in Europe

The immediate goal to the United States after the defeat of Germany in Europe, was the creation of a stable Europe to ensure that peace would last. The winter of 1944 and 1945 had been harsh and the economies of most European countries had come to a standstill because of the war. Large amounts of infrastructure and industrial areas, vital to the reconstruction of Europe, had been destroyed during the war. Only Belgium and France still possessed the resources and facilities to fuel the post war reconstruction of Europe. These limited resources and facilities however, were not enough. The first concern of the United States was to ensure that Europe would not descent into social and economic chaos. Truman was briefed daily on this topic and he was concerned that social and economic unrest would lead to class struggles in the liberated areas and Germany.⁶⁸ The second concern of the United States faced after the defeat of Germany was the question of what the post war political order of Europe would look like. Specifically, what would happen with Germany. For this second concern the Allied powers organized a conference in July of 1945 at Potsdam. At the conference it was decided that Germany would be divided into four parts. The United States also convinced the other parties participating in the conference that Germany was to democratize and that the Germany industrial capacity should be used to rebuilt Europe. While this conference might at first seem a success, the distrust between the Soviet Union and the United States was beginning to grow. During the conference, the United States wanted to exclude the Soviet Union from countries that would be allowed to receive the benefits from Germany's industrial capacity. According to the Americans the Soviet Union had violated the agreements made at Yalta. The disagreement was over the fact that the Soviets did not democratize the countries that they had liberated. On the contrary, they supported local communist parties that were loyal to Moscow. The Americans and Soviets finally agreed that twenty five percent of the equipment from the Ruhr area would go to the Soviet Union as reparations. In

⁶⁷ Benjamin O. Fordham, "The Legacy of Military Spending during the Truman Administration," in *Origins of the National Security State and the Legacy of Harry S. Truman*, by Michael J. Hogan and Mary Ann Heiss (Kirksville, Missouri: Truman State University Press, 2015), 68–73.

⁶⁸ Harry S. Truman, *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman* (University of Missouri Press, 1997), 25–26.

hindsight, the distrust at the Potsdam conference can be seen as one of the first clashes of distrust between the United States and the Soviet Union.⁶⁹ The Ruhr area and control of Germany would become an important part of the strategic planning of the Truman administration.

While the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union after the war was tense and distrustful as the Potsdam conference demonstrated, it was not outright hostile as it would become during most of the Cold War. One of the first diplomats to warn the United States was George Kennan, a diplomat at the American embassy in Moscow. He warned of Soviet ambitions to expand in 1946 in what would become known as the long telegram. This telegram is interesting because it outlines the foundations of what would become American policy towards the Soviet Union for the early Cold War. The first part of the telegram examines the Soviet view of the world order. The telegram is mainly focused on Stalin and his public appearances and outlines of policy. Kennan argues that the Soviet Union will continue its war against capitalism through any means necessary. One of the Soviet Union's methods is to hasten this development by enforcing its ideology on the states they had liberated during the war and by supporting movements that would spread communism in capitalist countries. Kennan saw two related threats to the United States, one was militarily, the threat of the Soviet Union invading Western Europe or pressuring Western Europe with military means, and secondly ideologically, that Western European governments would follow a communist ideology and therefore be more inclined to support the Soviet Union. The other was the possibility of the Soviet Union using social unrest as the result of the lagging redevelopment of Western Europe to gain support in Western Europe. Kennan thus argued that the Soviet Union had to be contained through both military means and especially economic and social means.⁷⁰ This meant that countries in Europe would have to be stable to prevent the Soviet Union from gaining ground there. The United States therefore had to provide the means to ensure this stability, means that would be both political and militarily.

Kennan's telegram was influential and while some of the details in his analysis are debatable, he was correct in his analysis of the Soviet threat to the United States. There were several key events that shaped American policy in Europe and would validate Kennan's ideas about the Soviet Union. The first was the Greek civil war that began in 1946. The civil war in Greece was fought between communist insurgents and a capitalist government in exile that was supposed to return and maintain order after the British liberated Greece. Greece had not been the most stable of countries after the Germans were defeated. There was little economic development and tensions between different classes and social groups were high.⁷¹ In January of 1946, Greece had received a loan from the United States to combat the economic woes and start rebuilding. The loan however was not enough to combat the

⁶⁹ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 56–77.

⁷⁰ "Moscow Embassy Telegram #511", Thomas H. Etzold and John Lewis Gaddis, *Containment: Documents on American Policy and Strategy, 1945-1950*, Reprint edition (New York: Columbia Univ Pr, 1978), 50–63.

⁷¹ John Lewis Gaddis, *The Cold War: A New History* (London: Penguin Books, 2007), 15–30.

social unrest.⁷² The political situation in Greece did not help as well because it was difficult to spend the funds appropriately because of the lack of government control. When the civil war erupted in Greece, American policy makers, Truman in particular, saw this as a sign that communist influence had to be contained by any means necessary and that economic development, military support and social stability was the key to containing the communist threat.⁷³ The second development was partially hinted at during the Potsdam conference. The Soviet Union did not democratize the countries they had liberated in Eastern and Central Europe, instead the Soviet Union installed puppet regimes and supported organizations and factions that shared their communist ideology. The third and final straw that affirmed Kennan's view of the Soviet Union was the Berlin blockade of 1947 and the Czechoslovakian coup. Stalin, in order to extend his power over the German people and central Europe, had blockaded Berlin from the western powers and supported a communist coup in Czechoslovakia. While the aid to Europe had already begun in 1947, the blockade and the coup only solidified the idea that the United States, in order to preserve its own national security had to support Western Europe. In a speech given to Congress on March 12 1947, Truman warned that Greece and Turkey were in danger of falling into the Soviet sphere of influence and he argued that the United States had to step up to contain the Soviet threat and to protect the freedom of the free world. While at first the speech is idealistic, the reasoning Truman gave this speech is because he was convinced that in order to protect American interests, communism in Western Europe had to be contained. A report by the Joint Chiefs of Staff on April 29 of the same year reveals that behind the scenes the United States was developing a plan to contain the Soviet Union to protect its own national security through both military aid and economic assistance.⁷⁴ The report states that aid should be given to countries and authorities that favor the United States. The Atlantic side of the United States was also the most vulnerable to attack should a war with the Soviet Union erupt. Most of the American Naval bases were established in the Pacific. Having a buffer zone that could protect the United States in the event of a war was therefore important to the United States. Vital to this was the idea that communist parties would not gain any ground in Western Europe. Another aspect laid out in NSC20/4 is that Mackinder's Hartland theory would play a vital role in shaping what strategic decisions the United States should take. The report, ratified by president Truman, argued in accordance with Mackinder's theory that a state which controls the Eurasian heartland of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, would dominate the world. The report adds to this by stating that control of Western Europe and East Asia would also be vital for world domination.⁷⁵ The National Security of the United States had become

⁷² Dean Acheson to Harry S. Truman, with attached press release, August 7, 1946. Truman Papers, President's Secretary's Files. Greece.

⁷³ Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 73–75.

⁷⁴ "JSC 1769/1 United States Assistance to Other Countries for the Standpoint of National Security", Etzold and Gaddis, *Containment*, 71–83.

⁷⁵ "Report to the President by the National Security Council, November 23, 1948, NSC 20/4", *Foreign relations of the United States, 1948. General; the United Nations Volume I, Part 2*, 662-669.

global. If states in Western Europe would become sympathetic to the Soviet cause, then the American buffer zone would shrink or be reduced to an indefensible size. This was the dawn of a post war relationship between the United States and Western Europe that would result in a permanent garrison in Western Europe.

Start of transatlantic cooperation

The post war relationship between the United States and Western Europe had three pillars that would come to define it. The first pillar was economic cooperation. American policy makers during the war believed that the key to a stable world order was global trade. To achieve this the United States had to aid Western Europe with its rebuilding efforts. The Economic Cooperation Act of 1948, better known as the Marshall plan, was the foundation of this pillar. The second pillar was military cooperation. The United States evaluated that the Soviet Union would become the most powerful power in Europe. To prevent the Soviet Union from interfering with Western Europe, the United States had to ensure that Western Europe was adequately defended. Therefore the United States signed the Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1949. The third pillar was international cooperation. While there was already economic and political cooperation through the United Nations, the WTO, and the Bretton Woods system, military cooperation through international institutions and law only started after 1949. The most notable example of this is NATO, which was formed on the initiative of the Western European states to ensure that the United States would be obligated legally to assist Western Europe.

The Economic cooperation act of 1948 was a milestone in transatlantic relations. While there was already aid to the Western European states immediately after the war, the Economic Cooperation Act was important because it solidified the American commitment to support the Western European states economically. The cooperation act was part of the European recovery program that was initiated in 1947. According to a cabinet working document that outlined what the program should be, it was created as a response to the East-West divide of the continent. The fact that the continent was divided in half and each side did not have free access to the other side hampered the recovery progress. While the document does not mention the Soviet Union by name, it does mention that the program was created, among other things, to combat a political controversy created by a faction whose representatives in Europe want to impede European recovery.⁷⁶

The second important act that would define transatlantic cooperation was the Mutual Defense Assistance Act of 1949. This act was the counterpart to the Economic Cooperation Act. Where the Economic Cooperation Act was purely meant to rebuild the European economies, the Mutual Defense Act was created to rebuild the armed forces of the various European states. The act came about after

⁷⁶ "European Recovery Program Basic Document No. 1", October 31, 1947. Clifford Papers, Subject File.European Recovery Program[folder2]. Accessed April 12 2017. https://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/study_collections/marshall/large/documents/index.php?documentdate=1947-10-31&documentid=6-3&pagenumber=1 .

the European states that had unified their military policy in the Western Union Defense Organization had asked to United States for funding in order to rebuild their armed forces. This act cannot be understood without keeping both NATO, which was beginning to form when the act was passed, and the Economic Cooperation Act in mind. This act provided the funding that would result in the European states rebuilding their armed forces.⁷⁷

The third pillar that would define transatlantic relations between the United States and Western Europe was NATO. While NATO will be more examined in detail in a later chapter there are some important aspects to NATO that are relevant to understanding the Truman administrations objectives in Europe. NATO specifically is no more than an organization that came about as a result of a series of agreements. The Truman administration was rather quick when it came to signing the NATO agreement.⁷⁸ Most of the work on the agreement had been done behind the scenes in 1948. The organization itself provided the framework for the defense policy of the Atlantic side of the United States.⁷⁹ The two most important aspects of NATO, however, are article five of the North Atlantic Agreement, which declares that an attack on a member is an attack on all members and the ability of member states to establish military bases in other states.⁸⁰ The last aspect is interesting because it allowed the United States to play an active role in Western Europe.

The United States feared a Soviet attack in Europe, while most of the policy described above came about ad hoc, there was indeed a strategy behind it all. The goal of this strategy was to protect the Atlantic side of the United States and to do this by containing communism. The strategy would be formalized in NSC 68, a policy document drafted for the National Security Council in 1949. While it was initially dismissed by Truman, the impact of the report among other policymakers ensured that the doctrine laid out in the report would become the main doctrine of American foreign policy for the Cold War. NSC 68 formed the basis of American national security policy. It stated that with the capabilities of 1949, a ground war in Europe would result in an American defeat. The United States had three options. The most logical one was to establish military bases in Western Europe to deter a Soviet invasion. The advice and strategy laid out in NSC 68 became the basis on which American military forces would be stationed in Europe. The legal means NATO provided to the Americans allowed them to negotiate access to Western Europe more easily.⁸¹

A report by Senior Secretary of the Military Committee from December 12 1950 highlights the early problems that NATO faced. The base assumption on which military tactics of deterrence rested was that a Soviet Invasion of the western world would start with a large military invasion of

⁷⁷ Gaddis, *The Cold War*, 30–32.

⁷⁸ “NATO treaty negotiations” Truman Collection, Roosevelt Institute for American Studies, Middelburg.

⁷⁹ “NATO - Official Text: Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Regarding the Status of Their Forces, 19-Jun.-1951,” accessed May 1, 2017, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/official_texts_17265.htm.

⁸⁰ “NATO - Official Text, 04-Apr.-1949,” accessed April 10, 2017, http://www.nato.int/cps/cs/natohq/official_texts_17120.htm?selectedLocale=en.

⁸¹ “NSC 68” Etzold and Gaddis, *Containment*, 385–442.

Western Europe. On the 26 of September 1950, the North Atlantic Council concluded that in order to properly defend Western Europe an integrated military force with a single central authority needed to be created and that all possible sources of manpower and productive resources needed to be utilized, hinting at the possibility of German re-armament.⁸² This report however, has to be seen in the context of the Korean war which broke out a couple of months prior. The war in Korea showed that the Soviet Union was intent on expanding its power and that full on military confrontation would be a possibility should tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States reach a boiling point. A report by the American ambassador in France to the American government is telling. He argues that the United States should establish military bases in Europe to contain communism.⁸³ While this report has to be seen in the context of France, where communism was an important ideology, the idea that Western Europe could fall to communism was important in forcing the United States to become active in Europe. The next chapter will focus more in the development of this army since it was Eisenhower who was in charge of the development of early-NATO.

Truman and American overseas bases

While Truman did not establish any overseas bases in the Netherlands, his administration laid the groundwork of the American global military presence in the form of bases. What is important to note is the previously discussed development of American policy in the years following the Second World War. American interests changed and became global as a result. In Europe the main focal areas of policy were the Mediterranean and Germany. Base policy in Europe reflected these strategic goals. While Truman was not the president that would build the military bases in the Netherlands, Eisenhower was the first president who started establishing military bases, Truman created the conditions that allowed the United States to establish these military bases. First there was the strategic focus on Germany. The United States had already established military bases in the United Kingdom during the Second World War. In an informal agreement with the new British Government led by Prime Minister Attlee during the final months of the war. It was decided that the United States would be allowed to maintain a military presence in the United Kingdom. Bases would be shared between the United States and the British armed forces. While this was not a formal agreement, in the literature it is called the Truman-Attlee understanding, the understanding guaranteed that American troops could remain in Britain at the discretion of the British government.⁸⁴ The informal nature of the agreement was primarily beneficial to the United States. While there was a lot of debate in the new Churchill

⁸² Report by the North Atlantic Military Committee to the North Atlantic Defense Committee, in *Foreign Relations of the United States 1950. Western Europe*, 548.

⁸³ 'The Counselor (Bohlen) to the Director of the Policy Planning Staff (Nitze), July 28, 1951' *Foreign Relations of the United States, United States Department of State Foreign relations of the United States, 1951. National security affairs; foreign economic policy* (1951), Volume I, 106-109.

⁸⁴ John Baylis, "American Bases in Britain: The 'Truman-Attlee Understandings,'" *The World Today* 42, no. 8/9 (1986): 155-59.

cabinet and parliament about their perceived loss of influence on military bases and the secretive and informal nature of the agreement, a compromise was reached whereby the British would be consulted when the United States would decide to use aircraft stationed in the United Kingdom. This also was the only public record of the understanding.⁸⁵ While the NATO agreements created general guidelines about the status of American forces in the United Kingdom, the base deployment continued to rely on the Truman-Attlee understanding. Another interesting aspect about Truman's bases in the United Kingdom was that naval bases played an important role. During the Second World War, it was important to be able to ship goods, weapons and personnel across the Atlantic Ocean from the United States. The threat of German submarines was a constant. Cooperation between the Royal Navy and the American Navy was highly developed by 1945. The Soviet threat meant that this cooperation continued to be of importance. The United States was allowed to continue to station military vessels in British ports and cooperation between both countries continued.⁸⁶ The second condition that shaped the American basing strategy was to develop a framework in which the United States could pursue its strategic goals as defined previously. The Truman administration was tasked with maintaining peace after the Second World War and quickly established military bases in the territory of the defeated axis powers. This left the United States with a system of overseas bases where most of them were located in different parts of the world. There was no overlapping structure of bases that would ensure a stable supply line to these newly established bases. If the United States was going to protect the capitalist world from the Soviet Union, the overseas bases would be vital. Germany for example would be the front line if the Soviets would launch an invasion by land. If Harkavy's theory is followed, then power projection from these bases to deter a Soviet invasion would be vital. The bases therefore needed to be secure and in the event of a war, would need the resources to hold out. The Truman administration therefore had to create a framework that would allow them easy access to military bases in states they were allied with and therefore the United States created a framework through NATO that would allow the United States to sign basing agreement with other states that shared their interests. This became the NATO Status of Forces Agreement. An Agreement that guaranteed the rights of American forces in NATO territory and of military force of NATO states in each other's territory. This framework allowed later administrations to establish military bases in NATO territory.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Duke, *United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe*, 298–301.

⁸⁶ Robert S. Jordan, "U.S. Naval Forces in Europe and NATO," in *U.S. Military Forces in Europe The Early Years, 1945-1970*, ed. Simon W. Duke and Wolfgang Krieger (Oxford: Westview Press, 1993), 72–82.

⁸⁷ "NATO - Official Text: Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Regarding the Status of Their Forces, 19-Jun.-1951," accessed May 11, 2017, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/official_texts_17265.htm.

Conclusion

When Wilson wanted the United States to play a more active role in global politics after the First World War, he faced a strong isolationist movement that prevented him from doing so. While the United States avoided European politics, it did continue to expand its military power in the Pacific, claiming islands and building military bases on them. When the Second World War broke out the United States was ill prepared. It had not expected Japan to declare war on them so soon so therefore most of the American military bases in the Pacific were badly prepared. While the United States did eventually win the war against Japan and Germany, the question as to what would become of this new world order lingered. Because of power relations after the war, the United States was forced in the position of super power. Soviet aggression during the late 1940's solidified the idea that the division of the world would not result in lasting peace. The concept of national security became much broader than the continental United States or even the Western Hemisphere. The Truman administration had to implement a strategy that would protect the United States by protecting states that shared the same goals and contain Soviet influence over Western Europe and Asia. In Western Europe the United States did this through both economic and military cooperation and support. Because of the perceived threat from the Soviet Union, it was eventually decided by the Truman administration that military bases had to be established in Western Europe through a framework that would guarantee military access.

5. Eisenhower's New Look

Eisenhower as a president is a unique president because he was fully involved in shaping the policy of the previous administration. Before he became president, Eisenhower had a long military career. Under Truman he had been commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during the Second World War, an important military advisor and finally supreme commander of NATO. His military career prepared him for a presidency in a time of great change. It was during his presidency that the bulk of military bases under NATO were established in Europe. Eisenhower as president, was responsible for creating deep lasting ties between the United States and Western Europe. This chapter will first examine how Eisenhower's military career affected his ideas on National Security and military forces in Europe. It will then examine the important presidential elections of 1952 and why Eisenhower wanted to be president. It will finally examine how Eisenhower's New Look policy shaped American military bases in Western Europe. The central question in this chapter is how did Eisenhower's New Look shape military bases in Western Europe?

Supreme Commander

Eisenhower is an interesting president because of the career that led him to the presidency. Before he was elected president in 1952, Eisenhower already had a distinguished military career. His rise through the ranks to eventually become the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Western Europe ensured that he had acquired both military insight and political skills. As Supreme Commander during the Second World War, he had to juggle both military and political concerns, especially in the months after the war, when political concerns took priority over military concerns. The first major crisis after the Second World War that Eisenhower faced was that of the unification of the different military branches and harmonization of training. Eisenhower was one of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at this point and was an important military advisor to the president. As was discussed in the previous chapter, Pearl Harbor had caught the United States off guard, and the primary military priority after the war was to prevent another attack on American soil. Eisenhower supported the unification of the armed services, based on his experience during the war.⁸⁸ Eisenhower's relationship with Truman was formal even though they both had an internationalist outlook on foreign and military policy. While Eisenhower was officially an advisor to Truman, thanks to his position in the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Truman rarely consulted the Joint Chiefs during his presidency. Most of the major decisions that Truman made regarding Europe were surprisingly made without advice from the Joint Chiefs, in particular Eisenhower. Even though the Joint Chiefs were less important under Truman, a lot of policy that Truman made throughout his presidency, especially policy regarding closer ties to Western Europe, Greece and Turkey, could count on Eisenhower's support.⁸⁹ Eisenhower disagreed, however,

⁸⁸ Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect: 1890-1952*, 1:433–42.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:447–52.

with the Truman administration on some level. Eisenhower argued that the Soviet Union was not powerful enough to win a war against the United States and would therefore use other means to spread its influence. Eisenhower was therefore a strong proponent of social and economic support to European countries. During his time in Washington, Eisenhower was also introduced to various important policymakers and congressmen. These contacts would become important for his political career later on. He also gained a lot of policymaking experience and this experience formed his long-term view of foreign policy and national security. Eisenhower thought that a cohesive chain of command and a common strategy would be the answer to preventing a second Pearl Harbor. It is interesting to follow Eisenhower's thought process throughout his military career after the Second World War and during his presidency. The idea of integration, coordination, and efficiency was key to his ideas on how American national security could be guaranteed. Another aspect was the idea of balancing military needs and civilian needs. Eisenhower feared what he would later call in his final speech as president a military industrial complex. This fear stemmed from the idea that the United States would fight a permanent war against the Soviet Union and therefore would continue to increase the expenses for the military and overlook important domestic expenses or reduce the freedom of the American people to enhance security. While Eisenhower's ideas were without a doubt highly political, for most of 1949 and 1950, Eisenhower wanted to remain strictly non-political. Eisenhower was however, involved in the military budget for 1950, the year the Korean War broke out. Eisenhower argued behind the scenes that a rapid rearmament program was necessary to win the war in Korea. The Truman administration, however, argued that the expenses were enough to win the war. Democratic officials however, were quick to place the blame on Eisenhower, because of his ideas on a balance between military and civilian spending.⁹⁰ By the end of 1950, the United States had become part of a major armed conflict in Korea and Eisenhower was not able to influence the American course of action, which frustrated him. In December 1950, Eisenhower was asked to become the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe of NATO. Eisenhower accepted.⁹¹

Eisenhower would spend a little more than a year in Europe as Supreme Commander, this year, however, was crucial for the newly founded NATO. Eisenhower was given the task of defining what exactly NATO would become and how this would influence the United States. In the United States, the isolationist and rightwing part of the Republican party was growing more and more powerful. This was personified by Robert A. Taft and Joseph McCarthy. Taft in particular was vocal about his opposition against NATO. McCarthy used reckless media tactics to accuse everyone he did not like of communism. Eisenhower saw the ideas of Taft and the methods of McCarthy were reckless and counterproductive. In his diary Eisenhower called them the "disciples of hate".⁹² Eisenhower's

⁹⁰ Ibid., 1:490–95.

⁹¹ Ibid., 1:495–99.

⁹² Dwight D. Eisenhower, *The Eisenhower Diaries*, ed. Robert H. Ferrell (W. W. Norton & Company, 1981), 195–96.

goals as Supreme Commander of NATO were therefore twofold. He had to show the people of the United States that NATO would become extremely important for the long-term security of the United States. On the other hand, he had to convince the European states that had originally founded NATO that NATO was not a free ticket for having American support. The European states, according to Eisenhower, had to pull their own weight if the alliance was to be successful.⁹³ Most of 1951 Eisenhower spend travelling between various European countries and the United States as a sort of ambassador for NATO, urging that more effort was needed by both sides of the Atlantic to create a substantial military force that could defend NATO territory. Eisenhower proved to be successful in the United States in convincing congress to support NATO. The Mutual Defense Assistance act was passed and four American divisions were shipped to West-Germany, and several naval forces and aircraft wings to the surrounding countries.⁹⁴

The second large problem that Eisenhower faced as Supreme Commander was the question of German re-armament. While this question of course was largely political, during 1951, Eisenhower did not want the United States to be the sole defender of Europe. The European states had to contribute to NATO. It became obvious however, that to create the most effective force capable of defending Europe, Germany would have to become involved. France in 1951, did not have the means to properly defend Western Europe and the armed forces of the Netherlands and Belgium were even less powerful. Initially, France was against German re-armament but after a talk with both Eisenhower and the German chancellor Adenauer, French prime minister Plevin proposed a plan that would become known as the Plevin Plan. This plan would create a multinational army with units no larger than a division directly under the control of Eisenhower, as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe. Germany would make up roughly twenty percent of this army. While Eisenhower was initially hesitant, arguing that the proposal included “every kind of obstacle and difficulty”, he eventually changed his mind. Eisenhower went even further and saw this army as a first step towards a unified Europe.⁹⁵ Eisenhower, through the force of his personality and his popularity among British politicians, even managed to get the British involved in this army. Although this involvement was indirectly, as the United Kingdom did not want to become part of a Unified Europe or European Army. By the end of 1951, Eisenhower had managed to shape NATO into a permanent part of Transatlantic relations and had managed to lay the foundation of a more integrated Europe.⁹⁶ At home in the United States however, trouble was brewing.

⁹³ Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect: 1890-1952*, 1:500–502.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1:504.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1:507–9.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1:509–11.

Presidential candidate

1951 was not a good year for the Truman administration. The United States had become involved in a major conflict that looked like it would not be over anytime soon. The democratic party had become hugely unpopular and in the Republican party, rightwing elements like those represented by McCarthy and Taft were becoming popular. On top of that Truman sacked general MacArthur, the commander of the armed forces fighting in Korea, because of the fact that the war in Korea had been dragging on for almost a year now. Moreover, the budget Truman had proposed for 1952 called for 65 billion dollars of the 85 billion dollars of the total expenses for defense. This would also create a budget deficit of 14 billion. This unbalanced budget caused an outrage among Republicans, who traditionally wanted a balanced budget, and caused a surge in support for republican hardliners. With presidential elections in 1952, it seemed that the democrats would lose the presidency and an isolationist republican would become president, reversing or slowing down most of the progress made during the Truman administration. Eisenhower himself thought that the budget proposed by Truman was out of proportion.⁹⁷ The most likely candidate for the republican nomination for president seemed to be Taft, who was anti-NATO and preferred a more isolationist approach. While Eisenhower had no love for the democrats, he did not want to see the work he had done since the end of the Second World War be destroyed by a president who wanted to take the United States on a more isolationist course. At this point in time, Eisenhower was a very popular man in the United States, most notably for his role in the Second World War, but also because of his personality and charisma. Eisenhower was however not determined to seek the office of the president publicly. Privately, Eisenhower had been meeting with important members of the republican party, most notably senator Henry Cabot Lodge, during the final months of 1951. While he made no commitments, it does show that Eisenhower felt on some level, the duty to prevent Taft from becoming president.⁹⁸ While the Democratic Party also tried to get Eisenhower to run as their candidate, Eisenhower and the Democratic Party did not see eye to eye on domestic issues and the history Eisenhower had with the Democratic Party did not make the offer appealing to him. In the mean time, Taft was gaining a lot of support among delegates of the Republican Party. An Eisenhower for President planform had formed in the Republican Party. With Taft gaining support, and without any opposition in the party, it seemed in December of 1951, that Taft would be the presidential nominee for the Republican Party. The budget Truman presented to Congress in January 1952, even got former president Herbert Hoover to endorse Taft, and the rhetoric that American troops should be brought home from Europe became popular because of the unbalanced budget.⁹⁹

Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge and commander of the American forces in Germany Lucius Clay had tried to convince Eisenhower in December of 1951 that he could beat Taft in the

⁹⁷ "January 22, 1952, Eisenhower, *The Eisenhower Diaries*, 209–13.

⁹⁸ Ambrose, *Eisenhower: Soldier, General of the Army, President-Elect: 1890-1952*, 1:512–13.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1:515–23.

republican primary. Eisenhower initially refused and outright dismissed Lodge, stating that he was not interested in seeking the office of the presidency. The turning point came on February 11 1952, when Eisenhower was shown a film of a rally in the United States by citizens who wanted Eisenhower to run for office by his friends. The idea behind his candidacy was that he would be a moderating voice as a candidate that could bridge the gap between the Republican party and the Democratic party and appeal to a large group of voters. On March 11, Eisenhower won the New Hampshire primary with 50 percent of the vote compared to 38 percent for Taft. Eisenhower would continue to win most of the Republican primaries and become the presidential candidate for the Republican Party.¹⁰⁰

Eisenhower would go on to win the presidential elections of 1952. His win however, despite his popularity, was not guaranteed. Eisenhower had to please both the moderate wing of the Republican party and the more isolationist wing. Eisenhower thus had to do concessions that would please both sides of the party. Eisenhower teamed up with John Foster Dulles, a republican who was skeptical of Truman's strategy of containment but did not outright dismiss it as bad. He appealed to the more radical wing of the Republican Party because he argued that a more offensive strategy was needed to defeat communism. The alliance between Dulles and Eisenhower was more political than personal. Eisenhower agreed with Dulles that budget had to be balanced but he was less convinced of Dulles ideas that a more aggressive stance to the Soviet Union was necessary. Eisenhower believed that given time, the Soviet Union would collapse because communism was not sustainable. Initially, the alliance between Eisenhower and Dulles was informal, but when Eisenhower won the presidency by a landslide in November 1952, the question of Dulles's position in a future Eisenhower administration arose.¹⁰¹ Dulles and Eisenhower both had different, but not extremely conflicting ideas about national security. Each of them however considered Europe to be important, in contrary to Taft who argued that spending on the military development of Western Europe was a waste.¹⁰²

New Look

Eisenhower wasted no time when he was elected in November of 1952. Eisenhower inherited a, according to him, government that was unorganized. The elephant in the room and also an important point of discussion during the campaign had been the large amount of federal spending under Truman. Eisenhower also faced was the Korean War, which was one of the reasons the federal spending had increased in the last two years of the Truman presidency. In December of 1952, Eisenhower visited Korea to discuss possible strategies with the generals and commanders to see how the war could be ended as quickly as possible. Eisenhower also began to create his cabinet. The most notable of his choice of ministers was Dulles as secretary of state. As was mentioned earlier, Eisenhower and Dulles managed to find common ground from which they were able to formulate a foreign policy. Finally,

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 1:521–25.

¹⁰¹ Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment*, 127–29.

¹⁰² John Foster Dulles, *War or Peace* (New York: MacMillan, 1950), 17–21.

Eisenhower reformed the National Security Council by having the president, himself, take a more active role in it. Eisenhower wanted to create a more efficient administration that he himself could oversee.¹⁰³ The first major challenge of his presidency, and the challenge that would come to define Eisenhower's approach to American bases in Europe, was to reduce the military budget to a more manageable size. Eisenhower had to both balance the military needs that presented themselves during his presidency with domestic investments that would support the American economy. Reducing the military budget to a level Eisenhower deemed necessary was at the time however a humongous challenge. The Korean War was still raging and the role of the United States demanded that it had the ability to protect its allies in the event of a war. Eisenhower gave Charles Wilson the task to examine how a balance of the military budget was achievable. There was a lot of hesitation from the Joint Chiefs of Staff regarding this act of balancing. Only Admiral Fechteler argued that Eisenhower's goals were achievable. He stated that the United States had overestimated the Soviet threat. Another concern that was raised, especially by Dulles, was that a cutback on military spending in Europe might invite the Soviet Union to try a military invasion of Western Europe.¹⁰⁴ An eventual plan to balance the budget was created in the National Security Council called NSC 149/2.¹⁰⁵ This document was an amended version of an earlier report by the National Security Council NSC 149/1. While NSC 149/1 was never released in print, and therefore it is not possible to examine this document, a memorandum that lists the objectives and ways of achieving these objectives was printed. This memorandum listed the key objective as being maintaining the American commitment to the rest of the world while ensuring that this commitment would not disrupt the United States economy and budget so that the United States can sustain its own economy. The report wanted to achieve this by bringing the budget into balance. The was to be done by bringing the Korean War to a settlement acceptable to the United States, indirectly helping anti-communist groups in Asia, protection of the United States from enemy attacks, support allied forces and increase their ability for self-defense, maintain production capacity, reduce inefficient spending and by lowering trade barriers to encourage free trade. Emphasis should be decreased on deploying more forces overseas and on keeping the armed forces and their material in a state of readiness.¹⁰⁶ The memorandum also includes some interesting aspects that relate to nuclear weapons. In 1949, the Soviet Union had acquired nuclear weapons and therefore both super powers possessed atomic capabilities. Another development was the creation and enhancement of advanced missiles that could be used over longer and longer distances while becoming more and more accurate. The memorandum argues that by 1956, instead of using large scale military deployments to guarantee the security of the United States and its allies, airpower and the development of atomic energy, both

¹⁰³ Bowie and Immerman, *Waging Peace*, 83–95.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 96–106.

¹⁰⁵ "NSC 149/2", William Z Slany, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1952-1954. National Security Affairs (in Two Parts)*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC, 1984), 305.

¹⁰⁶ "Draft Memorandum Prepared for the National Security Council" *ibid.*, 1:281–87.

for military and civilian use, would become more important.¹⁰⁷ Maintaining an air force is less expensive than a large land based military force because it is more versatile and can strike across a larger region. Eventually, these documents were the basis of the defense spending of the federal budget for the fiscal year 1954. This budget and the plans that were created in the first year of the Eisenhower administration were the foundation of what would become Eisenhower's New Look policy. This policy would shift its focus from large military deployments in the different theatres to smaller, specialized, strategically tactical ones that focused on air and missile power, while also strengthening allied military forces so they would rely less on American support.

1953 delivered to Eisenhower another important victory. On July 27, an armistice was signed between the two fighting Korean factions and Korea was divided in a communist north and a pro-American south. This was a success for Eisenhower as it meant that less military resources had to be spent on the war. The second change was the death of Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Soviet Union. This led to a reevaluation of the Soviet Union as a threat to national security. While it was hoped that this would decrease tensions, the death of Stalin did not decrease the Soviet ability control eastern Europe or the possibility that the Soviet Union would deescalate tensions, according to the CIA. On the contrary, the CIA estimated that the Soviet Union would increase their nuclear capability.¹⁰⁸ The true foundation of the New Look policy was NSC162/2. A policy document that outlined the military national security policy of the Eisenhower administration. It combined all of the ideas that had thus far been important to the administration. A reduction in federal spending and a new strategy that would cost less and at the same time deter the Soviet Union from starting a war. As war previously mentioned, both the United States and Soviet Union were developing their nuclear capabilities at a very fast rate. In the event of a war between the United States and the Soviet Union, conventional military tactics and usage of forces would be less successful in the event the war went nuclear. NSC162/2 accounted for this fact by using the threat of a nuclear retaliation against the Soviet Union and its allies should any country in the 'free world' be subject to a Soviet Invasion. The New Look policy called for a drastic change in military thought. Airpower and nuclear capability would supersede conventional warfare.

Eisenhower and overseas bases

So, what effect did the Eisenhower administration have on military bases in Europe? To start off, it is important to note that in 1952, when Eisenhower left NATO and returned to the United States, American bases in Europe were mainly located in Great Britain and West-Germany. The British bases were left over from agreements made during the Second World War and the bases in West-Germany were part of the occupying force that was established after the German defeat in the Second World

¹⁰⁷ "Draft Memorandum Prepared for the National Security Council", *ibid.*, 1:281–87.

¹⁰⁸ "NIE-90, Soviet Bloc Capabilities through Mid-1955" Central Intelligence Agency, 11 August 1953, CIA Online Reading Room.

War. Eisenhower's encouragement of cooperation in Europe through at first the Plevan plan and later the European Defense Community. When Germany joined NATO in 1955, the American garrisons changed from an occupying force to an allied overseas base. While in practice this change was gradual, it does imply a shift in policy towards Europe. Eisenhower's support for cooperation fits in with both his vision of an organization efficient security policy and his attempts to reduce spending through the New Look policy. The changes the New Look policy had on the way the Soviet Union would be deterred from attacking also changed the way the American garrisons in Europe were organized. There would be a large focus on airpower, with the capability to carry out nuclear strikes against the Soviet Union, support for these new elements and a restructuring of other elements in Europe. While Truman may have laid the foundation of the American empire of bases in Western Europe, by having the United States join NATO and making it play an active role in global politics, Eisenhower shaped the underlying structure of American bases in Europe into the form it would remain in for most of the Cold War. While the base network would continue to expand, it was because of Eisenhower's New Look policy that bases were established in the Netherlands and Belgium. In 1954, the Soesterberg agreement between the United States and the solidified this by allowing an American squadron to be stationed at the Soesterberg airbase in the Netherlands. In 1957, the Eisenhower administration did a study on the system of bases that had been created. This report by Frank C. Nash, the assistant secretary of defense, shows how much the system of bases changed from 1947 to 1957. From a few bases in Great Britain and Germany, and a base in Guantanamo Bay, to over 1,5 million Americans, both military and civilian, deployed worldwide.¹⁰⁹ An overview of bases and recommendation for future base patterns in this report also suggest that bases will need to serve different tactical needs because of changing technology and a greater use of air power.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁹ Report to Eisenhower by Frank C. Nash on U.S. Overseas Military Bases, Section II: Pattern of U.S. base development. White House, 1 Dec. 1957. U.S. Declassified Documents Online, tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4RFFz6. Accessed 24 Feb. 2017.

¹¹⁰ Report to Eisenhower by Frank C. Nash on U.S. Overseas Military Bases, Section III: Considerations as to Future. White House, 1 Dec. 1957. U.S. Declassified Documents Online, tinyurl.galegroup.com/tinyurl/4RFHk2. Accessed 24 Feb. 2017.

Conclusion

Eisenhower's presidency was extremely important to the development of American overseas bases. His New Look policy shaped both the relationship in Western Europe between the host state and the United States, by focusing on cooperation between the different European states, and the shape of the American basing system, by minimizing the cost of bases by increasing their ability to deploy aircraft and nuclear weapons to deter Soviet aggression. Eisenhower was perhaps the most important president for American bases during the Cold War. This chapter concludes the American perspective on bases in Western Europe. The next chapters will focus on why the Netherlands was strategically important for the United States and why the Netherlands was insistent on having American forces stationed in its territory.

6. The European Context

This chapter will analyze the larger European context in which the base building by the United States took place. It will examine how this context shaped American and Dutch policy regarding bases. The first part of this chapter will give a broad the European invitation to establish military bases in Europe. The second part will examine the most important aspect of this invitation, the establishment of NATO and the inclusion of the United States in the Atlantic treaty. The third part will examine how the Netherlands was affected by European politics and why the Netherlands wanted to involve the United States in Western Europe. The central question in this chapter is, what was the larger European context that shaped Dutch policy to invite the United States to establish military bases in the Netherlands.

European cooperation

As was discussed in the introduction of this thesis, Geir Lundestad argued that the American Empire in Western Europe was an empire by invitation. Lundestad argues that instead of an immediate conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union in Europe, there was a period in which Britain and the Soviet Union were the main contenders in Western Europe directly after the Second World War. The government of the United Kingdom wanted to try to maintain its position as the most powerful state in western Europe. They supported Greece and Turkey financially in their fights against communist insurgents in 1944 to 1946. By 1947 it became evident that the United Kingdom was not in a position, economically and militarily, to continue to follow this policy. In 1946, the United States had already strengthened its position in the Mediterranean and by 1947, the British asked the United States to take over their role in Turkey and Greece. The British invited the Americans in to take over their role as military power in the region.¹¹¹ Not all European states were as welcoming to the Americans as the British. While the Netherlands welcomed American support despite the conflict it had with the United States regarding Indonesia, as was discussed in the previous chapter. France on the other hand, did not appreciate the American involvement in Western Europe. The Americans also distrusted the French. French president De Gaulle's ideology that included elements of right wing extremism and nationalism was not a natural fit with Roosevelt's and Truman's internationalist outlook on the world. To make matters worse, communism was an important ideology in France, and De Gaulle did not try to contain them as much as the Americans might have liked. The French, instead of appealing to the Americans believed that they could act as an intermediary between the Soviet Union and the United States. While the French reluctantly participated in international organizations, such as those tied to the Marshall plan in Western Europe that indirectly tied them into the American empire, there continued to be distrust between the United States and France.¹¹² The French also

¹¹¹ Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe since 1945*, 37–45.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 46–48.

participated in NATO and the myriad of organizations that would later become the European community.

The Most important aspect of the Atlantic relationship and invitation was the military side. While the Truman and Eisenhower administrations wanted to reduce military spending, the consensus among European states was that American military support would be necessary. As was shown in the previous chapter, the Netherlands for example needed American support because it could not defend itself adequately while also maintaining other government expenses like the creation of a welfare state. While NATO has been an important theme throughout this thesis, it has yet to be examined in detail. The examination of NATO is important precisely because NATO was a military invitation by the European states to the United States to support the military of Western Europe. Moreover, the Netherlands was one of the founding members of the Western Union Defense Organization, which was a key organization in the creation of NATO.

In 1947, it seemed that the United States would not invest its military power in Europe. Truman wanted to reduce military expenditure. Between the United Kingdom and France, things were not much better. Britain was unsure if it should commit military forces to mainland Europe and France did not have a clearly defined strategy. France wanted to be a third force in the world that could mediate between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹¹³ In 1947, it did not seem that a permanent military alliance between the Western European states and the United States would be a reality in a few years' time. One of the first steps towards a permanent alliance and an invitation to the United States came from British foreign secretary Bevin. In January 1948, Bevin gave a speech in the House of Commons about the idea that Europe needed a military alliance that would include France and Britain that would need the backing of the United States.¹¹⁴ While the American reception was lukewarm, there was enthusiasm for the proposal, especially in the Benelux countries. The enthusiasm was not without doubts however, as the Benelux countries feared that an alliance with France and the United Kingdom would not serve their interests. France and Britain may come to dominate the alliance. The next years however, would see large changes in European politics that forced the European powers to form an alliance and invite the Americans over. The Netherlands in particular would seek to increase the American presence in Europe.¹¹⁵

In February 1948, communist rebels staged a successful coup in Czechoslovakia. At the same time it seemed that communist parties were on the rise across Europe, specifically in Italy and Norway. General Lucius Clay, the commander of the American garrison in Germany sounded the alarm that a Soviet invasion was imminent. It seemed that an order of post war peace was over.¹¹⁶ This tension and panic in 1948 forced the European leader into action. Across Western Europe, important

¹¹³ Kaplan, *NATO 1948*, 23–24.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 24–28.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 24–44.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 49–62.

figures in foreign policy began to call for increased European unification and reconciliation to stop the perceived Soviet threat. Even in France, foreign minister Bidault argued before parliament that France would have to reconcile with Germany if it wanted to stop the communist threat. He managed to convince parliament that cooperation with Germany would be inevitable and necessary.¹¹⁷ As early as March 1948, there were talks between European diplomats and the United States about an alliance that would include the United States. From the perspective of the Western European states, only an alliance that included the United States might be able to deter a possible Soviet invasion.¹¹⁸ Another step towards getting the United States involved in a transatlantic alliance was to invite Canada to join. While Canada was not truly significant in terms of military power compared to the United States, it did turn the slowly forming alliance into an alliance that spread across the Atlantic. The second reason the invitation to Canada was important was because of its geographical location. By inviting a neighboring state to the Alliance, the Europeans could put more pressure on the United States. The Berlin blockade that began in June of 1948 accelerated the process and also convinced the French to fully embrace the alliance for the time being despite internal conflict in French politics about the role that France would play, some still believed that France could act as a third force to mediate between the United States and the Soviet Union.¹¹⁹

NATO

In September 1948, the Western Union Defense Organization was formed. It was an international organization that had as its main focus to increase the cooperation between Western European states on military issues. This did not include the United States however. In the United States, the Truman administration still had difficulty to on the one hand provide support for Western Europe but on the other hand to ensure that military expenses would not increase to rise to heights that would not be sustainable long term. The Western Union Defense Organization was also a guarantee to the United States that defense cooperation in Europe between the European powers was possible and that the Americans might not have to guarantee Western European security on their own.¹²⁰ 1948 was also an election year in the United States. When Truman was reelected as president he had a stronger mandate to continue his efforts to keep to support the European states. He offered financial and military support but did not commit American forces to Western Europe.¹²¹ This changed when the United States eventually joined the Atlantic Organization. The European states however had to make some concessions. As will be discussed in the following chapter, the Netherlands for example had to find a peaceful solution for its colonial war in Indonesia. Military authority in NATO would also be

¹¹⁷ Lundestad, *“Empire” by Integration*, 29–33.

¹¹⁸ Kaplan, *NATO 1948*, 59–70.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 107–13.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 139–56.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 184–89.

centralized through an appointed military commander and not through individual commanders for each state. European states would also be asked to try to carry their own weight.¹²²

While NATO was an important step in the European invitation to the United States, the United States government did not believe that it would be enough in the event of a Soviet invasion. While the negotiations 1948 may have been the turning point that solidified the American presence in Europe, the United States was not confident that without German support, the Western Alliance would be strong enough. The United States did not believe that a war with the Soviet Union could be won in Europe. The question of how Germany should develop after the Second World War and if it should play a role in the defense of Western Europe remained. Several strategies were created between 1948 and 1950, with some of them focusing on Germany, other on the defense of France or Italy, none of the plans however were accepted by all of the allies. Each of the different European states had different goals and priorities when it would come to a clash with the Soviet Union.¹²³ When the Korean War broke out, most European states began to change in their opinion on German rearmament. German chancellor Konrad Adenauer argued that it was important that Germany remilitarize within the context of NATO or some other international organization. Adenauer believed that the interests of the occupying powers were not the defense of German territory.¹²⁴

The Berlin crisis of 1948 had forced the European states to cooperate in terms of defense, the Korean War showed the European states that their fragile alliance in Western Europe was not enough. The United States had commitments across the globe and could not guarantee the safety of the Western European states. Moreover, with elections in the United States in 1952, the United States might reevaluate its commitments to the defense of Western Europe. When NATO was created, the first supreme commander, Eisenhower, stressed that the European states would have to increase their defense budget and cooperate more closely. This resulted in the Pleven plan that was discussed in an earlier chapter. The plan evolved over time into what would become the foundation of the European Defense Community. The European Defense Community is an interesting phenomenon because it was an attempt to create a common European army that would include Germany. In 1952, the treaty of Paris was created. This treaty, when ratified by all the participating powers, would create a common European Army. It was a significant departure from the Pleven plan as it laid out a plan for the future where European states would revoke their sovereignty over their armed forces. France was the most hesitant of all the parties involved. Both the idea of German rearmament and the idea of giving up military sovereignty was difficult for French policymakers. Because the United States put pressure on European governments to cooperate, French politics became polarized between a pro-American camp

¹²² Ibid., 206–23.

¹²³ Christian Greiner, “The Defense of Western Europe and the Rearmament of West Germany, 1947-1950,” in *Western Security, the Formative Years*, ed. Olvat Riste (Oslo: Norwegian University Press, 1985), 150–57.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 167–72.

and a nationalistic anti-American camp.¹²⁵ British politics, which had recently had an election that resulted in a conservative majority, did not want to get involved in a European army. Britain would support and cooperate, but it valued its position outside European institutions. West-Germany on the other hand was quite enthusiastic about the idea of a common European army. First because it would fit into the post war German constitution. The army itself would not be a German army and therefore it would not be a true German rearmament but a German military contribution to an international army. Second the European Defense Community would allow Germany to participate more in European politics instead of it being an occupied state under British, French and American rule.¹²⁶

In Washington the hesitance of the European states created some level of frustration, especially the hesitance of France, on who's ratification of the treaty the entire European Defense Community depended. The Korean War had shown that cooperation was needed and the newly elected President Eisenhower ran on a campaign to reduce military spending. In his first state of the Union Eisenhower stated that support for Europe would depend upon progress in Europe itself.¹²⁷ Eisenhower tied American support for European states to successful cooperation between France and West-Germany. Even with this attached threat, France continued to be hesitant towards this far-reaching integration of the armed forces. In 1954, France had not yet signed the treaty. American policy makers began to doubt if pressuring France into signing the agreement would work since France had declined to sign up until this point.¹²⁸

Dutch position

The Netherlands was caught in between this clash of two great powers. By July 1954, the Netherlands and Belgium had signed the treaty, with West Germany and Luxembourg on the verge of doing so. While the Netherlands had initially been hesitant to sign the treaty, as the Pleven agreement and early proposed war plans during the formative years of NATO had not accounted for Dutch interests, the pressure of keeping the United States involved in Europe persuaded the Dutch government to sign the treaty. The signing of the European Defense Community treaty by Netherlands was more pragmatic. There were two points of criticism, especially about the earlier Pleven plan. The Netherlands did not see the necessity for the creation of a unified armed force, especially since there was already cooperation through NATO. The Netherlands argued that cooperation between different armed forces would produce the same result. Moreover, the Netherlands was concerned about political responsibility for this new army. Another objection by the Netherlands was that maintaining a military force as stated in the Pleven plan was not financially possible by the Netherlands. The contribution

¹²⁵ Kevin Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defense Community, Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defense, 1950-1955* (MacMillan, 2000), 15–19.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 26–30.

¹²⁷ "State of the Union 1953" Accessed 7-6-2017, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=9829>.

¹²⁸ Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defense Community, Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defense, 1950-1955*, 70–75.

and percentage that the Netherlands would have to contribute would have adverse effects.¹²⁹ During the Paris conference of 1952, the first criticism of the Netherlands was alleviated. The European Defense Community would become a part of NATO and would fall under the command of the supreme commander of the allied forces.¹³⁰ The agreement that was presented to the Dutch parliament in December 1953 was more of a pragmatic compromise than an agreement that the Dutch government could fully embrace. The way the Defense Community would be financed was still unclear but it would be equitable according to the contribution to the overall military force. Also, the Defense Community in the eyes of the Dutch government was a stepping stone towards further European integration. The most interesting aspect of the reply to parliament was that according to the Dutch government, the agreement would ensure that the United States would commit troops to Europe that it would deem necessary for the defense of Western Europe. Moreover, the government informed parliament that the supreme commander of the allied forces in Europe had ensured that the defense of Dutch territory would remain a priority for the United States. It seemed that the Netherlands had succeeded in keeping the United States invested in Europe by participating in the treaty.¹³¹

By 1954, the Netherlands had agreed to allow the United States to establish a military base on its territory. This decision should be seen in the context of the struggle between France and the United States at the time. Because Eisenhower wanted to reduce the military expenses and at the same time strengthen Western Europe, Eisenhower's New Look policy called for the European states to help themselves up to a certain point. By having a military base in the Netherlands, the Dutch government could ensure that the United States would defend its territory in the event of a war and at the same time ensure that the United States would maintain a permanent presence in Europe.¹³² The troubles between France and the United States however, were not over.

In France both the military itself, although not openly, the communists, and the Gaullists were opposed to the European Defense Community. Anti-German sentiment was still an important factor in French politics after the war and the Plevin Plan had been controversial. In August 1954, the French government was unable to gain enough support in the French National Assembly and the proposal to create a European army failed.¹³³ While this was a huge disappointment for Eisenhower, who had been a strong proponent of European cooperation and German rearmament, it did not result in the United States pulling resources away from Europe. At the same time, the British had been promoting an alternative for the European Defense Community. Their idea was to incorporate Germany into the

¹²⁹ "Buitenlandse zaken memo 61436-4057 GS" Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Europese Defensie Gemeenschap, nummer toegang 2.05.331, inventarisnummer 21.

¹³⁰ "Memorandum, 5 mei 1952" Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Europese Defensie Gemeenschap, nummer toegang 2.05.331, inventarisnummer 21.

¹³¹ "Memorie van Antwoord 22 december 1953" Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken: Europese Defensie Gemeenschap, nummer toegang 2.05.331, inventarisnummer 80.

¹³² Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defense Community, Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defense, 1950-1955*, 70-71.

¹³³ Arnold Kanter, "The European Defense Community in the French National Assembly: A Roll Call Analysis," *Comparative Politics* 2, no. 2 (1970): 203-6.

already existing NATO framework.¹³⁴ Instead of the creation of a large multinational armed force that would include German elements, Germany would join NATO and be allowed to remilitarize. Despite all the drama, conflict and clashing viewpoints between the main participants in the European Defense Community negotiations, the European Defense Community failure showed that the United States would continue to support Europe militarily. It also was a test case for European integration. Finally, the failure of the European Defense Community showed political positions that would mostly remain in place during the 1950's and 1960's. France would reject any agreement that they perceived was a threat to their sovereignty and Britain would try to maintain ties to the continent without becoming involved in supranational organizations. Finally, it showed that the United States would remain committed to the defense of Western Europe despite the setback of failing to strengthen European military cooperation.¹³⁵

Conclusion

The larger European context in which the Netherlands invited the United States over to establish military bases was one that was dominated by different interests and a United States that tried to create a common European security policy. Because of its small size and relative low military power, the Netherlands could not have a large amount of influence on the final outcome. By making sure that American interests and Dutch interests coincided, by allowing the United States to establish military bases in the Netherlands, the Dutch government could sway negotiations in a direction that would favor the Netherlands on some level. While the final outcome of the European Defense Community agreement might not have been entirely favorable to the Netherlands, the Dutch government managed to align American and Dutch interests and at the same time ensure that the United States would remain invested in Europe. While it is debatable how much influence the Dutch government had on the United States, the outcome was favorable to the Netherlands. The role France played in the crisis about the European Defense Community was probably more influential in shaping the final outcome. Because without their participation, the community would fail. The failure of the community itself, however does not render the diplomacy leading up to the failure void.

¹³⁴ Lundestad, *"Empire" by Integration*, 43–48.

¹³⁵ Ruane, *The Rise and Fall of the European Defense Community, Anglo-American Relations and the Crisis of European Defense, 1950-1955*, 188–97.

7. The Dutch Invitation

This chapter of the thesis will examine the perspective of the Netherlands on American bases. While chapter three and four focused on the American interest in establishing bases in Western Europe, this chapter will examine why the Netherlands wanted American bases within its own borders. The Netherlands before the Second World War had not been involved in a major European conflict since the Napoleonic Wars and had maintained a position of armed neutrality. Why did the Netherlands change their position after the Second World War? The first part of this chapter will examine the Dutch interests and concerns in the final year of the Second World War and directly after. The chapter will then examine why the Netherlands was important enough for the Americans to establish military bases. It will then examine how the Dutch viewed the Americans and why the bases were built. After this, the chapter will focus on Dutch prime minister Willem Drees and how his policies led to the establishment of bases. The central question in this chapter is why did the Netherlands invite the United States to establish military bases?

Post war transition

The Second World War was harsh on the Netherlands. While the Netherlands had suffered during the war, the Dutch industry was heavily invested in during the war by the Germans and at the end of the war was at a level not quite so different then at the start of the war.¹³⁶ During the winter of 1944-1945 a large-scale famine threatened the Netherlands. The southern part of the Netherlands, the whole of Limburg and most part of Brabant, had been liberated in 1944. The Dutch government in exile, which was established in London after the German invasion of the Netherlands, realized during the war that it was impossible to return to the Netherlands without the aid of the allies. This aid was once again called on in January 1945. In order to prevent mass starvation due to the famine in the unliberated and liberated parts of the Netherlands, the Dutch government in exile called upon the United States to help with the relief effort. After the invasion, the Dutch had become part of the allies and the post-war position of the Netherlands was linked to the relationship it had with the others states of the allies. This dependence however, was a huge change from the position of neutrality the Netherlands had had from almost 150 years. The Dutch government was unsure about the future post war situation of the Netherlands and the role that it would play in the new international system. A report from the American ambassador to the Dutch government in exile illustrates this. “The long and short of the matter is that these officials are representing and are working on the behalf of a country which is small, is being weakened and is -with warrant- terribly concerned about the future; and they are dealing constantly with officials of three countries which are large powerful and pre-occupied with the problems of defeating common enemies and laying the foundations for relationships of peace and

¹³⁶ Hein A.M. Klemann, *Nederland 1938-1948 Economie En Samenleving in Jaren van Oorlog En Bezetting* (Haarlem: Boom, 2002), 300–302.

security in the postwar world.”¹³⁷ Ine Megens in her book *American aid to NATO allies in the 1950's the Dutch case* argues that the Dutch dependency on the United States was not something that was well liked among the government in exile. Megens argues that Dutch foreign policy from 1945 to 1947 was a transitional period where the Netherlands did not want to be depended on the United States and tried to revert back to a foreign policy that tried to emphasize neutrality.¹³⁸ The position of the Netherlands after the Second World War however, was not a position that would benefit a neutral stance. Megens argues that two foreign policy problems shaped the Dutch foreign policy after the end of the war. The first was what would happen with Germany and how Germany would fit in the new European order after the war. The second was Indonesia.¹³⁹ The government of the Netherlands hoped that the Dutch empire would survive the Second World War, the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, however, had allowed for Indonesia revolutionaries to strengthen their position. After the Japanese capitulation, the Indonesian revolutionaries declared their independence from the Netherlands. The Netherlands in response send over troops in what was called the “first police action”. Both the Netherlands and the Indonesian nationalists appealed to the Americans for support. The Americans were hesitant about supporting either side. On the one hand they could support the Dutch and strengthen their economic recovery by allowing them access to the natural resources of Indonesia. On the other hand, they could support the Indonesian nationalists and support the ideal of self-government that the United States always championed in its propaganda. The State Department in December 1945 prepared a memorandum about a possible position the United States could take on the Indonesia issue. Instead of supporting either side, the memorandum suggested that the United States use the newly created United Nations to solve the issue.¹⁴⁰ The Indonesian nationalists, however, viewed the United States as a force acting against them. While Dutch troops did not use American equipment, although the Dutch government had asked for American weapons and vehicles, the Americans had trained a brigade of Dutch troops that was to be used in the war in the Pacific. When Japan surrendered, this brigade was still in the United States. In 1945, this brigade left the United States and became part of the Dutch forces in Indonesia.¹⁴¹ The United States was concerned about the Indonesia conflict however, communism in both Europe and Asia had to be contained. An Indonesia that felt that it could not count on the United States to support its independence might try to call on the Soviet Union for support. In January 1949, the CIA did a study on the Indonesia conflict. The study argued that “The Dutch action will have important economic consequences for the US and the rest of Western Europe as well for the Netherlands” and that “The situation in Indonesia enables the Soviets to espouse

¹³⁷ “The Ambassador to the Netherlands Government in Exile (Hornbeck) to President Roosevelt, February 21, 1945”, E. Ralph Perkins, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers 1945, Volume V, Europe* (Washington, DC, 1968), 5–8.

¹³⁸ Megens, *American Aid to NATO Allies in the 1950s the Dutch Case*, 15–23.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 23–26.

¹⁴⁰ “USGA/Gen/29, December 26, 1945”, S. Everett Gleason, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic Papers 1946, Volume VIII, The Far East* (Washington, DC, 1971), 787–89.

¹⁴¹ Megens, *American Aid to NATO Allies in the 1950s the Dutch Case*, 29–30.

vigorously all nationalist aspirations and gives them an opportunity to identify the United States as a partner of the Dutch.”¹⁴² In late 1949, the Dutch pulled their forces back from Indonesia and the Indonesian republic gained its independence. The reason why the Dutch changed their foreign policy to one that supported the United States was that the Netherlands wanted to continue to ensure that the United States remained an important part of European politics. If the United States was not involved in European politics then France or the United Kingdom would become too influential and the influence of the Netherlands would decrease. By trying to align Dutch and American interests, the Netherlands hoped that they could influence European politics. As discussed in the previous chapter, having an American presence, and thus interest in the Netherlands, the Dutch government hoped that this would align American and Dutch interests.¹⁴³

As was mentioned in the fourth chapter, Truman’s foreign policy doctrine dictated that communism had to be stopped both through military and economic means. This meant strengthening the European countries that were most vulnerable to a communist revolution. The had suffered during the war. Consumption, employment and industry had all dropped during the war. Certain economic sectors had profited from the war. Transportation services, especially by ship, had increased.¹⁴⁴ After the winter of 1944-1945 the food, clothing, shoes and fuel supply dropped in the Netherlands. This caused levels of unrest and poverty to rise. Even in the liberated parts of the county, fuel was scarce.¹⁴⁵ The newly liberated Netherlands thus inherited the problems with poverty that arose during the final years of the war. To preserve stability in Western Europe, the United States had to help the Netherlands rebuilt their country. While it never became an influential part of Dutch politics, the Dutch Communist Party CPN saw a large increase in members following the end of the Second World War.¹⁴⁶ Another reason the United States wanted the Netherlands to be stable was because of the strategic location of the Netherlands. The Netherlands had profited in the nineteenth century from the rise and industrialization of Germany. The rivers that Germany and the Netherlands shared had proven to be important for the economies of both countries. From a military perspective, the rivers, and the general location of the Netherlands itself, were interesting because the Netherlands could be used to supply and support the military forces stationed in Germany as part of the occupation force. While bases were not established during the Truman presidency, the New Look policy placed even further emphasis on the strategic importance of the Netherlands. Because of the focus on air power, the Netherlands became home to an American airbase. The strategic importance of the Netherlands however, should not be overemphasized. Base deployment in the 1950’s was very limited.

¹⁴² “Consequences of Dutch Police Action in Indonesia, 27 January 1949” Central Intelligence Agency, CIA Reading Room.

¹⁴³ Megens, *American Aid to NATO Allies in the 1950s the Dutch Case*, 31–32.

¹⁴⁴ Klemann, *Nederland 1938-1948 Economie En Samenleving in Jaren van Oorlog En Bezetting*, 379–82.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 468–89.

¹⁴⁶ “CPN Ledentallen (1909-1991) | Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen (DNPP),” accessed March 23, 2017, <http://dnpp.ub.rug.nl/dnpp/pp/cpn/leden>.

Dutch base politics

But what exactly changed in Dutch politics and public opinion that resulted in the United States establishing military bases? The Netherlands up to the Second World War had pursued a policy of neutrality. The Netherlands prior to the Second World War was highly reliant on trade, its small size and limited capacity to field armies or fleets prevented it from taking an active role in European politics. The war itself had an important effect on Dutch politics. During the war a large part of the Dutch public opinion began to support changes to the government. Dutch politics and society prior to the Second World War was highly segregated and pillarized. Each social group or pillar had its own political movement. There was a protestant political party for protestant Christians and a catholic party for Catholics. The Nederlandse Volksbeweging, NVB, was a movement that was founded during the war as an idealistic non pillarized political movement that advocated political renewal. The movement advocated a renewal that would try to remove the old party and pillar structure and create a system with larger parties.¹⁴⁷ The other development that shifted the Dutch to move to a foreign policy that stressed participation was that the Netherlands was afraid that the postwar order would not be beneficial to them. Already during the war Foreign Minister in exile Van Kleffens argued that Germany after its defeat would have to be contained. The best way to do this according to him was the development of an Atlantic alliance. The benefit of this alliance was that it would include all the Western powers and in a way create a dependency between them. This would result in the minor powers like the Netherlands and Belgium having the ability to on some level steer the other larger powers in a direction that they want.¹⁴⁸

The first step the Netherlands took on its path to take a more active role in world politics was to join the Brussels Treaty Organization. This organization became the bases for the Western European Union, an international military alliance between the Benelux countries, France and Britain. The Dutch government viewed this as an important step to keeping the United States military forces in Europe. As previously discussed, there was a lot of resistance in the United States to a large garrison in Europe mainly because it was expensive. The Dutch wanted to ensure that the United States would remain active in Europe because of the Netherlands feared that a Europe without the United States would be dominated by France and Britain. The bargaining position of the Netherlands in the international organizations was weak and therefore most of the defense plans that were created in the early 1950's and late 1940's that would be used in the event of a Soviet invasion did not consider the Netherlands to be strategically important. Most of the focus in these plans was to defend France. While the Dutch did manage to eventually get a common defense plan that ensured the Netherlands was defended in the event of a Soviet invasion, having the United States play an active role in Europe

¹⁴⁷ David J. Snyder, *U.S. Public Diplomacy in the New Netherlands, 1945-1958: Policy, Ideology, and the Instrumentality of American Power* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI, 2007), 35–45.

¹⁴⁸ Jan van der Harst, "U.S. Forces in the Netherlands, 1950-1960," in *U.S. Military Forces in Europe, the Early Years, 1945-1970*, ed. Simon Duke (Oxford, 1993), 207–8.

would level the negotiation ground between the powerful nations in Europe. Criticism of the European defense Community was largely the same. It was dominated by France and Germany. The Netherlands preferred a remote power like the United States to European powers who would focus policy on their own needs.¹⁴⁹ This new enthusiasm for participation in international organizations can also be seen in the parliamentary debate that led up to the signing of the Atlantic Treaty. Interestingly most of the parties in parliament were in favor of the treaty. The party that offered the most resistance was the communist party. Their argument was that the North Atlantic Treaty organization would increase tension between the Soviet Union and Western Europe. Most of the other parties voted in favor of the treaty, only the small reformed party RPV had some doubts during the debate, but voted in favor in the end.¹⁵⁰ When Eisenhower as supreme commander of the Allied Forces in Europe visited the Netherlands on his tour through Europe, he argued that the Netherlands should invest more in its defense. Eisenhower argued that airpower would fit best into NATO strategy as airpower close to the East-German border was lacking. American airpower in Europe was concentrated around Great-Britain. While Eisenhower had set lofty goals as examined in an earlier chapter. It was difficult for each of the different European states to meet these goals.¹⁵¹ The Netherlands in particular had difficulty meeting them. After the Second World War the Dutch created a system called the *verzorgingstaat* or welfare state. This system was crucial to the stability of the Netherlands. It redistributed wealth so each citizen had some basic standard of living. David J. Snyder argues that the welfare state was partly created to create a stable post war society along Keynesian ideals that would be stable enough to deter possible civil unrest such as a communist revolution. Combining both a sizable military with a welfare state was a difficult balance.¹⁵² To satisfy the United States, the Dutch government in 1951 almost doubled their defense budget in their proposed budget for 1952, from 850 million to 1.5 billion. The Dutch army also adopted a training system based on that of the United States and extended the conscription period from 12 to 18 months.¹⁵³ There was still suspicion towards the Netherlands in the United States. When a cabinet crisis ensued in 1951 and the Dutch cabinet fell as a result, prime minister Drees could not keep the commitment of 1.5 billion guilders.¹⁵⁴ When Drees was re-elected later that year, he proposed a new program that, while it would not reach the set goal of 1.5 billion, it reiterated that the Netherlands was firmly committed to NATO. In the parliamentary debate that followed, the main concerns were that the welfare state would be at risk.¹⁵⁵ An unbalanced budget that would threaten the economic recovery of the Netherlands would be equally as dangerous as a military invasion from the Soviet Union. Civil unrest and economic stagnation would undo most

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 209–10.

¹⁵⁰ Handelingen der Tweede Kamer, 68^{ste} Vergadering, 15 July 1949, 1681-1701.

¹⁵¹ van der Harst, "U.S. Forces in the Netherlands, 1950-1960," 210–12.

¹⁵² Snyder, *U.S. Public Diplomacy in the New Netherlands, 1945-1958*, 393–401.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 410–12.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 412.

¹⁵⁵ Handelingen der Tweede Kamer, 68^{ste} Vergadering, 29 May 1951, 1853-1890.

of the progress that had been made since the liberation of the Netherlands.¹⁵⁶ The new Drees cabinet had to balance the concerns of the Americans on the one hand, who were still concerned that the Netherlands would not be committed to NATO and the domestic concerns about economic stagnation due to excessive defense spending.¹⁵⁷ In January 1952, Drees visited the United States in what was officially a research trip about labor relations in the United States. The secret agenda for the visit however had two days planned out for a visit to the White House, meetings with several important members of Congress and meetings with several important cabinet ministers of the United States including Secretary of State Acheson.¹⁵⁸ Part of the reason of the visit was to reassure the United States that Drees was fully committed to NATO. When the first Drees cabinet fell in late 1952, and Drees was re-elected, the American ambassador saw this as evidence that the policies of Drees were compatible with the larger expenses in defense. While defense spending did increase, they were nowhere near the level of 1.5 billion that the 1951 budget had planned. Only in 1954 did the budget reach the level of 1.5 billion. The goal of the Dutch governments, however, to keep the United States committed to the Netherlands, had succeeded. The United States would continue to support the Netherlands.¹⁵⁹

Military bases in the Netherlands

The support the United States would give the Netherlands would not be limited to financial and military assistance. The United States would eventually establish military bases in the Netherlands. The election of Eisenhower and his proposed New Look strategy first raised concerns among Dutch officials. They feared that Eisenhower would reduce the number of troops in Europe and therefore leave Europe with less defenses. The Dutch in 1953, asked the United States to station troops within their border, both as a guarantee that they would not abandon Europe and as a guarantee that the United States would maintain an interest in the Netherlands, to counter balance the weight of France and the United Kingdom in NATO. While the Americans did not give the Dutch the large number of troops they asked for, three squadrons, the Americans argued that the Netherlands was of strategic importance to defending West Germany. The Americans therefore promised the Netherlands that a single squadron was to be stationed in the country. Negotiations started that would eventually lead to the Soesterberg agreement.¹⁶⁰ At the start of the negotiations, the Truman-Attlee understanding was seen as a good starting off point. An informal agreement that would not have to be ratified by parliament. While the Soesterberg agreement was a formal agreement, the United States was also

¹⁵⁶ Daalder and Gaemers, *Premier En Elder Statesman, Willem Drees 1886-1988. De Jaren 1948-1988*, 236–39.

¹⁵⁷ Snyder, *U.S. Public Diplomacy in the New Netherlands, 1945-1958*, 421–33.

¹⁵⁸ “Tentative Itinerary for the Visit of the Prime Minister of the Netherlands to the United States” Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Archief W. Drees [levensjaren 1886-1988], nummer toegang 2.21.286, inventarisnummer 963.

¹⁵⁹ Snyder, *U.S. Public Diplomacy in the New Netherlands, 1945-1958*, 432–40.

¹⁶⁰ van der Harst, “U.S. Forces in the Netherlands, 1950-1960,” 213–14.

informally allowed to use a radar facility near Alkmaar and Den Bosch. Parliament was not informed about them and there is no information to be found on the extend of these two installations.¹⁶¹ The formal negotiations themselves were mainly focused on legal issues. The agreement would remain in force until the end of NATO. The agreement allowed the United States to establish military bases in the Netherlands by mutual agreement between the Dutch government and the United States government. The land for these bases would be provided without cost for the United States. Good and equipment will be imported duty free.¹⁶²

There were two levels of agreements that allowed the Americans to station military forces in the Netherlands. Unlike with Germany, which was occupied by the Americans, stationing military forces in the Netherlands required the consent of the Dutch state. This consent came on two legal levels. The first is the status of forces agreement, the second was the actual basing agreement that established the military base. The status of forces agreement is interesting because the usage in the Netherlands was actually a test case to see if it could be used throughout NATO. The status of forces agreement that was used was the NATO status of forces agreement that was signed by all members of NATO in 1951.¹⁶³ The NATO status of forces agreement was revolutionary because it provided a framework for each of the members of NATO regarding the legal rights and privileges for military forces in the territory of another member state.¹⁶⁴ The status of forces agreement first provides legal means should American forces break the law in the host country. It also provides rules and regulations for civilians attached to the military deployment. These can be family of the deployed troops but also civilian personal who are necessary for the functioning of the base. Finally, a status of forces agreement provides taxation rules for the troop stationed in the host state.¹⁶⁵ The second level of agreements is the actual basing agreement itself. This agreement allows the basing state to establish a base at an area specified by the host state. While these agreements vary in scope and size depending on local circumstances, each American base has its own base agreement. The base agreement that was signed between the Netherlands and the United States was the Soesterberg agreement in 1954. This agreement allowed the United States to establish a joint American-Dutch airbase at the airport near Soesterberg. The base was called New Amsterdam.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 215–16.

¹⁶² “Notawisseling tussen de Nederlandse en de Amerikaanse Regering inzake legering van Amerikaanse troepen in Nederland, met Bijlagen; 's-Gravenhage, 13 Augustus 1954”, *Tractatenblad van het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden*, 120 (1954) 21.

¹⁶³ “NATO - Official Text: Agreement between the Parties to the North Atlantic Treaty Regarding the Status of Their Forces, 19-Jun.-1951,” accessed May 1, 2017, http://www.nato.int/cps/in/natohq/official_texts_17265.htm.

¹⁶⁴ Jeffrey R. Webb, ed., *Status of Forces Agreement: Foreign Jurisdiction and Congressional Oversight*, Defense, Security and Strategies (New York, NY: Nova, 2012), 1–8.

¹⁶⁵ R. Chuck Mason, *Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA): What Is It, and How Has It Been Utilized?* (Collingdale: DIANE Publishing, 2010), 20–23.

¹⁶⁶ “Soesterbergovereenkomst - :: Maxius.nl Voorheen Lexius.nl,” accessed April 3, 2017, <http://maxius.nl/notawisseling-tussen-de-nederlandse-en-de-amerikaanse-regering-houdende-een-overeenkomst-inzake-legering-van-amerikaanse-troepen-in-nederland-s-gravenhage-13-08-1954>.

On October 26 1954, the Dutch parliament discussed the deployment of American forces to Soesterberg. The debate is interesting because it is not really at all a debate. While during the debate about NATO, there were questions from multiple parties, the deployment of American troops however did not spark any kind of debate. In fact, the agreement with the United States was one of several laws that was passed during the same plenary session. The only opposition to the law came from communist member of parliament Henk Gortzak. Gortzak argued that the Netherlands would become dependent on the American congress, which could amend the Status of Forces agreement. He stated that this was an American occupation of the Netherlands and that it served no other purpose than an American imperialistic ambition to control Europe. Frans Goedhart on the other hand, an anti-communist member of parliament for the ruling Labour party congratulated the Dutch government on taking the initiative to invite American forces to the Netherlands. When the parliament voted on the proposal to station American troops in the Netherlands only the communist CPN party voted against.¹⁶⁷ In the media, there was little to no discussion on these bases. The lack of dissent against the proposed military bases and NATO participation can be attributed to the fact that the Americans were seen as liberators after the Second World War and the American public diplomacy campaign to create a favorable image of the United States in the Netherlands.¹⁶⁸ This is telling for the huge transformation the Netherlands underwent after the Second World War. From a country that tried to maintain its neutrality to a country whose parliament with a very large majority joins a military alliance and invites foreign troops to be stationed within its own borders. This pragmatic attitude can also be seen in the way the Dutch government allowed tactical nuclear weapons to be stationed in the Netherlands. The Dutch government allowed these weapons in exchange for more influence in NATO.¹⁶⁹ The Netherlands tried to expand their influence by aligning its interests with those of the United States.

The bases that were established are interesting because of the void they filled in the American and NATO defense framework in Western Europe. While the importance of the bases in the Netherlands should not be overemphasized, at the height of American deployments in the Netherlands only 3000 American troops were stationed on these military bases. In the 1950's two bases were established. New-Amsterdam near Soesterberg filled a strategic gap in the airbase system the United States was building. This gap was in between the airbases in Germany and those in the United Kingdom. In the event of a Soviet invasion, several air squadrons would have to fly from the United Kingdom to West Germany. By having an airbase in between these two strategic positions, the United States would be able to deploy air power more effectively in the event of a war.¹⁷⁰ Next to the New Amsterdam air base in Soesterberg, a base was established near Rotterdam in the city of Capelle aan den IJssel in 1957, this base was not militarily in nature but administrative and served as a logistics

¹⁶⁷ Handelingen der Tweede Kamer, 7de Vergadering, 26 October 1954, 129-141.

¹⁶⁸ Snyder, *U.S. Public Diplomacy in the New Netherlands, 1945-1958*, 499-546.

¹⁶⁹ van der Harst, "U.S. Forces in the Netherlands, 1950-1960," 224-25.

¹⁷⁰ Duke, *United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe*, 22.

center for the troops in the New Amsterdam base and in Germany. German supreme commander at the start of the First World War Von Moltke had argued that the neutrality of the Netherlands was necessary because “It is extremely important to ensure that there remains a route through the Netherlands through which we can import goods. It should in a sense become our trachea through which we can breathe.”¹⁷¹ The Americans during the Second World War may have followed a similar logic. American supply lines into Germany after the end of the war all ran through either port cities in the Netherlands or Belgium. Eventually the plan was to reroute supply lines into the American zone in Germany through Bremen and Bremerhaven.¹⁷² Supply lines to southern West Germany however, would continue through the port of Rotterdam. The base in Capelle aan den IJssel, a city close to Rotterdam, would serve as a logistics and administrative center that would cooperate closely with supply bases in Germany and other parts of the Netherlands.¹⁷³ The reason why the United States did not develop the base in Capelle aan den IJssel to a larger naval base was because of the military bases they had established in the United Kingdom and at Bremerhaven. These bases were more strategically important for power projection. As discussed in chapter four, there was a close relationship between the United States Navy and the Royal Navy. The base at Capelle aan den IJssel remained an important logistics center, shipping over a million ton of supplies to bases further inland in 1989, at the height of American bases in the Netherlands.¹⁷⁴

So how did American base deployments develop during the early Cold War in the Netherlands? Eisenhower’s New Look policy also called for nuclear weapons to be used in the event of a Soviet invasion. In 1957, the Americans asked the Dutch government if they could station nuclear weapons in the Netherlands. While a lot of sources regarding nuclear weapon deployments are still classified and inaccessible due to the fact that these bases are still active or due to the fact that these archives are still not accessible to the public, research has already been done by Simon Duke, who examined military bases in Western Europe. He lists three military bases in the Netherlands that were storage depots for nuclear weapons. While they were not all established during the 1950’s, it does show the extent to which the Netherlands went to accommodate the United States.¹⁷⁵ The resistance to the bases and to the nuclear weapons stationed there was also very limited in the 1950’s. Only the communist party and the newly established pacifist party were against nuclear weapons being stationed in the Netherlands. During the 1950’s there existed such a broad consensus that by 1960, the Netherlands even housed ballistic missiles and nuclear capable bombers.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷¹ Paul Moeyes, *Buiten Schot Nederland Tijdens de Eerste Wereldoorlog 1914 - 1918* (De Arbeiderspers, 2014), 84.

¹⁷² "Memorandum by the State-War-Navy Coordinating Committee to the Acting Secretary of State", William Slany, *Foreign Relations of the United States: Diplomatic Papers, 1945, European Advisory Commission, Austria, Germany, Volume III*, 249-252.

¹⁷³ Duke, *United States Military Forces and Installations in Europe*, 24–26.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 26.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 32–36.

¹⁷⁶ van der Harst, “U.S. Forces in the Netherlands, 1950-1960,” 226–29.

Conclusion

The Netherlands changed quite a bit during the 1940's and 1950's. From a country that valued its neutrality to an active participant in global politics. Next to these foreign policy concerns, domestically, the Netherlands needed both maintain the support of the Americans while also ensuring that the Dutch welfare state would remain intact. The Netherlands were willing to go through great lengths in order to keep the United States involved in the European theater even inviting the United States to establish military bases in the Netherlands. In Dutch society and politics, the Americans were also highly regarded, there was little to no resistance in the Netherlands against the deployment of military bases and even nuclear weapons. Only after 1960, did opposition to the military bases grow into a larger social antiwar movement. The 1950's in Dutch politics regarding foreign affairs were mostly characterized by a broad consensus about policy towards the rest of Europe and the United States. The 'American Empire' in the Netherlands can thus be characterized as a true empire by invitation. It was a pragmatic mutually beneficial relationship between the Netherlands and the United States.

8. Conclusion

American military bases in the Netherlands during the early Cold War were more than just small garrisons of troops. They were parts of a much larger picture of early Transatlantic relations during the Cold War. They were both the goal and a means to achieve that goal. Lundestad argued that the American Empire in Europe was the result of an invitation by the European states to the United States. Military bases and cooperation were a small part of this invitation. This thesis has argued that this invitation was especially important for the Netherlands, and American military bases, even though in the period discussed were only a small element of cooperation between the United States and the Netherlands. Military bases would provide the Netherlands with extra security in the event of a conflict with the Soviet Union and by conforming to American viewpoints, the Netherlands could ensure that its position was not undermined by other, more powerful European states. This relationship was mutually beneficial.

As argued in chapter two, states build overseas bases when they perceive that this base can provide them with certain strategic benefits such as increased power projection, securing important strategic locations, coercion of other states, to gather intelligence, or to support already existing military installations in the region. According to the theory by Calder, the success of a military base depends on the base politics pursued by both the basing state and the host nation. In the host nation, political and social support for the military base has to be high to ensure that the basing state can be guaranteed that the base will not be removed in a couple of years. In most circumstances, when host states are willing participants in base politics, power disparity between the basing state and the host nation plays an important role. The host state should gain something from the establishment of the base in their territory. The theories on overseas military bases showed just how complex the political reality around the establishment of military bases is. While the theories can broadly explain why the United States wanted to establish military bases in the Netherlands and why the Netherlands would want them to establish these military bases, states don't exist in a vacuum. The next two chapters showed how events during the Early Cold War shaped American overseas basing policy. Interestingly, the arguments that Harkavy uses to explain why states would build military bases outside their territory seem to hold up. The United States wanted to deter the Soviet Union from invading Western Europe and by supporting Western Europe militarily, they could on the one hand show their commitment to defend Europe, through organizations such as NATO, and on the other hand project power in Europe through military deployments. By reinforcing Europe, the United States could reinforce its historically weak side and support allies that could help defend the United States. Eisenhower was instrumental in the establishment of military bases in Europe. His New Look policy focused on air and nuclear power and these two forms of power projection would continue to be the main source of American military forces in Western Europe. If one compares the overseas military presence in Europe to a fortress, one could argue that Truman laid the foundation and Eisenhower

build the fortress walls. The position of the Netherlands in this political development was interesting. While initially, Dutch and American interests both clashed and aligned, the Dutch adapted their policy towards Indonesian independence. In return, they invited the United States to establish military bases in the Netherlands. The Netherlands profited from the military bases as this would align the security interests of the Netherlands with those of the United States. The Netherlands also benefited from the increased security the bases would bring. Calder's theory and Alan's theory seem to be confirmed in the Dutch case. However, most of the theories discussed only focused on the relationship between the host and basing state. The larger context of basing is an element that has not been examined in the literature. This thesis aimed to show that the larger context of American basing in the Netherlands was important as the invitation was sent partly because this would strengthen the Dutch position in Europe. By inviting the Americans the Netherlands was also able to keep the United States invested in Europe politically and counter-balance France, Britain and West Germany.

The changed political order in Europe and the shift in Dutch foreign policy after the war in Indonesia, were the primary catalysts that started the Dutch policy of having the United States involved in Western Europe and trying to align the Dutch goals with those of the United States. Having American military bases in the Netherlands would ensure that at least on some level these goals aligned. Because there was little hostility towards the United States in the Netherlands, the Dutch government feared little resistance to American bases when they invited the United States to start constructing American bases in the Netherlands. This makes the Netherlands an interesting case study as this seems to contrast the views of Vine and Johnson about military bases as discussed in the first chapter.

While it might seem that this thesis has come to a different conclusion than the most recent research on American bases. The difference between this thesis and the most recent research is the way this topic has been approached. Vine focusses on military bases in countries that did not have base building by invitation but instead were forced to allow American troops in their territory like Germany or Japan. The base politics and relations between the host state and basing nation were different from the start. This also invokes Calder and Allen's theories about the relationship between the host state and basing nation. Because the basing state was seen not as a liberator but as an occupying force, the success of the military bases, according to these theories, would be less likely. This thesis therefore does not contradict previous findings of other researchers, instead it adds to the debate by examining a state where American bases politics were a success, and both the host state and the basing state benefited from the relationship. The research done in the late 1980's and early 1990's was the foundation on which Johnson and Vine build their arguments. The theories discussed in the second chapter all complement each other because they focus on different aspects of base politics and the base politics discussed in the later chapters, based partly on these theories, provide an interesting and unique perspective on American base politics. Merging the theories and using them to compare different host countries might be an interesting start for new research. This thesis has tried to

contribute to the debate on American overseas military bases and by examining the Netherlands has provided a unique perspective on base politics. By viewing this thesis in the context of previous research the thesis contributes to a better understanding of base politics, but also leads to further questions such as whether the Netherlands is unique in its invitation.

Base politics remains a minor but important topic in the larger context of transatlantic relations. The Dutch invitation was an even smaller part of this development. The invitation is, however, relevant as this explains how the American Empire of bases began in the Netherlands and how base politics shaped both American and Dutch foreign policy. Geir Lundestad was right in his argument that the European states, specifically the Netherlands, invited the United States to Europe after the Second World War. The Dutch invitation, however, was not only an invitation to build military bases in the Netherlands but also an invitation to strengthen post war ties and firmly bind the United States and the Netherlands together.

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Appendix 1: Overview of military bases in the Netherlands

Location	Purpose	Date established	Date closed	Number of Personnel (1989)
Brunssum, Limburg	Command center (NATO)	1953 (Moved to the Netherlands 1966)	Active	500 Airforce
Soesterberg, Utrecht	Airbase	1954	2008	2139 Airforce, 297 Civilians
Capelle aan den IJssel, Zuid-Holland	Sealift Command, Offices	1957	Active	300 Airforce, Army and Navy
Coevorden, Drenthe	Supply Depot	1964	1998	25 Airforce
Eygelshoven, Limburg	Supply Depot	1964	1999	25 Airforce
SHAPE Technical Centre, The Hague, Zuid-Holland	Communications and Information Agency	1955	Active (NCI Agency)	100 Airfoce
't Harde, Gelderland	Nuclear Weapons Storage	1961	1992	25 Airforce
Havelterberg, Drenthe	Nuclear Weapons Storage	1961	1992	25 Airforce
Schinnen, Limburg	Airbase, logistics	1967	Active	200 Airforce
Steenwijk, Overijssel	Duke lists this base, unknown			
Vlagentwedde, Groningen	Supply Depot	1964	1999	25 airforce
Volkel, Brabant	Unknown	1960's	active	140
Woensdrecht, Brabant	Airbase, Ballistic Missiles	1986	1994	1500

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