

# The Corps' identity as a weapon to secure its existence

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THE POSITION OF THE DUTCH MARINE CORPS WITHIN THE  
DUTCH ARMY AFTER THE REORGANISATION DURING THE  
NINETIES

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## Preface

## List of abbreviations

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| CKM           | <i>Commandant van het Korps Mariniers</i>           |
| CSCE          | Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe    |
| CVCS          | <i>Comité Verenigde Chefs van Staven</i>            |
| CZMNED        | <i>Commandant Zeemacht Nederland</i>                |
| DPC           | Defence planning committee                          |
| FGO           | <i>Formerings- en Gereedstellingsopdracht</i>       |
| GOEM          | <i>Groep operationele eenheden mariniers</i>        |
| INF           | Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty            |
| IPI           | International Peace Institute                       |
| KCT           | <i>Korps Commando Troepen</i>                       |
| MARCONFOR     | NATO Maritime Contingency Forces                    |
| MARCONFORLANT | Maritime Contingency Force Atlantic                 |
| MCG           | Maritime Combat Group                               |
| NATO          | North Atlantic Treaty Organization                  |
| NLMARSOF      | Netherlands Maritime Special Operations Forces      |
| QPO           | Qua Patet Orbis                                     |
| RRF           | Rapid Reaction Force                                |
| SACEUR        | Supreme Allied Commander Europe                     |
| SATG          | Surface and Assault Training Group                  |
| SSG           | Seabased Support Group                              |
| UN            | United Nations                                      |
| UNAMIC        | United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia          |
| UNCRO         | United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation     |
| UNPF          | United Nations Peace Forces                         |
| UNPREDEP      | United Nations Preventive Deployment Force          |
| UNPROFOR      | United Nations Protection Force                     |
| UNTAC         | United Nations Transnational Authority for Cambodia |

## 1. Introduction

*WO II- veteraan Bill Ramakers, laatste 'Zwarte Duivel' overleden.*<sup>1</sup> On the 7th of February, 2018, the NOS published an article on its website about Bill Ramakers. Ramakers was the last 'Black Devil' that alive. When he was seventeen years old, Ramakers defended the bridges across the river Maas in Rotterdam from the 10<sup>th</sup> until the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, 1940, against the German Wehrmacht. However, after defending the bridges successfully, the centre of Rotterdam was bombed by the Germans. Ramakers was already a prisoner of war at that time, but escaped shortly after the bombing. He was present during the Dutch Veterans' Day in 2014 and was welcomed as a hero by Prime Minister Mark Rutte and former Minister of Defence Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert.<sup>2</sup> The online article gives attention to the most famous myth about the Marine Corps: the story of the 'Black Devils'. Even after almost eighty years, the marines are still known by the story about these Black Devils before the start of the Second World War. So, the article confirms that the story is still remembered by the people in the Netherlands. The relationship between Rotterdam and the Marine Corps is also an important part of the story about marines.

*Qua Patet Orbis* is Latin for 'Zo wijd de wereld strekt' or wherever the world. This is the motto of the Dutch Marine Corps, which was established in 1665. It is specialised in carrying out maritime operations, amphibious landings, and expeditionary land operations with light infantry units. The marines can be deployed for long periods of time, under all climatological and geographical circumstances. The Dutch Marine Corps totals around 2,300 men and it focuses on worldwide operations.<sup>3</sup>

To celebrate the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marine Corps, an edition from the journal *Militaire Spectator* was dedicated to the Corps. *Militaire Spectator* is a Dutch, scientific journal focused on officers of the Dutch army. One of the articles covered the relationship between Rotterdam and the Corps. K. Kornaat and first-sergeant of the marines R.L. Poetiray explain why there is a relationship. In their opinion, the people from Rotterdam feel the symbolism of willpower and endurance of the Dutch Marine Corps. They feel a connection: sobriety and the work ethic are key to both. In September 2013, closing the Van Ghentkazerne

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<sup>1</sup> 'WO II- veteraan Bill Ramakers, laatste 'Zwarte Duivel' overleden': <https://nos.nl/artikel/2215773-wo-ii-veteraan-bill-ramakers-laatste-zwarte-duivel-overleden.html> (accessed on 09-02-2018).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> 'Royal Netherlands Navy: Marine Corps' <https://www.defensie.nl/english/organisation/navy/contents/navy-units/marine-corps> (accessed on 12-10-2017).

in Rotterdam was suggested. The closing had everything to do with a cut of 300 million Euros in the budget of Ministry of Defence and the barrack was going to be the victim of this cut. A part of the people of Rotterdam was in uproar, including the mayor of Rotterdam, Ahmed Aboutaleb, and former marines. Etienne Hennekes, a former marine, collected 12,000 signatures within a couple of weeks to show the drive of people from Rotterdam to stop the closing of the barrack.<sup>4</sup>

In February 2014, the decision to not close the Van Ghentkazerne was made. Although this development in Rotterdam does not cover the future of the whole Dutch Marine Corps, it definitely shows the willingness of people to fight for the future of the marines in Rotterdam. This development can be seen as an example of cuts in the budget of the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps is one of the oldest units of the Dutch Army, but also one of the most expensive. The number of marines has been reduced several times during its history due to cuts in the budget of the Ministry of Defence. However, after several reductions or reorganisations in the history of the Marine Corps, the marines and Ministry of Defence found a solution or a new mission to get the Corps back to its old size. Some researchers discussed this development, but the exact reason how the Marine Corps found a solution, is left open. This thesis will show how the Marine Corps profiled itself within the whole Dutch Army to secure its position and size.

## **1.2 Previous studies and academic relevance**

A lot is known about the Marine Corps, much research has been done to get an insight in the history of the Marine Corps. The book that fits this research the most is *Over grenzen. Het Korps Mariniers na de val van de Muur, 1989-2015*. It was published in 2015 by four researchers of the Netherlands Institute of Military History (NIMH) in The Hague, the Netherlands. Arthur ten Cate, specialist in modern military history, Sven Maaskant, researcher with a lot of knowledge about operational deployment, Jaus Müller, staff officer military history, and Quirijn van der Vegt, a researcher who is specialised in post-war history of Dutch air weapons, wrote the book. It focuses on the Marine Corps after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It describes all the operations that the Marine Corps joined after 1989, such as the operation in

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<sup>4</sup> Klaas Kornaat and Ronald Poetiray, 'Het Korps Mariniers en Rotterdam,' *Militaire Spectator* 184 (2015): 512-520 ; Gerard ten Voorde, 'Marinier hoort gewoon in Rotterdam,' *Reformatisch Dagblad*, November 13, 2013.

Iraq (1990-1991 and 2003-2015), Afghanistan (2005-2013) and the anti-piracy activities (2002-2015).<sup>5</sup>

The authors argue that the Marine Corps got the chance to prove itself after the end of the Cold War. It was able to rediscover its expeditionary specialism in dangerous areas of conflict, worldwide. Furthermore, its flexible can-do mentality helped the marines to overcome any problem. But the cuts in the budget of the Ministry of Defence resulted in a number of obstacles, such as the deletion of a third unit of marines and the centralizing of logistics and personnel management. They also argue that the Marine Corps was deployed more on land than on the sea, but the Marine Corps was the unit that the Dutch Army needed after the fall of the Berlin Wall.<sup>6</sup> This thesis will not focus on the specific operations, but on the identity of the marines and how the Marine Corps used this identity during the 1990s.

Furthermore, many books about the Marine Corps are written to commemorate an operation or another special occasion, such as *Herinneringsboek Detachement Cambodja III*<sup>7</sup>, *Fire-mission: herinneringsboek KMdetachement Bosnië*<sup>8</sup>, and *Mariniers in Bosnië*<sup>9</sup>. These books are mostly written to praise the Marine Corps because of its history or actions, so the books do not give a neutral and realistic view on the Marine Corps. For example, the first book states that the third detachment did, without a doubt, a great job in Cambodia. This thesis will fill in academic the gap and will give a realistic story about the position of the Marine Corps.

### 1.3 Research question and sub questions

The main research question focuses on the existence of the Marine Corps within the Dutch Army. It occurred several times in the history of the marines that there were doubts about the future of the Marine Corps. Why is it made possible, for several times, that the future of the

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<sup>5</sup> Arthur ten Cate et al., *Over grenzen. Het Korps Mariniers na de val van de Muur, 1989-2015* (Amsterdam 2015) 4-8.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 331-332.

<sup>7</sup> R. Cinqualbré, M. Langenkamp, and J. Majoor, *Dutchbatt (III):Royal Netherlands Marine Corps : herinneringsboek Detachement Cambodja III- 1993* (1993).

<sup>8</sup> Mart Vogels, *Fire-mission : herinneringsboek KM-detachement Bosnië 1 : juli 1995 - januari 1996* (Rotterdam 2001).

<sup>9</sup> G.J.M.C.M. Danen, *Mariniers in Bosnië : 4 januari - 28 juni 1996* (Rotterdam 1997).



marines was saved after it was threatened by reduction, or even by abolishment? How did the Marine Corps profile itself after 1989 within the Dutch Army? The period of time that is used for this research question is the second half of the twentieth century, because that period saw several massive cuts concerning the budget of the Ministry of Defence started after 1970. But the focus is mainly on the nineties, after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Before 1989, a fixed percentage of the budget of the Ministry of Defence was given to the three departments of the Dutch Army: the Royal Netherlands Navy and the Royal Netherlands Air Force both got 25 per cent of the total amount of money and the Royal Netherlands Land Force got half of the budget. The distribution of money was, after 1989, controlled by competition between the three departments. The departments got money if it was found capable of joining a specific operation. This way of distributing the money got influence on the Marine Corps and the marines experienced these cuts after 1989.<sup>10</sup>

To answer the main question, the question is divided into four sub-questions. The first question gives information about the Marine Corps itself and what the characteristics are that a marine must have. The second sub-question is about the first big turning points in the history of the Corps, namely after the operation in Dutch New Guinea in 1962. It gives a description of the specific turning point, the national and international developments and the solution that was found to secure the future of the Marine Corps. Attention to the position of the Marine Corps within the Dutch Army is also addressed. The third and fourth sub-questions give attention to the development of the Marine Corps in the nineties. How did the Marine Corps secure its existence during the nineties? Was there a specific reason, on personal or national level, to secure the future of the Marine Corps? The peacekeeping operations that the marines joined are described and this gives an overview of what the reputation of the marines was in these years. Finally, the last and fourth sub-question discusses the existence of the Marine Corps set against the decision-making of the Dutch government, the reputation seen by the Marine Corps and the reputation on the marines by people from outside the Marine Corps. What is the role of the new way to distribute the budget that results in a competition between the different departments of the Dutch Army to join an operation? What kind of influence does this distribution and competition have on the future of the Marine Corps?

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<sup>10</sup> Jaime Karreman, 'Bezuinigingen op Defensie en de Koninklijke Marine,' <http://marineschepen.nl/dossiers/bezuinigingen-defensie-marine.html> (accessed on 09-01-2017).

## **1.4 Methods and sources**

The most difficult part of doing a research about the Marine Corps is that most of the literature is positive and shows a perfect image of the marines. Writers are proud of the way in which the marines are operating in different foreign countries. There is not a lot of discussion about the existence of the Marine Corps in the literature. On every problem, a solution was found by joining operations of the UN or expanding its field of operations to a more international area in the second half of the twentieth century. What is striking about the already existing literature is the fact that little to no attention is paid to the developments behind the decisions. Why are decisions made and how are these decisions implemented? Who are the engineers of the solution that tide the future of the marines? A certain solution is found, but why did the Marine Corps find a solution? Are there no other options concerning the existence of the Marine Corps? Is it really necessary to keep the special forces of the marines alive? This research takes a closer look to this part of the history of the Marine Corps.

The method that is used is an innovative aspect of the research. The use of interviews and the documents of the meetings of the Dutch Parliament give a new view on this subject. The competition between the different departments of the Dutch Land Forces, after 1989, is an interesting development. The relation between this competition and the existence of the Marine Corps is a subject on which a lot more research can be done. First of all, the whole research will be qualitative, so based on literature and other sources. Research has already been done on the contribution of the Marine Corps on national and international level. The marines are seen as an outstanding part of the Dutch Army and have several specific characteristics.

The third and fourth part of the research took a lot more time than the first two chapters, partly due to the method that was used. Primary literature is an important part of the research. Research has been done in different archives, such as in the National Archives in The Hague, the Netherlands, and the Dutch Institute of Military History in The Hague. The Semi Static Archive in Rijswijk did also have a lot of documents that are used in this research. This is not a public archive and permission is needed to get access to the documents. Most of the documents were older than 25 years and were old enough to go to the National Archive. But a lot of them were not ready and had a temporal number. It is possible that some documents are unknown by the given, specific number after finishing this research. Policy budgets of the Ministry of Defence are found online and all the documents that are discussed

during a meeting of the States General of the Netherlands from 1814 until 1995 were available online<sup>11</sup>, with the exception of not public subjects.

It was important to be aware of the very positive texts about the Marine Corps, because most of the texts show only the brave image of the Corps and the enthusiasm about the men in Rotterdam. Most of the books and articles are written in a way to celebrate an anniversary of the Marine Corps. So, the main goal of the writers is to show the positive characteristics of the Marines. The other challenge that can be expected is the process of interviewing. It was difficult to make a life story out of an interview. Interviewees told stories even if it did not encourage them to do so. They told their own story that was based on their own experiences.<sup>12</sup> Because of the research I have done before interviewing these people, it is possible to see the differences between the story of the interviewees and the story that is written down in official documents. It is important to distinguish between the own story of an interviewee and the statement of official documents. However, it is possible that the statements within official documents do not give the real reason behind a decision. Combining both stories will give the most complete description of a development within the Dutch Army.

During the research, four people were interviewed who are related to the subject. It was sometimes difficult to get in contact with them. H.G.B. van den Breemen is an Admiral of the Marine Corps and he was Chief of the Dutch Defence Staff from 1994 until 1998. Jan ten Hove, commander of the Van Ghentkazerne, and Ingo Piepers, a former marine that wrote a book about a coming world war in 2020, were also interviewed to ask what they think of the Marine Corps. These three interviewees are strongly related to the Marine Corps and can help with the perspective from the marines. An anonymous person was interviewed to get a closer look on what people from outside of the Marine Corps think about marines and the developments. He worked closely with former Minister of Defence, Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert. He does have another perspective than the other three persons and explained how he thinks that the Marine Corps got the chance to join the peacekeeping operations in the nineties.

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<sup>11</sup> 'Staten-Generaal digitaal. Parlementaire documenten uit de periode 1814 tot 1995':

<http://www.statengeneraaldigitaal.nl/> (accessed on 21-05-2018).

<sup>12</sup> Yvonna Lincoln and Norman Denzin, *Turning points in qualitative research: tying knots in a handkerchief* (Oxford 2003) 273-276.

## 2.The Dutch Marine Corps and its establishment

*'Gij weet wat ons korps kan!*

*Gij weet, dat na 280 jaar alleen met beroepspersoneel gewerkt te hebben,  
dit korps de soepelheid heeft getoond in één slag even goed te kunnen  
werken met oorlogsvrijwilligers, reserve- en militiepersoneel.*

*De samenstelling van het oude en het nieuwe, beide met hun goeds en kwaads,  
is een waar succes en zal dit blijven.'*<sup>13</sup>

### 2.1 Introduction

The text at the beginning of this chapter shows how proud the marines are. Although changes within the organisation are made, the Marine Corps is a success, according to the writer of this text. It is dedicated to the celebration of the 315<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marine Corps. Pride is one of the characteristics that marines learn during their training. Unity, strength and dedication are the three characteristics that can be seen as the DNA building blocks of a marine, according to the centre of education of the Dutch Marine Corps.<sup>14</sup> Values are seen as ideals or motives within a group that are aspired by all members. It is part of the 36 characteristics and values that makes a marine a marine. The three values are connected to each other and also strengthen each other. It arises during the training, education and deployment and together they generate the proudness of a marine. Unity and strength can be seen as opposites, because unity represents the group-related characteristics and strength represent the characteristics of the individual marine. The third value, dedication, describes the attitude a marine must have to succeed.<sup>15</sup> The text at the beginning of the chapter from a hand-out that was written by the Marine Education Centre about being a marine, is only one of the many examples in which the values of a marine are highlighted. The hand out describes which characteristics are needed to be a good marine, the so called *korpswaarden*. Marines get this hand out during their education and it is written by the education center for marines.

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<sup>13</sup> A.D. Harms, *Mariniers van vandaag. Het Korps Mariniers in 1980. Uitgegeven ter gelegenheid van het driehonderdvijftienjarige bestaan van het Korps Mariniers* (Rotterdam 1980) 10.

<sup>14</sup> Mariniers Opleidings Centrum, *Koninklijke Marine. Hand-out Korpswaarden* (Rotterdam 2013) 7.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, 7-13.

This chapter mainly gives an introduction to the Marine Corps. It starts with a description of the establishment of the Marine Corps and why it was seen as important to establish a Marine Corps within the Netherlands.

## **2.2 The establishment of the Marine Corps**

The start of the Dutch state can be located during the Dutch Revolt from 1568 until 1648, against the rule of Roman Catholic King Philip II of Spain because, in the opinion of Dutch elites, he took advantage of his authority. During this conflict, the Dutch fleet took a prominent place in the Netherlands. Next to importance of the land-based forces within the Netherlands was the fleet seen as characteristic of the Netherlands: the fleet protected commerce and protected the Netherlands from its enemies.<sup>16</sup> You need two components to wage a war: a well-trained army and money to maintain the army. The economy of the Republic had to be profitable and the army had to be innovative. During the Dutch Revolt, the role of international trade was extended and Dutch maritime power became an important part of the Republic.<sup>17</sup> Adri van Vliet, specialised in the maritime history of the seventeenth century, argues that the Dutch navy was an important part of the Republic, because twenty per cent of budget of the Republic was spent on its fleet.<sup>18</sup>

Several military historians, such as Adri van Vliet and Marco van der Hoeven, argue that the final, military victory of the rebels in the Northern Netherlands can partly be explained by the successful amphibious-orientated warfare. The important choice to treat the conflict as one integrated fight instead of two different conflicts, war on land and war at sea, contributed to the victory against Spain. Waging an amphibious war had several advantages. The waterscape offered logistic advantages, because water can be seen as a natural tool during a battle, such as the fast transportation of equipment or soldiers by ship. Furthermore, trade on rivers and overseas afforded an essential source of income. Finally, the presence of large commercial fleets can already be seen as a military factor, because most of the navies existed of additionally armed, merchant vessels. Fleets could take part during a battle against other armed ships. Jan Juliaan Woltjer, historian in the field of Dutch history in the sixteenth

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<sup>16</sup> Jaap Bruijn, *Varend verleden. De Nederlandse oorlogsvloot in de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw* (Amsterdam 1998) 71-73.

<sup>17</sup> Klaas Kornaat, *Wereldwijd aan de Maas. Het Korps Mariniers en Rotterdam* (Rotterdam 2015) 15.

<sup>18</sup> J.R. Bruijn and C.B. Wels, *Met man en macht. De militaire geschiedenis van Nederland, 1550-2000* (Amsterdam 2003) 44.

century, argues that not only the previous factor was significant, but also that the choice of the Spanish commanders to give more attention to the cities in the Southern Provinces was very important during the conflict.<sup>19</sup>

After the Dutch Revolt, naval warfare became more and more dependent on the speed of ships and the weaponry on a ship and the idea of a permanent maritime force became more common. The Province of Holland, on behalf of Dutch admiral Michiel de Ruyter and supported by Grand Pensionary Johan de Witt, decided in 1665 to install the marines in a 'Regiment de marine' that consisted of nineteen units. This marked the start of the Marine Corps. The 10<sup>th</sup> of December, 1665, is the founding date of the Dutch Royal Navy and so it also applies to the Dutch Marine Corps. Although the name of the Marine Corps was not used, the Corps sees this day as its founding date. Led by its first commander, captain Willem Joseph baron van Ghent, the Dutch marines were involved in the maritime and amphibious warfare in the North Sea against England.

The marines in the Netherlands were expeditionary guards and security forces. This task was unusual in the Dutch Army. This had everything to do with doubts about the usefulness and necessity of the specific specialism of the marines. Already at the start of the existence of the marines, they had to prove themselves. Marines were not always necessary to win a battle, because of the innovation of big battleships. The weapons that were present on a battleship were more important during the course of a battle than the presence of any soldier. Employment of land forces was not seen as decisive to win a battle and the Corps needed to secure its existence. Therefore, the expeditionary capability and deployment during amphibious operations became the most important task of the marines. The amphibious specialism remained throughout the history of the Marine Corps and it had to provide legitimacy to the Marine Corps in the twentieth century, according to Arthur ten Cate, Sven Maaskant, Jaus Müller and Quirijn van der Vegt, specialists in modern military history. This specific specialism would secure the existence of the Marine Corps in the Netherlands during the 1990s.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Pepijn Brandon, 'Een 'War and Society'-geschiedenis van de Tachtigjarige oorlog,' *BMGN-Low Countries Historical Review* 129-3 (2014): 62-63.

<sup>20</sup> Ten Cate et al., *Over grenzen*, 15-30.

### 2.3 The Marine Corps of today and its organisation and tasks

The Marine Corps is divided in several units. Through time, the aims of the Corps got more specialised and it was divided into task-oriented units, such as a Special Forces unit that focuses on counter-terrorism. In total, the Marine Corps consists of 3000 marines (exclusive the *Marinierskapel* and *tamboers* and *pijpers*.) At the moment, its most important task is to participate in international peace-keeping operations of the United Nations and NATO.

Within 48 hours, the marines can be deployed everywhere in the world. Furthermore, it is the only part of the Dutch Army that can be deployed during an operation on land, while working from the sea. Therefore, it does not need a logistical base on land.<sup>21</sup> Next to that, the marines have to provide operational units to guard and secure barracks of the Navy in the Netherlands, the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. Moreover, marines can be deployed for any general task of the Dutch Royal Navy.<sup>22</sup> A term that is increasingly used when talking about the Marine Corps is 'littoral'. The coastline from the sea to 200 kilometres inland can be seen as a littoral area. The coastal areas are a very complex and divers transition region and the biggest part of the world population lives in these kind of areas, and that number is growing. A marine is the only soldier of the Dutch Army who can be deployed in these areas and it is necessary, in the future, that a marine can be deployed in this area to secure safety from any enemy. The area is becoming more important and therefore also the marines. The area in which a marine can be deployed is important to secure its existence.<sup>23</sup>

The biggest part of the Marine Corps consists of two Marine Combat Group (MCG's) or in Dutch: *Amfibische gevechtsgroep*, with approximately 700 marines each. Each MCG includes three *infanteriecompagnieën* (infantry units), an *ondersteuningscompagnie* (support unit) and a *staf- en verzorgingscompagnie* (units of staff and medics). The other marines are part of other groups within the Marine Corps, such as the Netherlands Maritime Special Operations Forces (NLMARSOF) and that is the elite unit of the Marine Corps. The Special Forces are trained to execute operations in areas in which normal marines are not able to operate. They can particularly be deployed during terrorist attacks. The Surface and Assault Training Group (SATG) can be seen as the unit of the Marine Corps that supports all

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<sup>21</sup> 'Korps Mariniers. Eenheden van het Korps mariniers': <http://korpsmariniers.com/eenheden/> (accessed on 02-02-2017).

<sup>22</sup> A. J. Hakkers, 'Het Korps Mariniers van 1665 tot heden,' *Qua Patet Orbis* (1986): 464-465.

<sup>23</sup> R.G. Oppelaar, 'De marinier. Eeuwenoude traditie, eigentijds perspectief,' *Militaire Spectator* 184 (December 2015): 501.

deployment of marines by providing manoeuvrable vessels. Seabased Support Group (SSG) is a unit of around 90 people, which is responsible for maritime, operational and logistical support. The support is done by the principle of 'just in time, just enough': mobile and flexibly employable. A marine is trained to operate with not a lot of equipment and other special support and this makes the Corps a flexible part of the Dutch Army. Furthermore, a part of the marines is stationed in the Caribbean at the barracks named Savaneta. Its goal is to secure the safety of the Caribbean and they are joining the local operations of drug control. The *Marinierskapel* of the Royal Marine Corps is a harmony orchestra formed by 53 musicians. Its most important task is to musically support military ceremonials for the Royal House of the Netherlands and the Ministry of Defence, but it does not join operations. However, the *Marinierskapel* is seen as a characteristic unit of the Corps.<sup>24</sup>

A document or guideline of the Royal Marine of 2016, which can be used to explain how the Marine Corps has to be deployed during military operations, gives a general explanation of how the organisation of the Corps is managed today. It describes the process of the requirements that will ensure the deployment of the operational marines. The process shows how marines are deployed efficiently. First of all, the process starts with a FGO (*Formerings- en Gereedstellingsopdracht*). The task, duration and the mission of the Dutch contribution during the expected mission is formulated. The number and composition of marines and the composition of any material that is needed during the operation, is communicated to the specific department of the Dutch Army. After that, the rules of engagement, the rules that define the circumstances, conditions and manners in which the use of force can be applied during the operation, are described. Finally, tasks and responsibilities need to be clear. The next step in the whole process is the design of a very detailed profile of the mission. In response to this profile, a specific and extra training for the marines can be started. The process consists of more specific steps, but this description shows shortly the preparations of a marine unit that will be deployed in an operation in which the Netherlands participates.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> 'Korps Mariniers. Eenheden van het Korps mariniers': <http://korpsmariniers.com/eenheden/> (accessed on 02-02-2017) ; Hakkers, 'Het Korps Mariniers van 1665 tot heden', 464-467.

<sup>25</sup> Koninklijke Marine, *Voorschrift Commando Zeestrijdkrachten Directie Operaties Algemeen. Leidraad Gereedstelling Operationele Eenheden Mariniers (VCSK DOPS ALG 254)* (26 July 2016) 41-54.



## 2.4 The Marine Corps in its own view

On the 20<sup>th</sup> of January, 1978, the Dutch Minister of Defence, Roelof Kruisinga (CDA), ascertained a handbook for the marines to facilitate the education of personnel of the Marine Corps with a rank below that of a corporal. The handbook belonged to the equipment of military service personnel.

The book starts with an introduction of the history of the marines. The most important achievements and battles on sea won by the marines are described, with the aim to show the braveness of the marines. The marines took part in several important battles during the Anglo-Dutch Wars in the second half of the seventeenth century, such as the battle of Chatham of 1667. But it also shows its battles on land, such as the battle of Seneffe between the French army and the Dutch-German-Spanish army in Belgium, 1674. On December 2, 1817, the Marine Corps officially got its name. However, the doubts about the existence of the marines during its history is also a frequently mentioned theme. Nevertheless, every time proposals to abolish the Marine Corps were rejected because of a new task or mission.

This chapter started with characteristics that marines must have, namely unity, strength and dedication. In 1978, a handbook for marines gave a lot of attention to this specific '*Korpsgeest*' or a *esprit de corps*. The Marine Corps is characterized by this *Korpsgeest* and profiles itself by these values. The handbook argues that every member of the Marine Corps knows that it consists of more than people, proficiency, organisation and equipment. History proves that it owns something extra to achieve good performances. On the one hand the *Korpsgeest* is shaped by something that is already present and on the other hand by something that has to be extended and emphasized. The seven following characteristics need to be present: a feeling of solidarity with the Marine Corps, companionship, a willingness to participate and to make sacrifices, professionalism, a well-groomed appearance, discipline and a strong bondage with your own team. Furthermore, the handbook states that the Corps can be seen as one big family. If a marine is led by the values of the *Korpsgeest*, the marine will be part of a big family and will be able to participate in its history.<sup>26</sup>

According to a book that was published in 1980 to celebrate the 315<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marine Corps, a marine can be very proud of its history. But the marine of today is making history as well. A link between the present and the history of the marines can be found in its timeless characteristics, because these are never changing and always applicable.

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<sup>26</sup> Koninklijke Marine, *Handboek voor de marinier. Herziene uitgave* (1978) 1-1, 2-1 – 2-6, 3-1, 3-2.

Furthermore, the book describes a strong relationship between the Dutch Navy and the Marine Corps. The Corps is seen as an integral part of the Navy and the Navy would lose an essential and distinguishing characteristic if the existence of the marines would not be secured in the future. The Corps is part of the budget of the Royal Navy, but the Navy is only seen as the part that provides the Corps with money. The Navy is barely mentioned in documents written by marines. However, the Dutch Navy is not complete without the marines with its specific profession, according to the book of Harms. Next to the further descriptions of the marines during the 1980s, the book is filled with images that are drawn by marine A. D. Harms.<sup>27</sup> Again, the book outlines an identity of the Marine Corps that can be described as heroic and indispensable. The literature that is written by the marines is very subjective. This results in literature that is not entirely representative for the Marine Corps and maybe, it can be seen as a form of propaganda and evidence to secure its existence.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

This first chapter aimed to investigate the tasks, aims and characteristics of the Marine Corps during the second half of the twentieth century. Books and documents that are written by marines or other people from the Dutch Army, all have a specific view on the Marine Corps. The chapter started with a clarification of several characteristics that a marine must have to succeed in his job. The Marine Corps is, according to marines, a big family with members who are dedicated and very proud of the history of the Corps: the marine of today is making history as well. Although it is part of the Dutch Royal Navy, the documents give the impression that the Corps is a unit that works completely independent from the Dutch Royal Navy. Marines are proud to be part of the Corps.

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<sup>27</sup> Harms, *Mariniers van vandaag*, 11-20.

### **3.New tasks during the second half of the twentieth century**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

On November 9, 1989, the fall of the Berlin Wall started by the demolishing of it by the people of Berlin and a couple of weeks later, the spokesman of Mikhail Gorbachev said that the Cold War was over.<sup>28</sup> Four years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, in 1985, Gorbachev decided to start focusing on the domestic problems of the Soviet Union and not on the expensive arms race between the Soviet Union and America. At their first meeting in November 1985 in Geneva, Reagan and Gorbachev discussed a reducing of their strategic army by fifty per cent. The next year, in Iceland, Reykjavik, they talked about the possibility of eliminating all nuclear weapons. In 1987, the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF-treaty) was signed by both countries and this treaty included that all ground-based intermediate missiles had to be eliminated.<sup>29</sup>

This chapter focuses on the most important developments between the deployment of the marines in New Guinea (1961-1962) and the fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989. Both events had an enormous influence on the history and deployment of the Marine Corps. After New Guinea, the Marine Corps had to reorganise and after 1989 it had to reorganise again. Both reorganisations define the period that is used in this chapter. The existence of the Marine Corps was questioned after the deployment of marines in New Guinea. After the end of this deployment, a large area of deployment disappeared and the future and deployment of the Marine Corps was unsure. Finally, it managed to secure its existence. Next to that, one of the most important developments within this period was the decision to join peacekeeping operations of the United Nations. It is important to describe why this decision changed the future of the Marine Corps until the fall of the Berlin Wall to see if a similarity can be found with the developments after 1989. For the context of this chapter it is important to take the identity of the Marine Corps and its values and aims into account. The identity of the marines is important for the decisions that were made during the second half of the twentieth century.

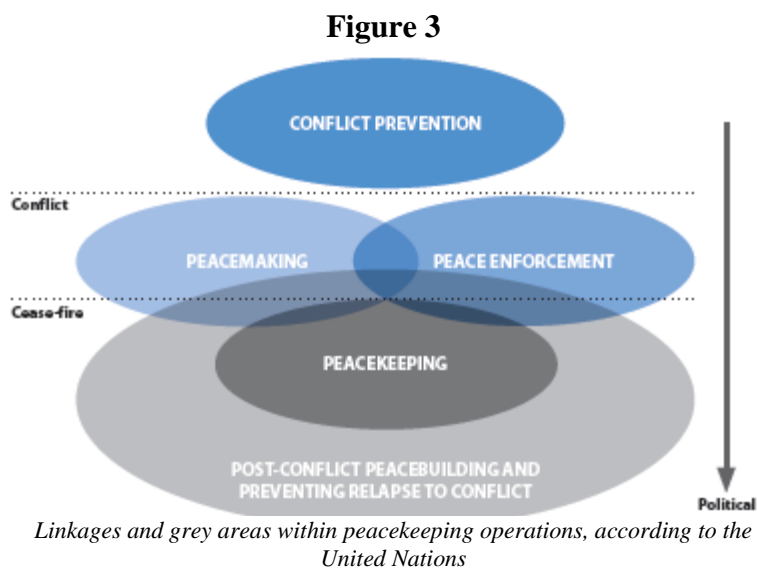
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<sup>28</sup> Nicholas Guyatt, 'The end of the Cold War,' in *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013) 605.

<sup>29</sup> Andreas Etges, 'Regional Cold Wars/Cold War crises. Western Europe,' in *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013) 170-171.

### 3.2 United Nations Peacekeeping operations

The Marine Corps participated in multiple peacekeeping operations, so it is necessary to explain what an United Nations Peacekeeping mission is before describing the developments in the Netherlands concerning joining peacekeeping operations. According to the United Nations, peacekeeping is one among a range of activities undertaken by the United Nations to maintain international peace and security throughout the world.<sup>30</sup> In 2008, the United Nations published a document with principles and guidelines about Peacekeeping Operations. The past sixty years, several peacekeeping operations took place, but there was no guide in which complex situations had been written down. This document can be seen as the first guide about peacekeeping operations. The documents consist of three parts: the evolution of United Nations peacekeeping, planning United Nations peacekeeping operations and the art of successful mandate implementation. Peacekeeping is one of the main tools used by the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. The UN Security Council is responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, as written in the Charter of the UN, which was signed on 26 June 1945. The establishment of UN peacekeeping operations is the most important tool to fulfil this responsibility. Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law are both part of the formative framework in which the UN operates. UN peacekeepers must have a good understanding of both types of law.<sup>31</sup>



Next to peacekeeping, there are four other situations in which the UN can help. The first is conflict prevention. Figure 3<sup>32</sup> gives an overview of peacekeeping within the other tasks of the UN. It tries to prevent a conflict within a state or between states by analyzing the factors driving the conflict

<sup>30</sup> 'United Nations Peacekeeping. Terminology': <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/terminology> (accessed on 03-03-2018).

<sup>31</sup> United Nations. Department of Peacekeeping operations and Department of Field Support, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. Principles and Guidelines* (2008) 8-25.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

and by warning the states, but also by early warnings and information gathering. Diplomatic measures are used to keep inter-state or intra-state tensions and disputes limited. The second is peacemaking and it involves diplomatic actions to bring hostile parties to a negotiated agreement. The United Nations Secretary-General facilitates the resolution of a conflict. In a situation of peace enforcement, the UN will use a range of coercive measures, including the use of military force and regional organizations, to restore international peace and security. Lastly, peacebuilding is used to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into a conflict by strengthening national capacities, such as by training soldiers or police officers. Peacekeeping operations are deployed to support the implementation of a cease-fire or peace agreement. However, they also play an active role in peacemaking efforts and they also are involved in early peacebuilding activities, as is clear from figure 3. Peacekeeping operations are essentially military in character and are aimed at three goals. Observation, monitoring and reporting of the situation in the specific state is the first aim of an operation. The supervision of a cease-fire and support to verification mechanisms can be seen as the second aim. Interposition as a buffer and confidence-building measure is the last aim.<sup>33</sup> Not only the United Nations itself focuses on peacekeeping, but also many other organizations try to reestablish and to maintain this peace. An example is the International Peace Institute (IPI).<sup>34</sup>

### **3.3 The deployment of the Marine Corps in New Guinea**

After the expedition to Dutch New Guinea, a lot of doubts arose concerning the future of the Corps. The independence of Indonesia in 1949 resulted in a struggle between the Netherlands and Indonesia over New Guinea. The Dutch were determined to hold on to its last in Asia colony, whereas Indonesia wanted to take it over. In 1950, the marines got the task to secure Dutch New Guinea and arrest Indonesian infiltrators. Because of this decision, the deployment of the Dutch Land forces stopped immediately and the marines took over its deployment. The conflict between Indonesia and the Netherlands reached its peak in 1962. The number of infiltrators and the pressure on the Dutch government and army by other

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<sup>33</sup> United Nations, *United Nations Peacekeeping Operations*, 8-25 ; ‘United Nations Peacekeeping. Terminology’: <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/terminology> (accessed on 03-03-2018).

<sup>34</sup> J. Eijkelboom, *Korps Mariniers in naam van de vrede? Een onderzoek naar de geschiktheid van het Korps Mariniers voor het deelnemen aan VN-vredesoperaties met relatief grote eenheden* (Thesis, Royal Netherlands Naval College, Den Helder, 1986) ; ‘International Peace Institute. Mission & History’: <https://www.ipinst.org/about/mission-history> (accessed on 03-03-2018).

countries increased. A total of 4,800 marines were employed on Dutch New Guinea. Led by C.B. Nicolas, twenty marines departed to the *Sterrengebergte* in Dutch New Guinea to secure a scientific expedition. The task of the marines was to control and guard the camps and to take care of the safety of the road around the camps. Willem Geneste, author who wrote mainly about the Marine Corps and the Royal Navy, pays little to no attention to the doubts that started about the future of the Marine Corps. This is probably a result of the aim of the book of Geneste: *Het Korps Mariniers in de twintigste eeuw. Van Peking tot Albanië*. It gives an overview of the history of the Marine Corps. He only has attention for the successes of the marines and not for the struggles to secure its existence.<sup>35</sup>

Already before the end of the deployment of the Marine Corps in New Guinea, a report was published by the management of the Marine Corps to discuss what the situation of the marines would be after New Guinea. It described the expected, major reorganisation and the reduction of its size for the purpose of maintaining the goals and character of the Marine Corps. Despite the expected reduction in size, the commission that wrote the report argued that the Marine Corps needed to have a large stand-by force which could be deployed anywhere in the world. Securing the Marine Corps would be of great value to the Dutch Army in times of peace and war. The Corps was an integrated part of the Royal Navy and was characterised by its excellent military spirit, according to the report. It possessed great degree of skills, proficiency and combat power. The Corps was able to protect the Netherlands in all parts of the world.<sup>36</sup> Of course, the report gave the Corps a very positive image and wanted to secure the existence of the Marine Corps. It was written by the management of the Marine Corps, so the committee wanted to secure its existence and its own jobs. Two assumptions can be made from this statement. Firstly, the authors of the report do think that the Corps completely fulfils all the requirements of being part of the Dutch Army. However, it looks like a report in which personal and political interests are intertwined, because of the fact that not even one critical statement is made. It focused only on the excellent military skills and the excellent attitude of the marines.

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<sup>35</sup> Willem Geneste, *Het Korps Mariniers in de twintigste eeuw. Van Peking tot Albanië* (Leeuwarden 2000) 101-113.

<sup>36</sup> National Archive, The Hague, Korps Mariniers, number access 2.13.141, inventory number 844: Rapport over de beschouwing van de organisatie en de sterkte van het Korps Mariniers indien de taak der Koninklijke Marine in Nederlands Nieuw-Guinea vervalt, 1961.

New Guinea became part of the United Nations in 1962 and as a result, the Marine Corps lost its last big operational area. There were also colonies in the West, but Surinam was managed by land forces and the Antilles were too small to justify the presence of marines on the islands. A period of insecurity started. Art de Vos, who wrote a master thesis about this specific period of the marines, pays a lot of attention to the doubts that arose after the loss of New Guinea. During the 1960s, several reorganizations took place within the Marine Corps, which were a direct result of the very high number of marines that were deployed during the Second World War and the aftermath of the colonial period. The years before the start of the Second World War, many new marines were trained. The estimated number of marines during the Second World War was 1500 and this size of the Marine Corps continued until New Guinea. The period resulted in a large number of marines and this was too high for the period after the colonial deployment of marines. The marines had a smaller operational area than before 1962, so the marines had to find a solution to secure the future of the Marine Corps. There is no debate on which solution saved the existence of the Marine Corps in the 1960s. Minister Joseph Luns of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced in New York that the Netherlands was willing to provide military units to the United Nations. The Marine Corps was the most suitable unit, because of the fact that it was trained to fight in all and tough circumstances. This new job could save the Marine Corps and it needed to grab this unique chance.<sup>37</sup>

Besides the task of the Marine Corps to send combat units worldwide as fast as possible and to defend the Netherlands, the Corps got the task to secure world peace on behalf of the United Nations. This task matched with the goals of the marines. According to commander Van Nass, the new, international task was more than welcome. The deployment of Dutch marines for the United Nations gave the Marine Corps a feeling of great satisfaction, because the marines thought that their existence was guaranteed by joining United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Marines had to be ready within 24 hours, but Van Nass is convinced that this would be no problem. During the conflict in New Guinea, the marines were ready within a couple of hours after receiving orders. One unit took the plane from the Netherlands and the second one came from Netherlands Antilles and everything was ready

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<sup>37</sup> Art de Vos, *'Tussen wal en schip'. Korps Mariniers als sluitstuk van de mariniersbegroting, 1962-1973* (Master thesis, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 1989) 36-39.

within 24 hours. The missing marines in the Netherlands Antilles were compensated with marines from the Netherlands after a couple of days.<sup>38</sup>

The United Nations gave the marines the possibility to practice its expeditionary identity. The motto of the Marine Corps is: *Qua Patet Orbis*, wherever the world, and this motto fitted perfectly after getting this new and international task. In preparation for its new task, the Corps added special United Nations exercises and lessons to the already existing QPO-practices (*Qua Patet Orbis*). This new task prevented further reduction of personnel after the operation in New Guinea, at least according to Willem Geneste. These developments are given by several historians, such as Geneste and Vos, for saving the future of the Marine Corps after the loss of Dutch New Guinea. They all agree on the same thing: the future of the Marine Corps was saved by joining operations led by the United Nations.<sup>39</sup>

### **3.4 The idea of joining peacekeeping operation during the seventies**

After the transfer of sovereignty of New Guinea, the Marine Corps lost its most important task. Nearly half of the operational strength, more than 1400 marines, was deployed in New Guinea. The Marine Corps had to look for a new task. Joseph Luns, Minister of Foreign Affairs, provided a new task for the Marine Corps: he wrote a letter to the State Secretary of the Navy, P.J.S. de Jong, about the Marine Corps. He wrote that the marines were the most suitable to join peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, because of their history, recent experiences, training and structure.<sup>40</sup>

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also agreed upon the proposal to send the Marine Corps to peacekeeping missions of the UN. According to Christ Klep and Richard van Gils, three reasons can be found to explain why the Netherlands had to join the mission. The first reason was to secure NATO as an ally. The UN was, according to Luns, less important to the Dutch Army than NATO, because NATO could guarantee the safety of the Western Europe. But the UN peacekeeping forces would be able to secure most of the starting conflicts and this would be beneficial to the Atlantic Allies. If an operation was beneficial to the UN, it was beneficial to NATO. Secondly, the colonial legacy of the Netherlands resulted in a bad image in Third World Countries, especially after the decolonization of the Dutch East Indies and

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<sup>38</sup> 'Mariniërs klaar voor elke VN-taak,' *De Telegraaf*, November 1, 1963, p. 9.

<sup>39</sup> Geneste, *Het Korps Mariniers in de twintigste eeuw*, 119.

<sup>40</sup> Christ Klep and Richard van Gils, *Van Korea tot Kosovo. De Nederlandse militaire deelname aan vredesoperaties sinds 1945* (Meppel 2000) 49-54.



New Guinea. An active participation in peacekeeping missions of the UN could improve this image. It was necessary to show goodwill. The third reason had everything to do with the own sake of the Netherlands and propaganda. Peacekeeping operations could be used to increase Dutch prestige and to ‘show the Dutch flag’.<sup>41</sup>

The view on joining peacekeeping operations of the *Comité Verenigde Chefs van Staven* (CVCS) was different from that of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. In their opinion, the commitments to NATO were also more important than to the UN, but they were more worried about the operational factors of NATO’s requirements of readiness. The Dutch Army did not have enough units to secure these requirements if they decided to join the peacekeeping operations of the UN. So, the Dutch army was not able to join both the missions of the UN and NATO and this would be very contradictory. The shortage of personnel would be the second problem, because the Dutch Army had large shortages of professional supporting staff and specialists. The army could not afford to send this supporting personnel to peacekeeping operations of the United Nations, if they also joined operations of NATO.<sup>42</sup>

On December 1970, the DPC (Defence Planning Committee), presented a report concerning the Atlantic defense for the 1970s. The expansion of the activities of the Soviet Union on the world seas was one of the main subjects in the report. This development could be a risk for the oil transport from the Indian Ocean, Cape of Good Hope and the South Atlantic Ocean to Europe. The report argued that NATO needed to cope with the threat of the Soviet Union by using the flexibility of sea power. In November 1972, the Military Committee agreed upon the mc211 (concept for NATO Maritime Contingency Forces). The MARCONFOR-concept introduced the idea of one big naval unit that consisted of units from different countries that could be deployed during a military crisis. The Netherlands, on behalf of the Dutch Secretary-General Joseph Luns and other members of NATO, got a more worldwide task, especially the Marine Corps. After being the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Luns became the Dutch Secretary General of the NATO from 1971 till 1984.<sup>43</sup>

The squadron commander Van Renesse was interviewed about the vision of the Marine Corps during the Cold War. He stated: ‘The whole sea is our area, we, the

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<sup>41</sup> Klep and van Gils, *Van Korea tot Kosovo*, 49-54.

<sup>42</sup> Anselm J. van der Peet, *Out-of-area. De koninklijke marine en multinationale vlootoperaties, 1945-2001* (Steenwijk 2016) 59-63.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid*, 59-63.

Netherlands, do not have a specific area'.<sup>44</sup> But how did the parts of the Dutch Army respond to the new tasks of the United Nations? The naval force did not worry about the new task. The job fitted to its normal operational task, because the equipment and training were already sufficient. Further reduction of the number of personnel was limited by this decision after it left New Guinea. To show its goodwill, the Marine Corps added several special United Nations military maneuvers and information sessions to its already existing QPO-program. More information became available about how the marines needed to react to riots, and world orientation became a more important part of its courses. Several rumors circulated about an United Nations related deployment in the Middle East after the Arab-Israeli wars between 1967 and 1973. However, after 1970, the armed forces did not take a United Nations operation in the upcoming years into account. Therefore, NATO tasks became more important for the marines and Luns' proposal about a stand-by force started to fade away. The chance to join a mission of NATO became bigger and so the change to secure the existence of the Marine Corps was bigger if it could join any operation.<sup>45</sup>

### **3.5 The Marine Corps, British Royal Navy and the fight against terrorism**

Next to the new task of joining United Nations operations, the Marine Corps needed another task to secure its existence, but a new opportunity came up. In 1965, the SACEUR (Supreme Allied Commander Europe) proposed the idea of adding a unit of marines to the AMF (Allied Command Europe Mobile Force). The unit had to be amphibious. The first idea was to add the United States Marine Corps, because it would satisfy the need of the SACEUR and it was seen as a well-trained unit. However, the United States Marine Corps could only be ready in about one to two months and this was seen as unacceptable. SACEUR asked NATO member countries if they had units available. *Schout-bij-nacht* Van den Wall Bake, chairman of the Dutch staff in Washington, considered the Dutch Marine Corps as the most suitable for this specific task. By the end of 1968, the Dutch State Secretary of the Ministry of Defence Van Es assumed that 600 marines could be deployed immediately. In 1969, the *Admiraliteitsraad* agreed upon the deployment of marines for the purpose of Maritime Contingency Force Atlantic (MARCONFORLANT).

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<sup>44</sup> C. Homan en R.T.B. Visser, 'Nederland heeft geen 'area', de hele vrij zee is ons gebied,' *Marineblad* 95 (1985): 384-393.

<sup>45</sup> Klep and van Gils, *Van Korea tot Kosovo*, 59-65.

The endeavour for a cooperation between the British Royal Marines and the Dutch Marine Corps was a result of this development. A mutual use of training facilities, joint military practices and the exchange of personnel could be very useful. In September 1972, the Dutch government formalized the cooperation between the Royal Marines and the Marine Corps and reported this development to NATO. The Dutch amphibious combat force and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commando Brigade Royal Marines would be deployed as the Immediate Reaction Force at the operation of NATO at Northern Europe. Furthermore, an integration of the so-called 'Whiskey Company' of Dutch marines within the 45 Commando Royal Marines would be employed during operations at Northern Europe. Joint military training took place regularly and was successful. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of May, 1973, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Dutch and British governments and this resulted in the UK/NL Landing Force. The cooperation was a great advantage to the Dutch Marine Corps, because of the fact that the Royal Navy and Royal Marines provided material support.

Finally, a national task also secured the existence of the Marine Corps: the establishment of a unit providing military assistance in case of hostage crises. This unit was a result of the hostage during the Olympic Games in Munich in 1972. The events in Munich started a feeling of fear and a solution was needed to prevent another hostage crisis.<sup>46</sup> This Munich massacre was a Palestinian terroristic attack on Israeli Olympic team members during the Summer Games of 1972.<sup>47</sup> Barend Biesheuvel, prime minister of the Netherlands from 1971 until 1973, also fully supported this proposal. He felt the need of a special trained unit to fight terrorism. The Dutch Army was, in his view, perfectly fitted to the task of defending Dutch society in times of peace. However, the military force was not entirely convinced by this new task, because of the disruption it would cause in its normal services.<sup>48</sup>

However, two train hijackings took place in the Netherlands, in 1975 near the village of Wijster and in 1977 at de Punt. Moluccans were fighting for the recognition of their own country: Republic of the South Maluka. After the independence of the Dutch Indies in 1949, Moluccans wanted their own country and the Netherlands did not support this development,

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<sup>46</sup> D.C.L. Schoonoord, *Pugno Pro Patria. De Koninklijke Marine tijdens de Koude Oorlog* (Steenwijk 2012) 196-198.

<sup>47</sup> 'Munich massacre': <https://www.britannica.com/event/Munich-Massacre#ref1241523> (accessed on 20-02-2018).

<sup>48</sup> Anselm J. van der Peet, 'Altijd gereed voor de gerechtigheid. Bestrijding van gijzelingen en kapingen door de krijgsmacht,' in: J. Hoffenaar, J. van der Meulen en R. de Winter (red.), *Confrontatie en ontspanning. Maatschappij en krijgsmacht in de Koude Oorlog 1966-1989* (The Hague 2004) 153-168.

according to them. The hostage by Moluccans at the Punt lasted nineteen days and fifty people were held hostage. Next to the hostage at the Punt, four Moluccans did the same at an elementary school in Bovensmilde. After nineteen days the Marine Corps got the command to intervene at the Punt. Starfighters distracted the people within the train, the Marine Corps took advantage of the situation and attacked the train. Six out of nine captors died during this intervention. The marines ended the hostage crisis, so this initiative to establish a specialized unit proved its importance within the Netherlands. However, the last couple of months a lot of discussion exist about the actions of the Marine Corps during this hostage. The marines ended the hostage, but it is not clear if killing the captors was instructed. The Dutch government argues that the marines were instructed to eliminate the captors and not to kill them.<sup>49</sup>

The Marine Corps played an important role within the Dutch Royal Navy, according to the documents which were written in preparation of the budget of Defence 1974. Different tasks within the Royal Navy were organized by the marines. The Marine Corps improved and provided the military training of the Navy. Next to that, the Marine Corps played part in providing instructions for sport and it took care for the military police task within the Royal Navy. Taking care of the implementation for the activities of military ceremonials of the Royal Navy was another task of the marines during the seventies.<sup>50</sup>

At the beginning of December 1972, Vice Admiral Eric Roest, commander of the naval forces and chef of the marine staff, argued that this task would place a substantial extra financial burden on the budget of the Navy. Next to that, he argued that the police would be more suitable for actions against terrorism. He based his opinion on the fact that the personnel of the police was trained to reach its goals with the right amount of violence that must be used in a certain situation, an attitude which the military apparatus missed, according to Roest. Soldiers of other parts of the Dutch Army were not specifically trained to use a certain kind of violence during operations. C. C. Schoenzetter, Rear Admiral of the Marine Corps from the 10th of April 1970 until the 19th of April 1973, felt the same way. The fight against terrorism was crucially different from the other tasks of the Marine Corps: it was seen as a specialized way of fighting. The marines were not able to equip another military unit for preventing terrorism and to maintain this extra unit, given its size of 2500 marines with a shortage of 250

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<sup>49</sup> Coen Verbraak, *Wij willen leven! 40 jaar nar de Molukse Kaping* (2017) (documentary):

<https://www.2doc.nl/documentaires/series/2doc/2017/mei/wij-willen-leven.html> (accessed on 25-05-2018).

<sup>50</sup> National Archive, The Hague, Korps Mariniers, number access 2.13.141, inventory number 787: Stukken betreffende de totstandkoming van de beleidsnota's van het Korps Mariniers., 1972-1979.

marines and the deficit budget. There were not enough marines and money to start such a unit. Besides the available number of marines, the weaponry and equipment were not suitable for this new task, according to Schoenzetter. The marines needed an additional training because of its specific amphibious characteristics. Finally, a joint action between the Marine Corps, the Royal Military Police, the Royal Land Force and the government would be highly impracticable.<sup>51</sup>

Despite all these arguments, the Marine Corps was seen as the military unit that had to operate during acts of terrorism in the Netherlands. Eventually, it appeared a great way to show the people of the Netherlands that the existence of the Marine Corps had to be secured in a period of political and economic difficulties.<sup>52</sup>

On Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> of October, 1974, a staffmeeting between the CZMNED (*Commandant Zeemacht Nederland*), Vice Admiraal Berend Veldkamp en CKM (*Commandant van het Korps Mariniers*), Generaal-majoor Lamers took place about the effects of cuts in the budget of the Dutch Navy for the Marine Corps. One of the decisions was the reduction of the number of military manoeuvres to four times a year: the same number as the military manoeuvres of the Royal Navy.<sup>53</sup>

### **3.6 The Royal Marine and the Marine Corps during the eighties**

As stated before, the Marine Corps got a new opportunity to secure its existence by joining United Nations Missions. During the Cold War, the maritime power of the Soviet Union was at its peak in response to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. The Dutch Navy was constantly looking at the size of the Soviet army. The Defence policy of 1980 was based on three factors: the perceived worldwide spread of communism, strengthening of the Soviet's fleet relatively to that of the United States and the strengthening of its position in the Warsaw Pact. The motivation of the Netherlands was to strive for a military force that was capable of supporting its own political aspirations worldwide.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> NL-HaNA, Korps Mariniers, 2.13.141, inv.nr. 787.

<sup>52</sup> Van der Peet, 'Altijd gereed voor de gerechtigheid,' 153-168.

<sup>53</sup> National Archive, The Hague, Korps Mariniers, number access 2.13.141, inventory number 806: Agenda en notulen van de stafbespreking tussen de staven van de commandant van de Zeemacht Nederland en de commandant van het Korps Mariniers op donderdag 24 oktober 1974, 1974.

<sup>54</sup> Schoonoord, *Pugno Pro Patria*, 243-249.

To make sure that the Royal Navy could have a balanced budget in this period, some changes had to be made. Several projects, such as the purchase of new equipment and boats, needed to be postponed because of lack of financial resources. The *Defensienota* of 1984 was dominated by the nuclear problems of the Cold War and explained the budget of the Royal Navy for the coming ten years. Just before the publication of the *Defensienota*, Luns met with the *Admiraliteitsraad* to discuss the situation of the Royal Navy. The council appreciated the effort of Luns during this meeting about the serious changes in the budget of the Royal Navy. The cuts in budget would be a limit on the possibilities to deploy an adequate operation and Luns tried to reduce this limitation. Luns realized the importance of the Navy within the Dutch Army.<sup>55</sup>

Notes of the *commandant* of the Marine Corps, J.J.A. den Haan, give a good insight in his view on the future of the Marine Corps at the end of his period of command. He focused on specific subjects concerning the marines and its future and the notes were addressed to his successor T. Rudolphie. Den Haan wrote that he was aware of the fact that there was a lot of support and co-operation from the staff of the Royal Navy to the marines in the Netherlands Antilles. He noticed a growing attention from them to the Marine Corps and this development was important to him. Without a properly functioning Royal Navy, the Marine Corps would not exist. So, the relationship between both parts needed to be strong, according to Den Haan. As part of the Royal Navy, the Marine Corps needed to have a good relationship with the Royal Navy.<sup>56</sup> Due to the fact that the budget of the Marine Corps was part of the budget of the Royal Navy, it is not surprising that Den Haan recommends this.

The first subject Den Haan questioned was the amphibious lift capacity of the Marine Corps. As part of the cooperation between the Marine Corps and the British Royal Navy, the Marine Corps used ships from Great Britain and because of this, millions of guilders were saved. Den Haan was not sure how long this situation would continue. Secondly, he tried to decrease the unavailability rate of the Marine Corps to keep the same number of marines, but with a lower operational force. After New Guinea, 2800 marines were deployed with a unavailability rate of 17,8 per cent (500 marines). However, Den Haan argued that a lot of changes and expansions took place without positive effects on the size of the Marine Corps.

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid*, 265-266.

<sup>56</sup> National Archive, The Hague, Korps Mariniers, number access 2.13.141, inventory number 943: Notities met de beschouwingen van de commandant van het Korps Mariniers J.J.A. den Haan aan het einde van zijn bevelsperiode die voor de toekomst van het Korps Mariniers van belang kunnen zijn, met bijlagen, 1983.

The establishment of the *Bijzondere Bijstands Eenheid Mariniers* and the deployment of an amphibious combat unit in Northern Europe together with the Whiskey-infantry company did not result in an expansion of the Marine Corps, also not after the expansion of the Dutch navy from 16800 to 17700 employees. So, even after the establishment of new units, the Marine Corps could not extend due to the reorganization. Finally, one of the most important characteristics of a marine is interchangeability. All the marines need to be able to fulfill every function within the range of his rank after a training. For example: marines can be deployed in Northern Europe and on the Netherlands Antilles and they must be able to secure the Embassy in Washington and to work on a ship. Den Haan had some doubts about the ability of women to be this flexible, so he did not think that a woman can be a marine.<sup>57</sup>

### 3.7 Conclusion

A lot of doubts arose about the existence of the Marine Corps between the end of the deployment of New Guinea and the fall of the Berlin Wall. In this period, the biggest doubts about securing the existence of the Marine Corps occurred after the deployment on New Guinea. But the Marine Corps found a new way to prove that it was an important and indispensable part of the Dutch Army by willing to join peacekeeping operations of the United Nations and NATO. Another way to secure its existence was to cooperate with the British Royal Navy. A lot of money was saved by borrowing material from Great Britain, while it also gave the Corps international publicity. Finally, there were also new tasks in the Netherlands that saved the Marine Corps: the establishment of a unit for providing military assistance in case of a terrorist attack in the Netherlands. Den Haan, *commandant* of the Marine Corps, reflected on the future of the Marine Corps at the end of his period of command. At the end of the 1980s there were still doubts about the existence of the marines. But these did not end the proudness of being a marine. The Marine Corps profiles itself as a brave and indispensable unit of the Dutch Army. There are some reservations regarding this unique position of the Corps. The documents and literature are written by marines and not by people from outside the Corps. Are views from other people on the Corps different from these views and why do marines profile themselves in this specific way? Was it a way to secure its existence?

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<sup>57</sup> *Ibid*, 1983.

The next chapters of the thesis focus on a specific period at the end of the twentieth century: the 1990s. The previous chapters can be seen as an introduction to the specific period in the nineties that this thesis focusses on. Without the knowledge of this developments, it is hard to see changes in attitude or profiling of the Dutch Marine Corps.



## 4. The Marine Corps after the fall of the Berlin Wall

### 4.1 Introduction

On the 14<sup>th</sup> of December, 2015, Hennis-Plasschaert, Minister of Defence from 2012 until 2017, gave a speech on the occasion of the 350<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Marine Corps with the following title: ‘350 years of pioneer, cooperation and dedication to the Dutch state’. General Smith of the Royal Marines and General Nelson of the United States Marine Corps were present during this speech, which confirms the good cooperation with other Marine Corps and reputation of the Dutch Marine Corps worldwide. Hennis stated: ‘Our cooperation has always been of a great value. Our bond is something to cherish. I am confident that our partnership will remain as tight-knit in the future as it is today. The simple truth is that we can defend our freedom more successfully if our nations continue to stand together. In this age of uncertainty, this much is certain!’<sup>58</sup> Hennis continued about the identity and added value of the Marine Corps within the Dutch state. A talent to improvise, to be resilient, have a team spirit and the mentality of ‘can-do’, characterise the Marine Corps and it makes the difference during its deployment. It is part of the DNA of a marine. According to Hennis, the Marine Corps, together with the Royal Navy, is something that can be seen as constant in a world that is changing. She praised the Marine Corps and said: ‘Where would the Dutch state be without the Marine Corps: a tradition that is centuries old, but has its own perspective’. Hennis ended her speech with the slogan of the Corps: ‘Qua Patet Orbis!’.<sup>59</sup>

The speech by Hennis-Plasschaert emphasized the unique identity of the Dutch Marine Corps within the Dutch Army. She stated that without the Corps, the Netherlands would miss its most trained and specialised unit. This gives the Marine Corps an indispensable function, according to Hennis. But how did the Corps get this identity and was the whole process as easy as Hennis’ speech of 2015 suggests? So, did the identity of the Marine Corps changed after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and in what way? Furthermore, the most important peacekeeping operations are discussed to show what the role of the Marine Corps was within the world during the nineties.

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<sup>58</sup> ‘Toespraak van minister Hennis-Plasschaert: ‘350 jaar Korps Mariniers, is 350 jaar pionieren, samenwerken en trouw aan de Nederlandse staat’: <https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/documenten/toespraken/2015/12/14/350-jaar-korps-mariniers-is-350-jaar-pionieren-samenwerken-en-trouw-aan-de-nederlandse-staat> (accessed on 14-12-2015).

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

## 4.2 The Dutch Army after the fall of the Berlin Wall

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War changed the world and, especially the structure and visions of the armies from countries that participated during the Cold War. The disappearance of the communist enemy between 1989 and 1991 ended the military threat in Europe. The danger of mutual destruction disappeared and a new world order was framed by this change. There were no clear opponents and this affected the Netherlands, because the Netherlands was strongly orientated towards foreign markets. Countries started to focus on worldwide crisis management and not on territorial defence. These ambitions could be completed by a smaller, professional army instead of an army that consisted of conscripts. But the most important reason to reorganise were the cuts in budget. Therefore, the Dutch Army had to change. Visser, a *kolonel* within the Royal Navy, argued in the *Marineblad* that the goals of the most important actors were varying. The Minister of Defence had a political interest, the staff of the Dutch Army had an interest in deploying its combat forces efficiently and the women and men who were working in the combat forces wanted an organisation which can offer a challenging career.<sup>60</sup>

What did this mean for the Marine Corps? Initially, the new world order, without a constant threat, did not change the aim of the Corps. On the contrary, the Marine Corps got more of the tasks that it already did before the fall of the Berlin Wall. The perspective of the same possible deployment was widely propagated in the first period after 1989. The need for a special unit that was worldwide deployable was in line with the aims of the Marine Corps. Interventions would be, according to professor Gé Berkhof, the new focus of the units of the Dutch Army, such as the Marine Corps. Furthermore, the area of operations would be more widespread instead of defending the Northern parts of Europe. He also argued that joint operations with the Royal Land forces and Royal Navy would be more important than before 1989. The function of a soldier had to be more all-round. The whole Dutch Army started to prepare itself for a future role in crisis management, but the marines were already trained to do those kind of tasks. Marines were better prepared than any other unit of the Dutch Army, according to Reginald Visser, member of the management team of the Maritime knowledge team.<sup>61</sup>

According to W.J.E. van Rijn, a historian and former vice-admiral, a big paradox within the Dutch Army can be noted after the fall of the Berlin Wall. After 1990, Dutch

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<sup>60</sup> R.T.B. Visser, 'redactioneel,' *Marineblad* (oktober 1990): 383.

<sup>61</sup> Ten Cate et al., *Over grenzen*, 15-16.

soldiers were often deployed during operations in different areas in the world, outside of Europe. The operations were comparable with war in terms of dangers and risks. During the Cold War, soldiers were prepared to use violence to secure a possible war. However, during little or no violence occurred. The situation after the Cold War was different: soldiers were again prepared to use violence, but the world that was seen as safer than before 1990 and this was totally different from just the threat of violence. The period after 1990 did not have wars comparable with the threat of the Cold War, but soldiers had to use a lot more violence than before 1990. A new situation of safety arose, which resulted in new developments concerning the policy of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Defence Note of 1991 is an example of this development and will be described in this chapter. The major political-strategical changes in Europe were noticed by newspapers and television programmes. A Third World War was not relevant anymore and this resulted in a lower interest in Defence. Money could go to other affairs within the Netherlands. At the same time, conflicts outside Europe got a lot of attention, such as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the mission of the Dutch Army to bring safety and peace in Cambodia.<sup>62</sup>

The Defence Note of 1991, written by Relus ter Beek, stated that the Marine Corps was completely suitable in the Dutch Army for the coming years, because of the fact that the Corps only consists of professionals. The obligatory military service did not apply to the Marine Corps. Marines were professionals and therefore faster deployable and better trained. For example, conscription applied for the Royal Land Forces and most of these soldiers were no professionals. The emphasis in the future army would be an army containing crises and peacekeeping operations and the number of marines would be the same. So, the cuts in the budget of the Ministry of Defence would only cut in the budget of the Royal Navy and not in the budget of the Marine Corps.<sup>63</sup>

### **4.3 Charter of Paris for a new Europe (1990)**

The Charter of Paris for a new Europe was an important document for the Dutch Army in the period after the fall of the Berlin Wall. It was ratified on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November, 1991, and focused on democracy, security and peace in Europe. The Heads of State or Government of

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<sup>62</sup> W.J.E. van Rijn, *Overstag en toch op koers. De Koninklijke Marine en haar personeel 1945-2005* (Franeker 2015) 379-387, 390.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid*, 390.

the countries that participated during the meeting in Paris recognised the need to discuss the circumstances within Europe. 34 states participated, such as the Netherlands, the United States of America and Iceland. The Ten Principals of the Final Act was the result of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. ‘A democratic government is based on the will of people, expressed regularly through free and fair elections. Democracy has as its foundation respect for the human person and the rule of law.’<sup>64</sup>

Its goal was to expand and strengthen friendly relationships and cooperation among the States of Europe, the United States of America and Canada, and to promote friendship among its people. Furthermore, a lower level of armed forces was seen as important to reach this goal. The Charter saw the new political and military situation that opened new possibilities for efforts in the field of military security. The idea was a more structured cooperation among all participating states in the coming future, because other threats could damage the stability of the states. Democratic institutions needed to be defended against activities that violated the independence, territorial integrity and sovereign equality of the states. Not only preventing conflicts, but also intervening by peaceful resolution would be a solution. The Netherlands would finance 3,6 percent of the costs of Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) institutions, activities and personnel.<sup>65</sup> The will to create a cooperation between the different states was a perfect opportunity for the Marine Corps, because they were trained to cooperate with other units from different countries.

#### **4.4 The Defence Note of 1991 and the Priority Note of 1993**

The Defence policy of the Dutch government during the nineties had a huge influence on the Dutch Army. The two most important documents were the Defence Note of 1991 and the Priority Note of 1993. Both documents consisted of the intentions and plans about the Dutch Army and both the Minister of Defence, Relus ter Beek, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hans van den Broek, took part in writing the policy.

##### *4.4.1 The Defence Note of 1991*

The writers of the Defence Note did also mention the changes related to the Dutch Army that took place after the fall of the Berlin Wall. But also the ratification of the CSE-charter, the

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<sup>64</sup> CVCE, *Charter of Paris for a new Europe (Paris, 21 November 1990)* 3.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid*, 1-24.

unification of Germany and the need to operate outside of the area of NATO influenced the circumstances in which the reorganisation of the Dutch Army took place. The Defence Note influenced the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force to a lesser extent than it influenced the Royal Land Forces. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, 1991, the military organisation of the Warsaw Pact was dissolved and this (involuntary) alliance between Eastern European countries aimed to control crisis within that area.<sup>66</sup>

The Defense Note influenced the Marine Corps: the size of the Royal Navy had to be reduced, but the quality and structure needed to be maintained. From 1991 until 1995, the staff of the Navy needed to be reduced by 15 percent and in the second half of the nineties by a further 10 percent. The Royal Navy was seen as a part that already met the requirements of a mobile and flexible unit, so this can be seen as advantageous. The plans about the Marine Corps were only a very small part of the Defence Note. The introduction of the *Groep operationele eenheden mariniers (GOEM)* in 1991 renewed the Corps and improved its efficiency. There would be a focus on a better coordination between the Dutch and British marines and a concentration of logistical and supporting elements. The Marine Corps was seen as something that fitted completely within the Dutch Army of the future and therefore the size of the Corps would remain the same, according to the Defence Note.<sup>67</sup> However, in literature about the Defence Note it is stated that the Marine Corps also needed to reduce by 300 marines.<sup>68</sup> The fact that there was little attention to the Marine Corps can be explained by a couple of reasons. First of all, the Marine Corps was, according to the Dutch government, an indispensable unit within the Dutch Army. Secondly, the Corps was seen as a fully integrated part of the Royal Navy, which resulted in the little attention. Finally, it could be explained by the fact that no big changes would take place within the Royal Navy.

*Luitenant-ter-zee der 2e klasse* Roy de Ruiter wrote a critical article about the Defence Note of 1991 in the *Militaire Spectator*. He argued that the Royal Navy took advantage of negotiations with the Minister of Defence. The vision from the Minister of Defence about the reconstruction of the Dutch Army and to make it suitable for the deployment of peacekeeping operations was advantageous to the Royal Navy. This part of the army already insisted on taking part in peacekeeping operations during the eighties. But the cuts in budget were bigger than expected and hoped for. A survey was conducted within the staff of Defence and the

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<sup>66</sup> Tweede kamer, *Defensienota 1991, vergaderjaar 1990-1991, 21991, nrs. 2-3* (1991) 5-12, 18-19.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 85-87, 92-93.

<sup>68</sup> Schoonoord, *Pugno Pro Patria*, 303.

result was negative: 37 percent of the staff expected a forced resign. De Ruiter felt that the Note could be seen as a start for a change in attitude and not the start for a reconstruction of the Dutch Army. The Note gave the army a new vision for the coming future. The new army had to be more flexible, quickly deployable and deployable in every part of the world. Deployment during peacekeeping operations needed to be part of the new tasks.<sup>69</sup>

#### 4.4.2 *The Priority Note of 1993*

The Priority Note of 1993 was written in reaction to the Defence Note of 1991 and was a complete overhaul driven by further cuts in the budget and an extension of a period without the threat of war.<sup>70</sup> It started with the reason why the document was written and that was because the world order changed more and faster than was foreseen in 1991. This resulted again in a recalibration of the tasks and size of the Dutch Army. Furthermore, the government decided to cut the budget of Defence even further. The political-military situation before 1989 was seen as impossible to happen again. However, new security risks started to develop, such as instability in the Middle East, and a new, big conflict was seen as an option for the coming years in which the Dutch army could be deployed. The situation in the first years of the nineties was considered as a paradox. During the Cold War, the Dutch Army was not or barely not deployed and after the Cold War units of the Dutch Army were deployed several times, as explained in the last section of this chapter. The biggest change within the army was the proposal to abolish the military service after the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 1998. This was the result of a constant need for immediate employability. Soldiers had to be ready within several days and this was only possible with a professional army instead of an army that consisted of conscripts.<sup>71</sup>

The focus of the Defence Note of 1991 was on the quality of a Dutch Army and not on the size of it. The Note of 1991 did not change a lot in the situation of the Royal Navy, because naval forces were seen as important. The only change was a shift to peacekeeping operations and crisis management; to fulfil these tasks the already existing structure of the Navy needed to be maintained. The staff needed to be reduced by 25 percent and the number of supporting staff needed to be reduced more than the number of operational staff. The idea

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<sup>69</sup> Roy de Ruiter, 'Defensienota 1991: het belang van een visie. De krijgsmacht neemt afscheid van de Koude Oorlog' *Militaire Spectator* 180 (2011) 64-76.

<sup>70</sup> Schoonoord, *Pugno Pro Patria*, 308.

<sup>71</sup> Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, *Prioriteitennota, vergaderjaar 1992-1993*, 22975 nr. 2 (1991) 3-8.

about the size of the Marine Corps was different, because of the fact that the number of marines needed to remain the same. The Priority Note emphasized the importance of the Marine Corps within the Dutch Army. Because of its special training programme and its relatively light weapon equipment, the Marine Corps was deployable in different climatic conditions during peacekeeping operations. Next to that, the marines did have an important role within the international political and military field, because they took part in the UK/NL Amphibious force and the Ace Mobile force.<sup>72</sup>

#### **4.5 Deployment of the Marine Corps in the first half of the nineties**

During the 1990s, the Marine Corps was deployed several times. Only its largest deployment during operations are described, because it were these operations in which the marine could prove its right of existence within the Dutch Army.

##### *4.5.1 Operation Provide Comfort*

After the end of the Second Gulf War in February 1991, the Kurds revolted in Northern Iraq. The revolt was ended by the intervention of Iraqi authorities. For fear of the Iraqi army, the Kurds fled to the mountain regions along the border of Iran and Turkey. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of April, 1991, the member states of the United Nations called for a protection of the Kurdish refugees in Iraq. ‘Provide Comfort’ was the name of the operation in which 800 Dutch marines were deployed and a safe haven was established in Northern Iraq. The Minister of Defence, Ter Beek, contacted his British colleague, Secretary of State Geoff Hoon, about a joint deployment of units of the UK/NL Landing Force. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of April, thirteen days after the call of the UN, the decision was made to deploy 400 marines and 800 military of the Land Forces in Northern Iraq. The task was to protect the safe haven with a minimal use of violence, to guide the refugees to their own homes or refugee camps, to monitor the armed forces of Northern Iraq (Peshmerga) and to start building a refugee camp near the city of Zakho. The marines had the feeling that they could secure the return of the refugees by giving them first a safe feeling. Therefore, patrolling, an open military presence and guarding the important places, such as hospitals and places where people could get water and food, were parts of the tasks of the Dutch marines. Overall, the activities were focused on making the

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<sup>72</sup> Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, *Prioriteitennota*, 33-36.

military superfluous: develop yourself as a soldier during an operation and be better than your function describes. The civilians form the area needed to do it by themselves if the soldiers left. The marines left on the 22th of June 1991, because the situation had improved and people were going back to their villages. ‘Provide Comfort’ was the first operation after 1969 in which a large unit of marines was deployed. The feeling of marines after the deployment in Northern Iraq was that the periods of training had a better result than they expected. The skills set of a marine was good, but the fact that they could improvise and be deployed worldwide gave the marines a satisfied feeling.<sup>73</sup>

*Luitenant-kolonel* of the marines Van Egmond noticed several important characteristics during operation Safe Haven. The speed at which the marines were deployed was important for the whole operation. Every country that could help the United States were very welcome and the Dutch marines were present shortly after the call. The unit of the Netherlands was the only one that did not have access to military transport helicopters. The fact that the British and American units did have access to the helicopters resulted in a dependency. The American soldiers supported the Dutch marines in several ways, such as logistically.<sup>74</sup>

Furthermore, the lessons that the marines learned during the operation Safe Haven were multiple. The performance of the marines was better than everyone could expected before the start of the operation. It was the first peacekeeping operation of the Marine Corps and it completed its goal: defending the Kurdish refugees during their way to home. The ‘can do’ mentality was outstanding. The qualitative characteristics that were described in the Defence Note of 1991, i.e. flexibility, mobility, responsiveness, multifunctionality, interoperability, cooperation and perseverance were completely in line with the performances of the marines during this operation.<sup>75</sup> The Marine Corps met the requirements of the Dutch Army. According to Van Egmond, this operation was a proof of the capabilities of the marines as part of the Dutch Army. The brochure ‘Je uiterste grens’ confirms this idea. Who choose for being a marine, knows that he has to go to any extreme. A marine operates in areas of extreme cold and tropical heat. But he also operates, most of the time, on the border of water and land. If we look closer to the history of operations from the Marine Corps,

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<sup>73</sup> Geneste, *Het Korps Mariniers in de twintigste eeuw*, 128-131.

<sup>74</sup> C.P.M. van Egmond, ‘Voordracht 4 december 1991 ter gelegenheid voorlichtingsdag onderofficieren,’ *Qua Patet Orbis* 1 (April 1992) 11-17.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid*, 11-17.



operating in such an area is not very common. So, this can be seen as a characteristic that is not completely true. The brochure ends with the statement that a marine needs a good physical and mental health. If you are selected to be a marine, you can be very proud.<sup>76</sup>

#### 4.5.2 Operation UNAMIC and UNTAC

The operation UNAMIC and UNTAC was initiated in Cambodia and can be seen as an operation that was completely in line with the expectations of an army after the end of the Cold War, namely a peacekeeping operation under the United Nations. In 1992, the Royal Navy and the Marine Corps joined the UNTAC (United Nations Transitional Authority for Cambodia). Three units of marines took part in the operations to fight against the Khmer Rouge. By then, it was the most expensive and biggest operation in the history of the United Nations and the Dutch marines played the main role within the Dutch contribution to Cambodia.<sup>77</sup> UNTAC was divided into four phases: preparations, alloy of troops, demobilisation and, the aim of the operations, securing the elections. However, Cambodia was a needy country and there was a need to prepare operation of UNTAC. UNAMIC (United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia) started before UNTAC to make sure that the country was ready for the big operation. One part of UNAMIC was to make sure that a part of the landmines was destroyed before the start of UNAMIC.<sup>78</sup>

After six months, the first unit returned to the Netherlands and the second unit replaced it. According to the commander of the first unit, H.F. Dukers, *luitenant-kolonel* of the marines, several lessons were learned during the first months of the operations that could be useful for the second unit. Dukers did not think that the first unit could have done a better job than it did, but there were some issues that were mentioned. Due to a lack of exploration, logistical preparations were done ‘in the blind’. Because of this, several problems arose and Dukers argued that, before every operation, exploration was a must. Furthermore, the next units needed to be more focused on possible dangers during the operation. The situation in Cambodia was unpredictable due to the attacks of the Khmer Rouge. The UNTAC supervision from the Netherlands could not give orders, because it did not know what the

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<sup>76</sup> Afdeling Personeelsvoorziening van de Koninklijke Marine, ‘Korps Mariniers. Je uiterste grens,’ (The Hague 1995).

<sup>77</sup> D.C.L. Schoonoord, *De Koninklijke Marine in actie voor de Verenigde Naties: Mariniers in Cambodja 1992-1993* (Leeuwarden 1993) 5-6.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-23.

circumstances in Cambodia were. This needed to change in the future to facilitate the marines faster. Finally, frustration was a frequent occurrence. Dukers argued that a part of the soldiers of the United Nations only joined an operation to earn money and not to perform their tasks well or to help Cambodia. Groups with the wrong attitude could irritate the Dutch marines.<sup>79</sup> Again, the statement of Dukers can be seen as a confirmation of the brave identity of Dutch marines. The fact that the aim of marines was to perform well and money was not the most important issue, confirms the well-known identity. He did not take any exceptions into account, but he only described a successful image of Dutch marines in Cambodia.

At the end of the UNTAC-operation and the Dutch participation, it was too early to judge if the operation could be seen as successful. The situation in Cambodia was for many years miserable and the situation could not completely transformed into a Western democratic country. This was not a surprise, but the Dutch soldiers did not feel satisfied. The money that was spent on the UNTAC-operation would stop and so, the operation had to stop. However, the operation started the change that the country could not have done on its own. The aim, free and fair elections, was achieved, but in the field of human rights not a lot of progress was made. Furthermore, the operation failed to control the most important Cambodian ministries in order to make sure that the Khmer Rouge would not be a destabilising factor in the future. In general, the Dutch staff experienced the operation as something special due to the climate and tropical environment. The poverty and miserable conditions in which the Cambodian people lived made a deep impression on the soldiers, but they also felt satisfied. Repairing and building of roads, bridges and markets provided direct results, according to several marines.<sup>80</sup>

#### *4.5.3 Operation UNPROFOR*

The biggest and most long-term operation in which the Dutch Marine Corps was deployed during the nineties is the operation in the Balkans. During this operation, the biggest genocide in Europe after the Second World War took place: Srebrenica. Dutch soldiers were directly involved in this genocide. After the death of Josip Broz Tito, former president of Yugoslavia, in 1980 a process started in which the unity of the country was under pressure. Tensions between several populations, such as the Serbs, Croats and Bosnian Muslims increased. The disintegration of Yugoslavia started on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June, 1991, when Slovenia and Croatia

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<sup>79</sup> H.F. Dukers, 'Voordracht Cambodja,' *Qua Patet Orbis* 1 (1993) 10-21.

<sup>80</sup> Schoonoord, *De Koninklijke Marine in actie voor de Verenigde Naties*, 284-292.

proclaimed their independence. The conflict within and around Croatia escalated and this led to the siege and shelling Vukovar. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of January, 1992, the American United Nations diplomat Cyrus Vance stimulated a cessation of hostilities and the regulation of this cessation became the start of operation UNPROFOR.<sup>81</sup>

The operation was divided into several parts. As a way of trying to improve the situation in former Yugoslavia, the United Nations Security Council decided to establish the UNPROFOR (United Nations Protection Force) on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March, 1992. The peacekeeping force consisted of three parts: a military, a civilian and a police component (United Nations Civilian Police). UNPROFOR had to monitor the enforcement of a ceasefire in Croatia and the demilitarization of areas that were conquered by Croatian Serbs. The areas were declared four United Nations Protected Areas (UNPA's). Furthermore, UNPROFOR had to secure the return of refugees. Because of the further threats within the area, the Security Council extended the area of UNPROFOR to Bosnia-Herzegovina in resolution 758 on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June, 1992 and in resolution 819 of the United Nations Srebrenica was declared a safe area. While a safe haven does not need to depend on a consent of warring parties, a safe area needs to have this consent and could not be enforced.<sup>82</sup>

In April and May 1995, the situation was still not under control, but the mandate of UNPROFOR ended on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March because of the fact that Croatia did not want to extend the mandate. The Security Council divided UNPROFOR into three independent operations with an own mandate: in Croatia the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation (UNCRO), in Bosnia-Herzegovina UNPROFOR and in Macedonia the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP). Every operation was run by a different commander and they had to shoulder responsibility to the headquarter of the United Nations Peace Forces (UNPF) in Zagreb, Croatia. In August 1995, RRF (the Rapid Reaction Force) from the Netherlands, Great Britain and France (RRF) arrived near Sarajevo, but it could not prevent the Srebrenica massacre.<sup>83</sup>

The Dutch contribution to UNPROFOR and especially in the RRF was major. Most of the operations that the marines joined took place outside of Europe, but this operation was in Europe and therefore much closer to their own country. 178 marines took part in the operation

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<sup>81</sup> NIOD Instituut voor Oorlogs-, Holocaust- en Genocidestudies, *De val van Srebrenica. Luchtsteun en voorkennis in nieuw perspectief* (Amsterdam 2016) 14-17.

<sup>82</sup> Klep and van Gils, *Van Korea tot Kosovo*, 261-263.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, 263-264.

UNPROFOR. Their task was to secure peace, but the marines were attacked several times and they could not intervene during these attacks, because that was stated in the mandate. The use of violence was prohibited. Several marines were frustrated by these circumstances, but this changed after the arrival of the multinational brigade. This brigade was not hindered by the mandate and was able to act actively against opponents. Because of the circumstance in which the marines operated before the arrival of the multinational brigade, some marines lost their faith in the United Nations. But after the end of the operation, the marines were satisfied with the result and it gave them a boost. Until June 1996, marines were present to ensure that the existing rules were enforced equitably. The marines did have a big role within this operation and so, it was a chance to show their capacity to the Dutch Army and Dutch government.<sup>84</sup>

#### **4.6 Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the Marine Corps and the developments that are related to the Corps in the 1990s. The international order changed after the Fall of the Berlin Wall and the whole Dutch army had to reorganise due to the cuts in budget. However, the Marine Corps was able to continue its policy and aims because of the fact that it was already used to the new tasks in the 1990s. Joining interventions and peacekeeping operations were the new aim of the Dutch Army. The threat of violence and war disappeared within Europe, but the conflicts outside of Europe got a lot more attention than before 1990. The Marine Corps profiled itself as the unit within the Dutch Army that was completely capable of doing this kind of ‘new’ operations.

The Defence Note of 1991 and the Priority Note of 1993 were the most important policy documents during the first half of the 1990s. De Ruyter stated that the Note could be seen as a start for a change in attitude and not the start for a reorganisation of the Dutch Army only. It gave the army a new vision for the coming future. A further cut in budget was the reason for publishing the Priority Note in 1993. The Priority Note confirmed again the importance of the Royal Navy and Marine Corps within the Dutch Army. The rest of the chapter described three peacekeeping operations that the Marine Corps joined during the first half of the 1990s. This deployment confirmed the image of the Marine Corps and was a way in which the Corps could profile itself within the Dutch Army.

The next and last chapter analyses the reorganisation of the Marine Corps and its reaction to it during the 1990s.

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<sup>84</sup> Netherlands Institute for Military History, *De mariniers. Een wereldkorps*, DVD 3 (2014).

## **5. Reorganisation of the Marine Corps after 1989**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Now that the development of the Marine Corps before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall have been described, a discussion is needed to show how the Marine Corps profiled itself during the reorganisation after 1989. The peacekeeping operations that the Corps joined, had a huge impact on how it could profile itself worldwide, but also on what the role of the Corps was in this period within the Dutch Army. This chapter analyses how the Marine Corps profiled itself to secure its existence in a new world order and in the Netherlands.

First of all, the chapter starts with a description of this new world order. The new threats and the first thought about the new role of the marines are described. Furthermore, an important myth is described to show how the marines used an important battle in its history to confirm its reputation of braveness. The third subject is the possibility of adding a third unit to the Marine Corps. After this, the response to the reorganisation of the Marine Corps is described, especially how the Corps profiled itself within the Dutch Army. To give a complete view, it is also important to study other parts within the Dutch Army. Finally, this chapter analyses how the marines saw the future of the Marine Corps in the coming years. Is the existence of the Corps secured by the way it profiled itself during and after the reorganisation of the Dutch army after the fall of the Berlin Wall?

### **5.2 The view on a changing budget and international world order**

The Dutch constitution describes the goal of the Dutch Army as defending the interest of the (Dutch) state. The three parts of the army took a different view on this task during the Cold War. The Royal navy wanted to fulfil this task around the world. Pieter de Geus, politician and Minister of Defence in 1980 and 1981, argued that the officers of the Corps supported the Royal Navy with a bit of complacency. The biggest problem was a deficiency of available funds. The ideas about how to fulfil its tasks were always too big for the amount of money that was available and the fixed distribution of money prevented a competition between the three parts. During the Cold War, 88 percent of the budget of the navy was spent on defending Europe and the Netherlands against ‘the East’ by defending the coast and to defend the routes to the Belgian and Dutch seaports. So, these tasks are taking place more on land than at sea. Only twelve per cent of the budget was spent on operations at sea, such as on actions against

piracy. The big question was how the Royal Navy had to spend the available budget when the Cold War came to an end.<sup>85</sup>

A lot of research was done after the end of the Cold War to find out what the role of the Dutch Army would be. The Clingendael Institute, the Netherlands Institute for International Relations in The Hague, did research on this subject in 1990. The research described what the new threats could be in Europe and how the Dutch Army had to react to these new threats. Samuel Rozemond, deputy director of the Institute, described three specific forms of new danger. The first threat could be a possible conflict near or around the new borders in Eastern Europe. Furthermore, anti-western ideologies linked with nationalism, advanced weapon technology and an interruption of oil supply could threaten Europe. But it was also possible that parts of the Soviet Union would inherit (nuclear) weapons. In summary, he expected a period in which threats would become more complex and multifaceted than they were during the Cold War.<sup>86</sup>

Henk van den Breemen was very much involved in these developments. In 1985, he was the head of strategic management within the Dutch Army and was a cowriter of the Defence Note of 1991. He states that during the eighties, marines were seen as the combat unit of the Royal Navy and that the Marine Corps missed the recognition as a separate entity: marines were always seen as part of the Royal Navy. What was the best way to promote the marines? Was it part of the navy or could it be seen as an own entity? Van den Breemen describes the struggle of the marines that is present during the whole history of the Marine Corps: are marines only soldiers at sea, or are they more than that? A focus on 3D thinking became more important after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the marines as a separate entity became more common as well. 3D thinking is explained later in this chapter.<sup>87</sup>

### **5.3 The ‘Black devils’ versus the battle for The Hague**

The deployment of the Marine Corps during 10-14 May, 1940, is one of the most famous stories about the heroic marines from the twentieth century. A lot of research has been done to search for the reasons why this deployment is so important and characteristic for the Marine

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<sup>85</sup> P.B.R. de Geus, *Staatsbelang en krijgsmacht. De Nederlandse defensie tijdens de Koude Oorlog* (Maassluis 1998) 207-210, 235-236.

<sup>86</sup> Netherlands Institute of International Relations Clingendael, *Nederlandse defensie tegen een nieuwe achtergrond* (The Hague 1990) 6-9.

<sup>87</sup> Van den Breemen, Henk. Interview by the author. Dordrecht, November 22, 2017.

Corps. It can be seen as part of the collective memory of marines from that time, but also from the new marines. The book that was written in 1948 by Bert Honselaar, *De zwarte duivels van Rotterdam*, gives a description of this myth based on personal experiences of marines. At that time, Honselaar was *Luitenant ter zee der IIIde klasse* and he gave a description of the five days in Rotterdam. He said that the Marine Corps were the symbol of the resistance that lasted for five days. Because of their perfect leadership, good training and a strong discipline, the marines were able to resist the Germans for five days and they proved their value within the Dutch Army. The fact that the marines could not do more than they did, was a result of automatic weapons, mortars and the many planes of Germany.<sup>88</sup> Honselaar confirmed the myth about the marines during the Second World War. The biggest part of the book was based on the stories of marines and did not give the whole story with all possible perspectives. For example, little to no attention was given to the perspective of the Germans. It described the story of the marines, but the book could be seen as a prosaic story about the five days in Rotterdam.

The stories and memories about this event resulted in a myth. A selection of different memories has to take place in which some are forgotten and others are kept. It also occurs that memories are adapted, because people have different memories about the same event or because it is better to change a memory for a specific purpose. Myths can give a certain meaning to an event. Already during the Second World War, a lot was written about the deployment of the marines, mainly by the own stories of marines. But the 'Black Devils' was also a very interesting subject in the eyes of journalists. So, most of the stories were written during the war and kept in private collections, but there is still a lot of attention for the event during days of commemoration, such as the birthday of the marines that is celebrated every year.<sup>89</sup>

However, this myth plays an important role in the history of the marines and is also important for the identity of the marines in current times, according to Mariska Kool, who wrote a thesis about the identity of the Marine Corps at the Erasmus University Rotterdam. The stories were falsified several times, but they were persistent and so a lot of people know these stories about the heroic marines and they are part of the collective memory. Why are they called the 'Black Devils'? Different stories are told, such as the story in which the

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<sup>88</sup> Bert Honselaar, *De zwarte Duivels van Rotterdam* (Rotterdam 1948) 9-12.

<sup>89</sup> Mariska Kool, 'Zwarte Duivels? Collectieve herinneringen en mythevorming over het optreden van de Rotterdamse Mariniers in mei 1940' (Thesis EUR, Rotterdam 2005), 18-23.

marines had black faces or that the marines attacked the German soldiers with knives which resulted in a red river due to the blood of the German soldiers. Kool states that the most realistic option is the story that a German officer called the marines the 'Black Devils' because of their heroic fight.<sup>90</sup>

This story can be seen as important to the identity of the marines. The existence of the marines was not always secure, but this myth contributes to the importance that marines can play during a war. The view on the Royal Land Forces during the Second World War in Rotterdam is less heroic when you compare that with the stories of the actions of marines. This is already an example of competition between the different parts of the Dutch Army during these days and it can be extended to the nineties. One of the stories is that the Land Forces built a kitchen to provide the soldiers with soup, while the marines were hungry. After all, the priority of the marines was to fight against the Germans. It confirms the differences in attitude between the different parts of the Dutch Army. But it is important to note that this is the view of the marines. When you ask a general of the Land Forces what he thinks about his myth, he answers sceptical.<sup>91</sup> The marines did a great job in trying to defend Rotterdam, but it is unfair and misleading that this story became such a big myth, according to this general. The total number of soldiers in Rotterdam was 7000 and there were only 300 marines present, only 4.3%. The other soldiers were mainly soldiers from the Royal Land Forces, but there is no famous myth or story about these brave men. Although the number of marines is not decisive, the fact that there is no story about the other 6700 soldiers is remarkable. During the same days of May, a battle was fought between German and Dutch soldiers in The Hague. This battle was comparable with the battle in Rotterdam, but it is not known by the heroic acting of soldiers. The soldiers fought extremely brave, meritorious and with a great success, but they do not make any great claims. A fact is that there is a big difference between the stories about both battles. Is that because of the fact that marines want to sell themselves as a brave unit, or is it a way in which the Marine Corps can secure its existence in times of doubts? It is a fact that the marines are much more praised than other parts of the Dutch Army. But why is this the case? It is possible to feel the tension between the marines and the land forces when this subject is mentioned during an interview?<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Kool, *Zwarte Duivels*, 47-50.

<sup>91</sup> Anonymous. Interview by the author. Utrecht, April 28, 2017.

<sup>92</sup> This paragraph is fulfilled based on an anonymous interview done by the author, in Utrecht, on April 28, 2017.



#### **5.4 A third unit of marines?**

On the 19<sup>th</sup> of January, 1994, a letter that was written by the Minister of Defence, Relus Ter Beek, was sent to the chairman of the Upper and Lower Houses to ask for the possibility to add a third stand-by unit within the Marine Corps. In spite of the cuts in the budget of the Ministry of Defence, he asked for this investment. A research was done on this third unit. Before this research the Marine Corps consisted of four units, with in total two fighting units. The first two were stand-by and both contained a support unit. Furthermore, the units made use of additional logistic and combat supporting units. The third unit was a mobile one, but did not have its own supporting component. The already existing support units could not give enough support to the third, proposed unit. The fourth unit was stationed on the Dutch Antilles. In this composition, the third unit was not able to replace the first or second unit. The only exception of this composition can be found during the operation in Cambodia. A third unit was deployed as a result of three far-reaching measures. Some marines were deployed twice on a voluntary basis, the number of marines was extended by not filling up other positions within the Royal Navy, and personnel from the Royal Navy was deployed during the operation in Cambodia. Ter Beek argued that this was not possible in the future and that the Marine Corps needed a third stand-by unit if marines were deployed more often in other peacekeeping operations comparable to the one in Cambodia.<sup>93</sup>

Four solutions came up after doing research on this subject. The costs of this solution was between 39 million guilders for the most basic unit and 195 million guilders for the option with its own supporting staff. To compare the possible options, operational, financial and political aspects were taken into account. Ter Beek preferred the option of a completely supported third unit, but in his view, financial aspects were more important than his own preference. He concluded that a third unit was not possible within the budget of the Ministry of Defence if he compared the Corps with the current structure and size of the whole Dutch Army. Those millions of guilders were not available after the cuts in budget, but Ter Beek also argued that a third unit was not necessary to the coming Dutch deployments during peacekeeping operations. The Priority Note stated that the Dutch contribution to peacekeeping operation had to consist of seven stand-by units of infantry: two units of marines, three units of Mobile Air Forces and two units of armoured infantry. The Dutch Army already consisted

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<sup>93</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Hoofdkwartier Korps Mariniers-archief, inventarisnummer 19, 'stafstudie naar het paraat stellen van een derde mariniersbataljon'.

of enough units and a third unit of marines was not necessary for the Dutch contribution. Units of marines could be replaced by an unit of another part of the Dutch Army.<sup>94</sup>

However, Van den Breemen argues that this reason that is stated in an official paper was not the real reason for not implementing this idea. He states that not giving the Marine Corps a third unit was more a psychological result of previous developments within the Dutch Army. The Royal Land Forces had to reorganise and shrink much and to compensate for this, the Mobile Air Forces was established in 1992. Enlarging the Marine Corps was not fair, so not only money was the reason for not establishing a third unit, but also the feeling of compensation towards the Royal Land Forces. There is a strong rivalry between the different parts, but that is not a big problem, according to Van den Breemen. Sometimes decisions benefit the Marine corps, sometimes one of the other parts of the Dutch Army.<sup>95</sup>

Ingo Piepers, a former marine who did research on the possibility of a third world war, thinks that this development was linked to the possible reduction of the Marine Corps. It can be seen as a solution to prevent a large reduction. Although the marines had to reduce as well, Piepers argues that a third unit, in practice, would be essential in the coming years. If the management at that time got it right, a third unit was absolutely realistic and attainable. The question was more if the Royal Navy wanted the Marine Corps as a very big and dominant part of their blue Navy, because in the end the Navy had to reduce and not the Marine Corps. In Piepers' view, the Dutch Army needed more light infantry units than tanks or a frigate.<sup>96</sup>

## **5.5 How did the Marine Corps react to the reorganisation and reduction?**

From 1984 onwards, there was an ongoing discussion about the actual reduction in numbers within the Marine Corps. What is notable about this discussion, is the focus on the history of the Corps: several documents about the reduction start with a description of its history. It is possible that the management of the Corps did this to show the biggest achievements during its history and it could help confirming its position within the Dutch Army. In 1988, the Corps consisted of 3088 marines and in 1990 of 3019. The proposed reduction after the reorganisation was 300 marines, but with the help of Dutch political leaders, the reduction was smaller than proposed, namely 100 marines. The total number of marines in 1993 was

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<sup>94</sup> SSA, Hoofdkwartier Korps Mariniers-archief, 19, 'stafstudie naar het paraat stellen van een derde mariniersbataljon'.

<sup>95</sup> Van den Breemen, Henk. Interview by the author. Dordrecht, November 22, 2017.

<sup>96</sup> Piepers, Ingo. Interview by the author. Rotterdam, December 17, 2017.

2965.<sup>97</sup> It is not clear in this document who these political leaders were. However, the fact that political leaders used their power to prevent the big reduction within the Marine Corps is notable. It is possible that an entanglement of political and personal interest took place. The abolishment of the equal allocation of the budget contributed to the competition between the different parts within the Dutch Army. It is possible that this political leader had a history within the Marine Corps or that this person had a preference for the Marine Corps. However, the name of the political leader is not given in the document. The minister of Defence at 1993 was Relus ter Beek and the Secretary of State until the 1<sup>st</sup> of June, 1993, was Berend-Jan Baron van Voorst tot Voorst and after the 1<sup>st</sup> of June it was Ton Frinking. They were both member of the political party CDA. Frinking had several functions within the Dutch Royal Land forces and was, together with Relus ter Beek, responsible for the establishment of the Airmobile Brigade of the Land Forces in 1993.<sup>98</sup> It is unlikely that Frinking was the political leader that helped the Marine Corps, but it shows that personal background could intertwine with the decisions people take during their career within the Ministry of Defence. Frinking had a background within the Royal Land Forces and when he was the Secretary of State, the Airmobile Brigade was established. It proves that it is possible that another political leader used its power to help the Marine Corps during its reorganisation.

A new staff policy was implemented on January 1, 1990. To prevent an unequal growth within the Navy between the number of employees and the number of functions, the management of the Royal Navy started an outplacement project, done by the department of Internal Communication. The most important issue within this project was '*krimpen zonder kramp*', or reduction without too many problems and unsatisfied employees. The Royal Navy felt responsible for the people that would lose their jobs after the reduction. The political developments during the first years of the nineties were in line with the outplacement project. Another option was needed within the Navy's work field for people who would lose their job. So, outplacement could be seen as a way in which employees are advised and get help to find, as soon as possible, a new job within their own work field. The project of the Dutch Royal Navy was based on the reorganisation of the Dutch company Hema. Researchers wrote a literature report and interviewed the person that was responsible for the reorganisation within

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<sup>97</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Chef van de Marinestaf-archief, inventarisnummer 2964 , S22720/14555, 'Notitie t.b.v. Admiraliteitsraad betreffende GOEM-2, 30 juli 1993'.

<sup>98</sup> 'Parlement & Politiek. A.B.M. (Ton) Frinking':

[https://www.parlement.com/id/vg09llignjpf/a\\_b\\_m\\_ton\\_frinking](https://www.parlement.com/id/vg09llignjpf/a_b_m_ton_frinking) (accessed on 03-06-2018).

the Hema to see how the Hema solved the problem of outplacement.<sup>99</sup> This project shows how much the Royal Navy was involved with their employees. The reorganisation and reduction was a big issue, but the Navy felt responsible for its employees. Next to that, the choice to pick the reorganisation of the Hema as a model for its reorganisations, resulted in a down to earth attitude. It is possible to compare the Navy with any other company in the world. Despite of the fact that people do not see the Navy and the Marine Corps as a company because of a different goal, the structure and organisation can be seen as the same as a commercial company. Unfortunately, the document only gives a description of a possible outplacement project and does not give the result of the outplacement within the Navy.

The position and reputation of the Marine Corps was under a threat in the 1970s and 1980s. A cultural change was needed within the Marine Corps to secure its position after 1989 and according to Van den Breemen, this change in attitude and reputation of the Marine Corps was successful when you compare it to the culture of the whole navy. The officers of the Navy only looked at possible operations at sea, but the marines focussed more on different options. The management of the Marine Corps also focused on possible operations on land and not only at sea. So, the chance that the marines would be deployed during an operation was bigger than the chance that the Royal Navy would be deployed. Because of this, the marines gained better results than the Royal Navy during the 1990s and more chances to be deployed. It got more options to show its abilities. After the appointment of marine Rob Zuiderwijk as commander of the Navy in the Caribbean, the acceptance within the Navy and the recognition of the role of the Marine Corps within the Royal Navy was completed, according to Van den Breemen. The Marine Corps could now be seen as a separate and full part within the Navy and the Dutch Army.<sup>100</sup>

## **5.6 The cooperation between different parts within the Dutch Army**

The reorganisation also resulted in new ideas about cooperation between the different parts of the Dutch army. If there was not enough money to have a support unit, maybe another part of the Dutch Army could help the Marine Corps with supporting staff. One of the new ideas was a cooperation between the Marine Corps and the special forces of the Dutch Army, the *Korps*

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<sup>99</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Chef van de Marinestaf-archief, inventarisnummer 2315, S 10368/133, 'Outplacement. Reader samengesteld door A. Weinans. Bureau interne communicatie, mei 1990'.

<sup>100</sup> Van den Breemen, Henk. Interview by the author. Dordrecht, November 22, 2017.

*Commando Troepen* (KCT). Already existing cooperations between the two special forces at an international level were taken into account in this research of 1996. The research was done by staff members of both parts without the staff of Defence.<sup>101</sup> The reason for the possible cooperation was the communality between their operational deployment during operations, and mainly in the field of special operations. Both units operate in a so-called special reconnaissance, operations that are conducted by small groups of highly trained soldiers who avoid direct combat and detection by the enemy. Next to a possibility of cooperation during operations, there was also attention for cooperation during a training and following courses together in other countries.<sup>102</sup>

After this research several other researches were done on this subject. A research on the possibility to have a cooperation between the Marine Corps and the Airmobile Brigade was done. In 1994, D.J. Broman wrote his thesis about this cooperation after a period of several cuts in the budget of the Ministry of Defence with a far-reaching result: a smaller Dutch Army. One of the results was the international collaboration between the Dutch Army and armies from other countries. Also on national level, there were possibilities to cooperate. Broman did research on the possibility of a cooperation between the Marine Corps and the Airmobile Brigade after a suggestion that was made in the Defence Priority Review of 1993. The aim of the suggestion was to prevent duplication and to promote efficient use of money. The results of his research were positive: both of the units were open to collaboration, but both needed to have their own place within the collaboration and to have the intention of not taking over each other's tasks. According to Broman, there were enough possibilities to realise this collaboration in the future. First of all, both units had to be fully aware of each other's possibilities and restrictions. The units were similar to each other in spite of the fact that they both had different specialities (amphibious and airmobile). The Marine Corps and

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<sup>101</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Chef van de Marinestaf-archief, Inventarisnummer 3244, S96/666/2971, 'Nota van de plaatsvervangend Chef Defensiestaf A.P.P.M. van Baal, Luitenant-Generaal der Artillerie aan bevelhebber der Zeestrijdkrachten en landstrijdkrachten, 5 augustus 1996'.

<sup>102</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Chef van de Marinestaf-archief, Inventarisnummer 3244, 10616/6820, 'Onderzoek naar samenwerking Korps Mariniers en Korps Commandotroepen. Uitgevoerd door de Werkgroep Implementatie 1998, ondergetekende Commandant van het Korps Mariniers, E.C. Klop, generaal-majoor der Mariniers. Gericht aan de bevelhebber der Zeestrijdkrachten, vice-admiraal L. Kroon, 17 september 1997'.

the Airmobile Brigade could support and replace each other. The management also had to be in favour of the collaboration.<sup>103</sup>

In 2004, a research was published by the Ministry of Defence about the possibility of a cooperation between both special forces. One of the limitations of a cooperation between the two groups is the differences in culture. In this report, culture is described as a collective and mental set of ideas in which members of a group of people differ from another group. If all members of a company have the same culture, it will result in a optimisation of intercommunication and it will strengthen the efficiency, which can have a decisive role during an operation. Every part, such as the Marine Corps and the Mobile Air forces, of the Dutch Army that can be seen as one big company, has its own culture. This culture or ‘esprit de corps’ results in the fact that every part has its own identity and a feeling of solidarity with its own corps. Besides, every soldier is convinced that his own corps is the best in the Netherlands during military operations. Soldiers want to distinguish themselves from others. The differences between cultures can be beneficial in a way that it can provide a bigger commitment and dedication, but it can also lead to forced competition between the corps. But if a cooperation is feasible, according to this research, the different corps are able to get a bigger understanding of each other and this would strengthen the Dutch Army as a company. Functioning as an entity instead of seeing each other as opponents helps the Dutch Army to distinguish itself at an international level.<sup>104</sup>

Van den Breemen argues that the Royal Air Force wanted to catch up with the marines after the successful start of the Marine Corps in the nineties during several operations. The Royal Air Forces saw how the Marine Corps reorganised successfully and felt the pressure to secure its position within the Dutch Army as well. Hans Couzy, general of the Royal Land Forces, who led the biggest reorganisation within the land forces after abolishing the obligatory military service, proposed to let the Marine Corps take over the *Korps Commando troepen*, but the Royal Navy rejected this idea. The competition and the feeling of pride prevented this cooperation, but the two parts do train together.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>103</sup> D. J. Broman, *Samenwerking tussen het Korps Mariniers & Luchtmobiele Brigade (scriptie KMA) (Breda 1994) 56-57.*

<sup>104</sup> Ministerie van Defensie, *Studie samenwerking KMarns-KCT-11AMB, Kamerstuk, 21-09-2004.*

<sup>105</sup> Van den Breemen, Henk. Interview by the author. Dordrecht, November 22, 2017.

## 5.7 Restructuring and efficiency within the Dutch Navy

The two words that were used the most during the reorganisation of the Dutch Army in the nineties, were restructuring and efficiency. Between 1991 and 2001, the Royal Dutch Navy had to reduce its personnel with 4130 people, both on operational and support level. As part of the Navy, the Marine Corps had to reduce its number of personnel as well. The biggest part of the reduction, 3770, was done by the project group HERBERT. The aim of the group was to prevent more commotion in Den Helder, the headquarter of the Royal Dutch Navy. The Commander of the naval forces, Nico Buis, argued on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 1994, that the reduction could result in an efficiency loss and that this loss was the biggest risk at that time.<sup>106</sup> The biggest question was: how can we have the same efficiency within the navy with considerably fewer personnel? Already before the start of the reorganisation, the navy had its own department of evaluation and efficiency, which each month published a report about the operational readiness of the marines. This report shows the focus on efficiency and the importance of evaluation. Research was not only done on the readiness of personnel, but also on materiel, such as equipment or weaponry.<sup>107</sup>

On January the 30<sup>th</sup>, 1990, the Minister of Defence, Relus ter Beek, wrote a letter to the chairmen of the House of Representatives and he also stressed the importance of efficiency within the Dutch Army. Next to the fact that he mentioned the reorganisation, he thought that the Ministry of Defence needed several changes to become more efficient. In his opinion, four issues needed extra attention in the coming ten years. The biggest issue was the high expenditures of the whole organisation, because the total revenue would fall due to several international agreements in arms control. The agreements would result in smaller armies and that would affect the Dutch army as well. The second issue he mentioned was the functioning of the managing board of the Ministry of Defence. The cooperation between the central management and the management of the different parts of the army did not work properly and needed to be improved. Thirdly, the investment in new weaponry would not be as big as in the eighties and so, the Ministry of Defence needed to think about this issue.

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<sup>106</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Chef van de Marinestaf-archieff, Inventarisnummer 2346, S30589, 'Brief aan de plaatsvervangend Secretaris Generaal, van de bevelhebber der Zeestrijdkrachten N.W.G. Buis, vice-admiraal. Onderwerp: Voorkomen vermenging doelmatigheidsoperatie defensie en KM-reductieproces, 19 december 1994'.

<sup>107</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Chef van de Marinestaf-archieff, Inventarisnummer 2392, '4 wekelijkse rapportage OPMIS-MARNS over de 12<sup>e</sup> periode van 1989 (december) over de operationele gereedheid mariniers van de afdeling Evaluatie & Effectiviteit'.

Furthermore, Ter Beek stated that Defence needed new departments to support the new structure, such as a department of new policy about personnel. It was also not allowed to treat soldiers differently from civilian personnel during the reorganisation, because both groups were important and a forced resignation must be prevented for the two groups.<sup>108</sup>

## 5.8 Wherever the world, QPO

The main goals of the Dutch Army can be described as protecting the integrity of its own territory and the territory of allies, such as the Dutch Antilles and Aruba, promoting of the international legal order and stability, supporting the civil authorities, disaster management and humanitarian aid.<sup>109</sup> The government has the monopoly over the deployment of the army. However, when international problems occur, the Dutch government has to take its responsibility to promote international stability. But the Netherlands is not able to do a military action on its own due to her relatively small army. The whole international community has a responsibility to protect this community by intervening when the population of a country suffers from a civil war or lawlessness. The last sentences are stated in the charter of the United Nations, which was agreed upon in 1945. The changes at an international level after 1989 had a big influence on thinking about international peace. The end of the Cold War changed the international situation. The constant threat of a big, international conflict stopped and this changed the aim of the Dutch army.<sup>110</sup>

A research about the ambitions of the Dutch Army was done in 2007 to look into these developments and it was named 'wherever the world', the same motto as QPO. It can be seen as a coincidence, but it can also indicate once more that the Dutch Marine Corps had a great position to start with in the changing world order. The first observation in this research was the link between globalisation and economic interdependence. Because of the fact that the interest of countries are getting more and more intertwined, the chance of a war got smaller, according to CDA and this research. Although opinions can differ on this subject, the CDA argued that intertwined interest results in less conflicts. Furthermore, the research states that

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<sup>108</sup> Semi-Static Archive, Rijswijk, Chef van de Marinestaf-archief, Inventarisnummer 2306, D90/218/3586, 'stuk over bezuinigen binnen het Ministerie van Defensie, 30 januari 1990'.

<sup>109</sup> Wetenschappelijk Instituut voor het CDA, *Ambities voor de Nederlandse krijgsmacht in een veranderende internationale omgeving* (The Hague 2007) 25-63.

<sup>110</sup> CDA, *Ambities voor de Nederlandse krijgsmacht*, 25-63 ; United Nations, *Charter of the United Nations* (San Francisco, 26th June 1945).



international terrorism makes the security situation more complex and less predictable. Finally, armed conflicts are taking place more and more within states and not between states.<sup>111</sup> The characteristics of the Marine Corps and especially the characteristics that are emphasized by the Corps itself, connect to these international changes. The Corps is once again the perfect unit within the changing world after 1989, according to the title of this research. Mainly because of the fact that the Corps can be deployed worldwide and in every type of landscape. However, this is only one party of the Dutch House of Representatives and so, this research does not give a good example of the opinion of the whole House of Representatives. The observations are also debatable. Before 2007, conflict already took place more within states than between states. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, several conflict within states took place, such as the conflict in Cambodia and Iraq, as described before.

## **5.9 The view of and on the Marine Corps**

The Marine Corps has its own and specific identity within the Dutch Army. The struggle for an own place within the navy can be seen as one part of this identity, but the way how the Marine Corps looks at its own identity is the other part. A marine is characterised by his braveness and perseverance, but also by his flexibility and creativity. Where other soldiers of the army stop because of a complex and difficult situation, a marine does not stop and continues until the job is done, according to Jan ten Hove. It is not important *how* a mission is accomplished, but that the job is done by solution-oriented thinking, i.e. making the impossible possible. A marine does not need any luxurious stuff to fulfil his task. The Royal Land Forces envy the marines and rivalry is present between both parts of the army, but this rivalry stimulates the parts to try to surpass the actions from the others.<sup>112</sup> Ten Hove is in favour of the marines and this opinion is a logical result of his background. If you ask someone from the Land Forces the same question, he will answer the question in a completely different manner, namely that the Land Forces do not envy the Marine Corps.<sup>113</sup>

The way of thinking that the Marine Corps used in the 1990s to distinguish itself from other parts was thinking in 3D: not only a focus on operation at sea was needed to secure its position within the army, but also operations on land and operations with helicopters and aircraft. Although choosing this way of thinking was a big risk due to the specialisms of the

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<sup>111</sup> CDA, *Ambities voor de Nederlandse krijgsmacht*, 25-53.

<sup>112</sup> Ten Hove, Jan. Interview by the author. Rotterdam, August 24, 2017.

<sup>113</sup> Anonymous. Interview by the author. Utrecht, April 28, 2017.

other two parts, it could be a way to show the need of having a Marine Corps within the Dutch Army. The image of the Marine Corps was to be the part of the Dutch Army that could do every operation that was important for the Netherlands and the international order. The management of the Royal Navy had full attention for the frigates, big warships, and did not worry much about the Marine Corps, because the corps would be fine, according to Van den Breemen.<sup>114</sup> This statement from Van den Breemen indicates that the Royal Navy did not have worries about the Marine Corps, because it could completely fulfil its duty within the Dutch Army. What the Royal Navy thought about this assumption is unclear. These thoughts are in favour of the Marine Corps, because of Van den Breemen's background.

Next to the previous development, the 3D thinking, there were also another issues that had an important influence on the nineties: peacekeeping operations. Relus ter Beek, Minister of Defence, can be characterised by his urge to join peacekeeping operations, according to Van den Breemen. As described earlier in this research, the Netherlands joined several operations and the Marine Corps made a huge contribution to these operations. The Corps was willing to join every possible operation and therefore had the chance to prove itself and to secure its existence by these deployments.<sup>115</sup> While the Dutch Land Forces had to reorganise after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the abolishment of military service and the operation in Srebrenica, the Land Forces saw that the actions of the Marine Corps mattered and were appreciated worldwide. So, Ten Hove argues that the Land Forces had to come up with a new idea and this new idea of a Mobile air force was based on the Marine Corps, according to Ten Hove. They wanted to measure themselves with the Marine Corps.<sup>116</sup>

In short, if a marine is asked how he thinks about the Marine Corps, the marine will answer that the Marine Corps was a successful part of the Dutch Army during the nineties. They finally got a position that they deserved within the army. Other parts, such as the Land Forces, were jealous of the well-trained marines, according to Ten Hove. But how did and do people outside of the Marine Corps think about the marines? It is not difficult to recognise a struggle between the different parts. A General from the Land forces argues that the Marine Corps can be described as an organisation that is very introverted and blows its reputation up, especially when it comes to its own capacities and own merits. An example of this issue is the aforementioned battle for The Hague and the myth about the 'Black Devils'. Other units that

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<sup>114</sup> Van den Breemen, Henk. Interview by the author. Dordrecht, November 22, 2017.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> Ten Hove, Jan. Interview by the author. Rotterdam, August 24, 2017.

fought against Germany are less famous than the units of the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps promoted its actions more to secure its existence for the second half of the twentieth century, and especially during the reorganisations, according to this General. Furthermore, there is also a problem with the treatment of soldiers that have mental health problems as a result of their participation in peacekeeping operations. According to the General, a marine is not always allowed to get a treatment for mental illness, because of the fact that a marine has to show that he is brave and indestructible. Soldiers from other parts are obligated to get a treatment. The other parts care more about the health of a soldier than their reputation. This could be a problem in the nearby future within the Marine Corps and could bring the future of the Marine Corps in danger.<sup>117</sup> The big reorganisation after 1989 resulted in a struggle between the different parts of the Dutch Army to secure their position. Every man or woman from a part in the Dutch army supports its own department within the army. After the abolishment of the military service, soldiers were fulltime part of the army and it was even more important to secure their existence.

### **5.10 The Marine Corps in the coming years**

In 2013, the Clingendael Institute published its vision on the Dutch Army of the future. The cuts in budget in combination with the rising costs for replacing the F-16 Falcons shaped the conditions for this vision. Three thoughts were seen as important: the Dutch interests and values, the strengths of the Dutch Army and the collective needs of the European Union and NATO. Four different types of the Armed Forces are possible, according to the Clingendael Institute, based upon the aforementioned three thoughts. The first one is the influence and air-based intervention force and this force focuses on the most modern air forces. This force can join the biggest military countries, such as the United States, to join the start of an operation. The second one is the economy and prosperity and maritime force and this force focuses on the maritime part of an army. Its goals is to secure the Dutch economic and trade interests. The third type is the stability and security and robust stabilisation force which concentrates on all three parts of the army. Lastly, the fourth force, according to the Clingendael Institute, can be described as the human rights and humanity and supporting peace force. The conclusion of the rapport was that the Netherlands does not have to base the decisions about reorganisation

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<sup>117</sup> Anonymous. Interview by the author. Utrecht, April 28, 2017.

on money only, but also on the capacity, experience and skills in which the Dutch Army could distinguish itself from other Armed Forces.<sup>118</sup>

After every reorganisation or other cuts in budget, the Dutch Army had to reorganise and this happened several times after 1989. However, research on how to optimize the Dutch Army with the available budget can sometimes go too far. Isabelle Duyvesteyn, Professor of International Studies and Global History at the Leiden University, argues that one of the biggest problems of political, military and academic thinkers could be think in a way of ‘strategisch analfabetisme’ or strategic illiteracy: a lack of strategic thinking. The relationship between the goals and the available resources is out of balance. The unclear, unachievable and high targets together with limited resources makes it difficult to set up a strategy. What is achievable within the Dutch Army when limited resources are available? Because of the cuts in budget, Defence has to think about what it can do with the available resources.<sup>119</sup>

How do several people think about the Dutch Army in the coming years and the Marine Corps in particular? Henk van den Breemen argues that the Marine Corps has done justice to the expectations of a worldwide deployable unit and that the Corps is most of the time the first unit that is sent to a peacekeeping operation. Furthermore, it is important, according to Van den Breemen, that every part of the Dutch Army has its own specialism. You need to allow a specialism to every part, because it can make the Dutch Army as a whole better.<sup>120</sup> Jan ten Hove states that the Ministry of Defence should continue reorganising. It is important to look forward, what kind of war is waged in 2020, and adapt the Dutch Army. The Dutch Army needs to be more flexible and efficient. At the moment, the Marine Corps takes care of everything, according to Ten Hove. The reorganisation can take the flexibility and speed of the Marine Corps as a starting point. But a cooperation between the Marine Corps and the Land Forces can be useful as well: the Corps can be deployed during the first weeks of an operation and the Land Forces are needed when the Dutch Army has to stay longer than those weeks.<sup>121</sup> Ingo Piepers also argues that the Dutch Army needs to reorganise. Because of the focus on the cuts in budget, a new view on the whole organisation is important. The concept that is used in the Dutch Army is old-fashioned due to new

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<sup>118</sup> Netherlands Institute of International Relations, *Clingendael's visie op de krijgsmacht van de toekomst* (The Hague Februari 2013) 3-34.

<sup>119</sup> I.G.B.M. Duyvesteyn, *Strategisch analfabetisme. De kunst van strategisch denken in moderne militaire operaties (oratie)* (Leiden 10 June, 2013) 1-6.

<sup>120</sup> Van den Breemen, Henk. Interview by the author. Dordrecht, November 22, 2017.

<sup>121</sup> Ten Hove, Jan. Interview by the author. Rotterdam, August 24, 2017.

developments on national and international level. The continuous struggle between the parts is also not beneficial for the structure of the army.<sup>122</sup>

### **5.11 Conclusion**

Overall, the Marine Corps profiled itself as a flexible and brave unit within the Navy and the Dutch Army. However, people from outside of the Corps think differently about how brave the marines were during the start of the Second World War. Issues that are documented by officials are not always telling the real story about a development and an example of this is the possibility of adding a third unit of marines to the Corps. The official documentation tells another story than Henk van den Breemen describes. So, a lot of decisions are made behind the scenes and the general story is stated in the documents.

The struggle of being a separate entity within the Royal Navy can be seen as finished after the nineties, according to Henk van den Breemen. The Corps found its place within the Dutch Army and also proved how essential the Corps was to the Netherlands. Despite the fact that a lot of competition takes place between the different parts, they know that a cooperation is needed to secure the existence of the Dutch army. Everyone has its own view on how the Marine Corps has to reorganise in the coming years, but all the marines do have the same thoughts about the Corps: worldwide and always deployable. Are those thoughts testable? Or is it just a way to prove and secure its existence for the coming years? Furthermore, it is also clear that the management of the Marine Corps used the help of political leaders to decrease the proposed reduction from 300 marines to 100 marines.

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<sup>122</sup> Piepers, Ingo. Interview by the author. Rotterdam, December 17, 2017.

## 6. Conclusion

The Marine Corps used its identity to secure its existence after the reorganization in the 1990s. The title of this thesis focuses on the position of the Dutch Marine Corps within the Dutch Army during the 1990s. The ‘Black Devils’ defended the bridges across the Maas in Rotterdam from the 10<sup>th</sup> until the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, 1940, and this operation can be seen as the start of the creation of its identity. The brave and well-trained marines were seen as an important part of the Dutch Army. But the number of marines was reduced several times during the second half of the twentieth century. Three developments influenced these reorganizations: the transfer of sovereignty of New Guinea, the start of peacekeeping operations of the United Nations and the fall of the Berlin Wall. But can a difference be found in the way in which the Marine Corps profiled itself before the fall of the Berlin Wall and during the nineties?

The thesis started with a general overview of the organization of the Dutch Marine Corps. The Marine Corps was founded as an unit of soldiers at sea. Its task was to protect Dutch ships and the soldiers were mainly deployed during battles at sea. Through time, the aims of the Corps got more specialized and it became more and more divided by task-oriented units. At the moment of writing, the Marine Corps consist of 3000 marines and its most important task is to participate in international peacekeeping operations of the United Nations and NATO. The number of marines changed over time due to several cuts in budget, but the Marine Corps secured its existence. During the nineties, the Marine Corps profiled itself not as an unit that consisted of soldiers at sea, but as a unit with soldiers that could be deployed worldwide and on any possible landscape. This can be seen as a very big difference. Marines were not only strong men that could fight a battle, but during the nineties, according to Van den Breemen, it were smart men who were able to react to several circumstances by their solution-oriented way of thinking. 3D-thinking became more important during the nineties, so a marine not only needed to be strong, but also smart. The reputation and skills of marines needed to change during the nineties due to a new international order. The ideas about how a marine had to behave itself did not change, but the work field in which the marine had to fight changed.

The work field of a marine changed, but the identity of a marine did not change during the nineties. The characteristics, such as unity, strength and dedication that a marine needs were still important during the nineties. Although not everyone thinks that the story of the ‘Black Devils’ can be justified, the concept of the ‘Black Devils’ is the perfect example of how the identity of marines can be described: well-trained and brave soldiers. The

characteristics are timeless and always applicable. The values of the *Korpsgeest* give a marine the chance to be part of a big family and to participate in the history of the Marine Corps, according to the book *Mariniers van vandaag* that was published in 1980 to celebrate the 315<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Corps. Marines of today, such as Ten Hove and Piepers, still have this idea about the values that are needed for a marine to succeed. However, there are people who think that these values will end the existence of the Marine Corps in the coming years. They think that the Marine Corps is too introverted and arrogant. But this part did not change over time and it profiles itself in the same way as 300 years ago.

Furthermore, the position of the Marine Corps within the Dutch Army changed during the 1990s. The Corps was not an integrated part of the Royal Navy before the fall of the Berlin Wall. The Marine Corps had to ask permission during the meetings with the Royal Navy for every decision it wanted to make. The Corps was seen as the fighting unit of the Royal Navy. The appointment of Henk van den Breemen in 1994 as *Chef Defensiestaf* was the first time a marine was in charge of the whole Dutch Army. The fact that a marine could have this function was a sign of a change within the Dutch Army. The appointment of marine Rob Zuiderwijk as commander of the Dutch Naval Forces in 2007 was the second big appointment within the history of the Marine Corps.

Van den Breemen stated that, after the fall of the Berlin Wall, a cultural change was needed to secure the existence of the Marine Corps. The abolishment of the fixed budget of the Ministry of Defence resulted in a competition between the different parts of the Dutch Army. Relus ter Beek had an urge to join peacekeeping operations and because of the new way the budget was allocated, the Marine Corps needed to profile itself as the part that could join all the peacekeeping operations Ter Beek proposed. The Royal Land Forces were disadvantaged by this new budget, but the Corps had the chance to profile itself as the new part that could join peacekeeping operations during the 1990s. The marines were already trained to join peacekeeping operations in the seventies and eighties. The fact that the Marine Corps was supported by an unknown political leader during the reorganisation, indicates that the new image of the Marine Corps was successful. It did not have to reduce its number of marines as much as the Royal Navy and Land Forces had to. The Corps profiled itself as the unit that the Netherlands needed in the new international order. This was a big change compared to the period before the 1990s. For example, after the sovereignty of New Guinea, the marines participated in a winter training with their equipment of the operation in New

Guinea and this was unimaginable during the nineties. The Marine Corps got a lot more attention.

The cooperation with the British Marine Corps, the establishment of the anti-terrorism unit and joining peacekeeping operation secured the existence of the Marine Corps. The establishment of a third unit of marines was maybe too ambitious, but Van den Breemen argues that this was only the result of the compassion on the Royal Land Forces from the Dutch government. The official papers say that the cuts in budget were the reason of not establishing a third unit. The statement of Van den Breemen shows how confident the marines are and people from outside of the Marine Corps see this confidence as a problem. The different opinions on the Marine Corps are a result of the competition within the Dutch Army. Van den Breemen states that the Marine Corps proved itself within the international order during the nineties and the acceptance and recognition as a separate entity within the Dutch Army and the Royal Navy is finalised.

The stories about the Marine Corps are very positive, but these stories are mainly told by marines themselves. It is true that the Marine Corps proved itself during the peacekeeping operations, but the new developments occurred at the perfect time. The stories about marines who do not need a luxury resort to join an operation and the stories about soldiers from the Land Forces who want to have a luxury resort before they want to join an operation are totally different. The competition between the different parts of the Dutch Army is mainly relevant between the soldiers of higher rank, but the normal soldiers work together during several operations. They do not feel the competition as much as the soldiers with a high rank. The Marine Corps were already trained as a special unit and that was what the Dutch Army needed during the nineties. It made use of its identity and reputation to prevent a large reorganisation within the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps profiled itself as the part of the Dutch Army that was ready to join every operation in the world. The marketing of the Marine Corps was a success during the 1990s.



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## Appendix 1

*Interview Commandant Jan ten Hove*

*Location: van Ghentkazerne Rotterdam*

*Time: 13.00*

*Date: 24th of August 2017*

*Wat vindt u van het feit dat er vanaf 1 januari 2017 ook vrouwen marinier mogen worden? Wat mij betreft, hoe eerder hoe beter. Er is op het moment 1 vrouw van de marine die over zou willen stappen naar het korps, maar dat is uiteindelijk toch niet gelukt. Jan ten Hove weet niet precies waar het mis ging, maar het is een kwestie van tijd en dan gebeurt het. Wat wij onderling zeggen, omdat we hebben gezegd, dezelfde standaard, wat natuurlijk niet fair is voor een vrouw.*

*In een stuk in het Nationaal Archief ligt een stuk uit de jaren 80 over of er twijfel was of een vrouwelijke marinier in staat was om alle taken binnen hun functie uit kunnen oefenen. De twijfel was toen of vrouwen dat ook konden. Fysiek zijn ze natuurlijk niet geheel gelijk aan de mannelijke marinier.*

*Ik heb hiervoor 3 jaar op Aruba gezeten en daar hadden we een vrouwelijke sergeant van de marine. Daar kon menig man een puntje aan zuigen, want wat was dat een bikkel. Dus dat gaat gewoon gebeuren en we zien wel wanneer. We merken het wel, en ik draag dat ook uit, ik zeg, jongens het is nogal wat dat we hebben gezegd dat de eisen hetzelfde blijven. Ook al heeft een vrouw minder spierkracht. Haalt ze het dan, dan moeten we haar ook 'huggen' en dan is het echt iemand die iets bijzonders neer heeft gezet, meer nog dan een jonge jongen. Als zij dat fixt, moeten we daar trots op zijn dat we een vrouw hebben. Ik denk ook dat dat gebeurt, dat we veel meer beschermend zullen zijn. Ik moest één keer zelf bij de Kamercommissie komen voor discriminatie hier, toen ik op het opleidingscentrum zat. Er was een documentaire geweest op tv en toen dachten ze dat er hier gediscrimineerd werd op homo's. En toen begon ik met die vaste Kamercommissie, ik zei: nou, er wordt wel gediscrimineerd bij het Korps. Als je namelijk geblesseerd raakt en je moet naar de ziekenboeg, dan word je weggezet als een watje, als een uitknijper. Iedereen heeft dat wel eens gehad, dat je geblesseerd bent, en op dat moment voel je je echt alsof je wordt weggezet. Niet op geloof, niet op seksuele geaardheid, niet op huidskleur, dat heb ik nog nooit meegemaakt.*

*Als ik nu naar buiten kijk, zijn het wel alleen maar blanke, jonge jongens. Hoe komt het dat de vrouwen pas zo laat bij het Korps Mariniers mogen?*

*Nee, wij zijn geen goede doorsnee. Dat is allemaal emotie. Hoe hoger je komt, hoe meer men minder met het hoofd bezig is, maar meer met het hart. Dat gaat ook over dit onderwerp. Er zit heel veel emotie bij en dat er toch 'common sense reasoning' dat er binnen de krijgsmacht een plek is voor het Korps of een plek is voor het Korps Commandotroepen. Alleen moet je dat wel met elkaar afspreken en hoe gaan we dat als 1 team binnen de gehele defensie vormgeven of organiseren. Dat wordt niet gedaan. Je houdt pijlers, het is zo verzuild, het is geen team. Het is een totaal verzuilde organisatie van landmacht en luchtmacht.*

*Dit is ook wat ik heb gemerkt tijdens mijn onderzoek. Eerst ging de helft van het geld naar de Landmacht en een kwart naar Marine en Luchtmacht. Dat was gewoon zo geregeld. Nu moet je strijden voor dat geld en wie er mag gaan. Het is redelijk opgelost door de aanstelling van een Chef Defensiestaf.*



Nou, het is nauwelijks opgelost vind ik. Ook nu, weet ik uit betrouwbare bronnen, ik hoorde dat, er was een T&O wargame. Hee, interessant, een wargame, ik dacht aan WARning 2020 van Dr. Ingo Piepers. Het ging over de verdeling van de straks extra gelden (rond de 1 miljard), zodat als er een nieuwe minister komt, dan zeggen de commandanten: ‘nee hoor, het is in orde.’ Nou ga je over war gamen, over wie welk geld krijgt. Ik vind het zo onvolwassen. En mij vraag is bijna altijd: wat is dan de visie? Wat is de stip op de horizon voor de Nederlandse krijgsmacht en voor de Nederlandse Defensie, maar die is er niet en dat is eigenlijk 1 van de grootste oorzaken van dat het geen team is. We hebben niet een gezamenlijk vergezicht, een stip op de horizon. Hoe ziet nou die krijgsmacht eruit? En dan krijg je situaties waardoor we de tanks zijn kwijtgeraakt of de patrouillevliegtuigen van de Marine. Omdat de defensieonderdelen er niet uitkomen, heeft onder andere Minister Henk Kamp gezegd: ‘dan doe ik het wel en gaan de Orions eruit. En de tanks vind ik ook een gemis. Ik vind een landmacht zonder zwaarder materiaal essentieel om uiteindelijk het voortzettingsvermogen. Dus het is een bizarre.

*Het is een heftige, ja, dat ga ik nu niet onderzoeken, omdat dat onderwerp zo groot is als een promotieonderzoek. Hoewel ik het wel erg interessant vind.*

Dan moet je echt Ingo Piepers, hij is hier trouwens morgen, want hij is over uit Indonesië. Hij woont op Java en het is erg fascinerend dat hij zegt. Hij begon jaren geleden, hij heeft daar met de lokale bevolking, want hij had wat geld, heeft hij een villahotel opgezet met alleen maar locals. Hij heeft geen één expat, maar het echt met het dorp opgezet en gezegd: ‘oké, ik ga met jullie hier iets neerzetten voor werkgelegenheid etc. etc.. Dat is gelukt. Ze zijn de nummer 1 op Tripadvisor van de regio en veel mensen uit Singapore gaan erheen. Het ligt op een hele mooie plek en hij betaalt boven het minimum loon en dat doet niemand in Indonesië. Het is zo corrupt, iedereen betaalt onder het minimum loon. Hij doet een aantal secundaire arbeidsvoorwaarden, zoals medische zorg en nog wat. Dus hij wordt op handen gedragen. Hij begrijpt ook steeds meer hoe een Javaan, een Moslim, denkt. Hij zegt, het is zo mooi, want ze dragen ons, Nederlanders, niets na. Ze hebben alle begrip, dat was toen, die tijd en hij zegt, ik hoor nergens een soort . Terwijl hoe lang hebben wij niet ‘de moffen’ gezegd. Mijn oma zei, nou, die Duitsers.

*Dat zijn misschien wel vooral Nederlanders die dit doen. Ik ben deze zomer in China geweest bij de faculteit van Peace Studies. De professor heeft ook uitspraken als dit gedaan omtrent 2020, dus wanneer er volgens hem vrede is.*

Hij zegt ook dat hij ernaast kan zitten, een paar jaar.

*Professor Lui Cheng zegt dat dit in 2075 gaat gebeuren, omdat wij dan een gemeenschappelijk iets hebben gevonden tussen alle mensen in de wereld waardoor er geen oorlog meer is. Ik vind dit heel vooruitstrevend.*

Ingo zegt dit ook. Ik zeg, Ingo, waar gaat dit dan naartoe? Hij zegt er zijn nog meerdere grote conflicten nodig, maar daarna gaan we naar *communities* en dan noemt hij IS als voorbeeld. IS is natuurlijk verschrikkelijk, maar het is wel grappig dat je uiteindelijk ziet dat er zowel in Libië, Syrië, Irak en Afghanistan die ideologie aanhangen. En dat gaat over grenzen.

*Er zijn natuurlijk meerdere mensen met dat soort dingen bezig, zoals Professor Liu Cheng van de University of Nanjing. In verschillende Aziatische landen hebben ze Peace Studies opgericht en daar zitten mensen, sommige worden wel als dissident gezien door de overheid, en zij zijn bezig met hoe ze de vrede kunnen versterken tussen de landen daar.*

Ik zeg tegen Ingo, wat vind je nu van bijvoorbeeld Rob de Wijk. Ja, die kijken alleen naar de laatste 100 jaar en gebaseerd op wat? Het is een beetje verhaaltjes aan elkaar koppelen. Het is

helemaal niet relevant of Trump of Clinton president wordt. Ja, Trump versterkt het wellicht wat, maar het systeem, de connectiviteit, is een proces en je bent daar onderdeel van. De data die hij heeft gebruikt, die komt van de heer Levi, die vanaf 1495 tot ergens 1978 alle oorlogen in kaart heeft gebracht op aantal slachtoffers en wie er betrokken waren. Dus het zijn niet zijn data, hij heeft alleen die data gebruikt en heeft toen de data aangevuld met de oorlogen na 1978. Zo kon hij toch de patronen zien.

*Over naar mijn onderzoek. Waar ik mezelf op betrapte tijdens het schrijven van mijn onderzoek is, ik heb natuurlijk heel veel promotiemateriaal van de mariniers gebruikt, veel boeken gelezen, en als ik dus over de geschiedenis van het Korps schreef, merk ik dus dat soms schrijf: roemrijke geschiedenis. Dus het werkt heel goed, de marketing. Ik ben natuurlijk neutraal als onderzoeker, maar ik heb regelmatig dit soort woordjes weg moeten halen. Ik ben erg benieuwd hoe het Korps Mariniers in jouw ogen wordt neergezet. Wat zijn echt de kenmerken en kwaliteit? Waardoor onderscheidt het Korps Mariniers zich van de rest van de krijgsmachtsonderdelen?*

Nou nu wordt het gekopieerd en wordt het overgenomen. Je ziet nu ook de bekende Nederlandse 'can do' mentaliteit van de krijgsmacht. Ik heb dat nog niet gezien bij de Landmacht, bijna nooit ervaren. Het is meer 'cannot'. Ik zit in Noord-Irak en dat was eigenlijk een humanitaire missie, net na de eerste Golfoorlog. Saddam Hussein had de Koerden in de bergen gedreven en wij gingen daar naartoe met spoed. Toen werd er ook nog een Landmachtclub aan vast geplakt en die kwamen de grens niet over. Ze werden tegengehouden en de mariniers reden daar al overheen. Het was even een vingertje omhoog tegen die grenswacht en dan dacht de Landmacht, we rijden erachteraan, maar toen ging hij weer dicht. Zij gingen wachten. Wij wachten niet, dat zit van hoog tot laag. Van een korporaal zijn tot de overste. Wij mogen er niet door, maar we moeten erdoor, dus we gaan praten en we zoeken gewoon de oplossing om met deze boeven iets te onderhandelen. Van joh, kom op, zal ik je een rantsoen geven? Dus je begint met corruptie, al wil ik niet zeggen dat het corrupt is, en je wilt je missie uitvoeren, maar je gaat niet zeggen, ik wacht bij de slagboom, waardoor ik Koerden, die ik moet helpen aan de andere kant, moet laten wachten. En dan zie je dat wij niet opgeven en dan zie je dat de Landmacht zegt van, dit is niet mijn taak: onderhandelen met een leidinggevende bij de wacht en dit was in 1991. Daarna gingen we naar Bosnië en toen kregen we bij de grens onze mortieren. We hadden allemaal groene voertuigen en het was een witte UN force en wij gingen als groene multinationale brigade er naartoe met Fransen, Engelsen en Nederlanders. Ingo wist dat hij ze in het groen niet de grens over zou krijgen, dus hij zei, weet je, ik ga ze wit schilderen en dan lijkt het net of we onderdeel zijn van de UN force. Bij een eenheid van de Landmacht zouden ze zeggen, ja, wit schilderen mag niet. Je mag niet zomaar het voertuig schilderen en wat zie je dan? De missie is bij ons heilig. De taak moet worden uitgevoerd en alle creativiteit en oplossingen zijn daardoor geoorloofd. Er is een enorme 'can do' een enorme oplossingsgerichtheid. 'Making the impossible possible'. Ga door waar andere stoppen. Er zijn ook veel mensen die aan mij vragen, Jan, wat zijn nu precies de verschillen tussen Corps Commandotroepen en Luchtmobiele Brigade? Als jij met pech staat langs de weg en ik stop om je te helpen en je zegt, zou je hem willen aanduwen? Dan ga ik duwen. Krijgen we hem niet aan. De Landmacht zegt, nou, het lukt niet. Ik bel wel ff de ANWB en rijdt weg. Ik ga niet weg en help jou net zo lang totdat die auto loopt of je stapt bij mij in en ik breng jou. Dat is een hele andere 'mindset'. Die landmacht zegt, ik heb een afspraak om 6 uur om bij mijn tante te gaan eten. Wij bellen die tante, het gaat niet door. Ik ben iemand aan het helpen hier en dat vind ik het mooie van het Korps. Maar het is aan het wegschuiven, omdat we een kleintje zijn en de landmacht zo overheersend is en door de missies van de laatste jaren, Afghanistan, moeten wij mee in de methodiek van de Landmacht. De Landmacht gaat niet 1, 2, 3 nu, als er een missie komt in, laten we zeggen, neem een

stabilisation mission in Mosul of in Raqqa, ligt helemaal in puin. Je gaat er pas naartoe als er een pre-deployment task force naartoe gaat om daar een soort Center Parcs neer te zetten, een soort Landmachtkazerne. Als die staat met alle infrastructuur, met een toilet en een douche, internet, moet er natuurlijk allemaal zijn, dan pas wordt de force ingevlogen. Wij balen daarvan, natuurlijk vinden wij die luxe ook lekker, want wij zijn ook mensen, maar de wijze van opereren, dat is natuurlijk niet de volgorde. Je gaat direct als force erin en op den duur komen er comfortlevels. Ik begin met mijn rantsoen, warm dat op en op een gegeven moment denk je, nou, ik zit nu 3 a 4 weken op rantsoen, ik vind het wel lekker om iets warm te eten of lekker te douchen. Dus dan komt er een mobiele keuken en een mobiele douche en op een gegeven moment bouw je zelfs een soort kamp. Zo hebben wij dat meegekregen. De eerste grote missie is eigenlijk Cambodja geweest, waar ook niks was. Daar gingen we gewoon in en begonnen daar op een lege plek. We begonnen tenten neer te zetten en gaandeweg hadden we op een gegeven moment een betonvloertje gelegd voor de mobiele keuken, want die stond nog in het gras. En nu krijgen wij, door de druk van die enorme Landmacht, want dat is natuurlijk een enorm apparaat en die denken alleen maar groot. Wij dachten helemaal niet groot. Dus die kijken wat daar zit. Waar is de afvoer en het riool? Nou, wij graven een gat in de grond en poepen daar met zijn allen in. Ook omdat ze de middelen hebben he. Ze hebben allerlei assets om dat te doen en wij hebben dat helemaal niet. Wij hebben er ook nog nooit aan gedacht en wij gaan nu helemaal die kant mee. In Afghanistan kregen we ineens containers met airco. Het is niet goed en het is ook niet meer snel, niet meer flexibel. Het is niet waar wij voor willen staan, want dat creëert bij ons ook een soort van luxe verwachtingspatronen in plaats van, jongens, 'be flexible', wees creatief. Cambodja heb ik dat zelf ook heel veel meegemaakt, zoveel creativiteit, en dat is gewoon zoveel leuker werken. Het 'unlocken' van het potentieel dat in mensen zit of wat in het product of de capaciteit zit. Je moet dat potentieel eruit halen in plaats van, toch weer alla Landmacht, dat je gaat wachten. In die eerste missie met die grensovergang, toen kwam de Landmacht wel de grens over en toen was er ook een administratieve eenheid bij en dat hoorde wij. Toen dacht wij, dat is wel makkelijk. Ik had een heel schema gemaakt van de beveiliging. Ik dacht, dat is handig, ik ga dat kopiëren. Ik was helemaal blij, ze hebben een kopieerapparaat. Dus ik ga naar de Landmacht en ik kom daar in het kantoortje. Ik zeg, mag ik even wat kopiëren? Nee, de sergeant is er niet. Ik zeg, maar daar staat toch het kopieerapparaat? Ja, maar daar gaat onze sergeant over.

*Het klinkt als een grote bureaucratie. Heeft dit misschien ook iets te maken met de dienstplicht bij de Landmacht?*

Ook dat. Het is niet direct. Je hoort in mijn stem misschien een soort verwijt (*een beetje wel*). Maar als je altijd grote aantallen dienstplichtigen moest processen ten tijden van de Koude Oorlog, voorbereiden voor de Derde Wereldoorlog. Grote aantallen jonge jongens en meisjes. Ja, dan heb je ook wel een hele strakke operatie nodig om dat te doen. Toen kregen zij ook een beroepsleger en werden ze uiteindelijk ook ingezet en dan krijg je dat drama Srebrenica, wat een enorm dure les is geworden. Ik vind de Landmacht echt stukken beter, onder andere door Srebrenica, want dat is natuurlijk het dieptepunt. Ook voor ons natuurlijk en voor de gehele krijgsmacht was dat een dieptepunt. Wij denken dat men niet weet dat het ook mariniers waren, maar ik zeg, moet je niet zeggen. Wij zijn ook militairen. Men ziet niet altijd het verschil tussen militairen en wij zitten ook bij Defensie. Het is niet goed voor Defensie dat de landmacht daar zo; n knauw krijgt. Dat is ook voor ons slecht.

*Waar komt de mentaliteit vandaan?*

Uit de historie. Uit de historie van, nou, laat ik niet helemaal teruggaan naar de Ruyter, omdat ik denk dat dat te ver is, maar dat je wel moet terug gaan naar de Tweede Wereldoorlog.

### *De zwarte duivels?*

Nee, dat is te ver terug. (de zwarte duivels zijn ten tijde van de Tweede Wereldoorlog?) Ik denk dat je terug moet gaan naar de Tweede Wereldoorlog. De mariniersbrigade werd opgeleid in Amerika en de Amerikanen hebben als mariniers vooral in de Pacific gevochten. Er waren niet zoveel mariniers aan het front hier, in West-Europa geweest. In de Pacific was het Klepmeer op een atol, een eilandje ala Texel, met Jappen die zich ingegraven hadden in rotsen. De klep gaat omhoog, schip vaart weg. Het enige naast je hebt, is de buddy naast je, een veldflesje met water en een paar houders met patronen en luid die zich niet overgeven. Doe je niets, weet je zeker dat je eraan gaat en weer in zee wordt gedreven, want die Japanners geven niet op. Dus we moeten het doen met elkaar en dat heeft een mentaliteit gecreëerd bij het United States Marine Corps die ze hebben overgebracht toen ze de brigade gingen trainen voor inzet in Nieuw-Guinea, voormalig Indonesië. Dan misschien een tijd niks, maar dan gaan we de samenwerking aan met de Engelse in de jaren 70 en ik ben in dienst gekomen in '83. In '82 was de Falklandoorlog en de Falklandoorlog was ala de Pacific. Ze worden vanuit Zuid-Engeland gaan ze allemaal op schepen en ze waren naar de Falkland. Ze verliezen vlakbij de Falkland een heel belangrijk schip, namelijk de Atlantic Conveyor met helikopters. Die wordt tot zinken gebracht en dat was een enorme slag, want die helikopters hadden ze nodig om de troepen te verplaatsen. Als je ziet, bij die mariniers, waar ze doorheen zijn gegaan in doorzettingsvermogen. Ver van any base ook he. Bij de landmacht is het veel meer dat, als je gewend bent doctrinair het gevecht te voeren met het Warschaupact op de Duitse laagvlakte, dan heb je nog steeds de basis van Nederland en Rotterdam, waar de versterking van de Amerikanen kwamen. Die plannen waren helemaal uitgewerkt. Je kon heel erg systematisch denken, oké als dat, dan komen ze, dan doen we dat en dan komt er een voorraad zo en zoveel dagen erna. Dus het was allemaal steeds in een opbouw van een safe achterland, waar die bevoorrading, support, versterking altijd konden komen. Dat is bij de Engelse mariniers nooit het geval geweest in de Falkland. Er kon niks meer vanuit Engeland komen. 'This is what you have, get the job done' met wat je nu hebt. De Falklands waarbij we daarvoor al de samenwerking met de Engelsen waren aangegaan, ik dacht in '75, de UK/NL Force. '82 de Falklandoorlog. Ik kwam in '83 in dienst en mijn mentor, Cammaert, die was totaal verengelt en hij was helemaal weg van de professionaliteit van de Engelsen. Hij begon op de officiersopleiding, waar ik toen zat, alleen maar in het Engels te praten. We moeten Engels denken en de 'mindset' moet Engels zijn. We zitten nu in 2017, als je kijkt naar de jaren 80, ik heb verschillende opleidingen gedaan in Engeland en die Engelsen zijn veel meer in een warready focus dan wij. Wij, Nederlanders, zijn,

### *Geldt dit voor het gehele leger?*

Nou, ja, dat vind ik lastig, maar ik heb ook in Larequille? Gezet. Dat was een base. Ik vind de Engelsen over het algemeen meer war ready, meer ala de Yanken en wij zaten toch veel meer. Kijk maar naar onze eerste missies, UN missies, wij gaan toch meer om de vrede te bewaren en we gaan niet direct met pennen uit en voorwaarts. Dat willen wij misschien wel als militair, maar dat was niet onze politiek. Wij hebben dat denk ik toch wel meegekregen van de Engelse. Dat zijn onze twee belangrijkste brothers en we hebben nog steeds ons primemarine corps pact en we hebben besprekingen in november. De primemarine staff corps. En dat willen we ook vasthouden, want dat zeggen we ook. Als wij opleidingen in Nederland bij de landmacht volgen, dan denk ik, het lijkt wel een middelbare school. Gaat dit nou over warfighting, over killing, over afzien, hoe ga ik om met de dood. Het is allemaal zo steriel en zo aardig en netjes, wat een oorlog natuurlijk helemaal niet is. Je weet, je leest, je kijkt film.

*De Deense documentaire Armadillo laat dit goed zien, vind ik. Ik was erg onder de indruk.*

Je hebt training locaties bij de landmacht, daar zit je met je kop koffie en dan heb je daar een simulator, een trainer. Je doet je jasje uit als het warm is, je zit lekker in je stoel. Diezelfde training, diezelfde faciliteiten in Engeland. Ik stond buiten te wachten voor een bijeenkomst. Er komt iemand schreeuwend naar buiten, was een actor, hij speelde een commandant onder vuur waarbij zijn eenheid was. Hij trok mij naar binnen. Ik dacht nog even, ik ga rustig zitten met mijn boekje. Het was donker en ik moest kruipen in een leslokaal en er was rook. Toen was er een verrekijker. Ik werd beoordeeld, hoe ik zou reageren op die ellende, gesimuleerd in een leslokaal in Engeland. Ik deed het goed, maar hij zei, wat dacht je. Ik was helemaal flabbergasted, ik dacht, what the fuck. Dus je vond het goed? Ik vond het onwijs goed, maar echt. Ja, ik zag je schrikken en ik was helemaal van mijn stuk. Daarna herpakte ik me en viel ik terug op mijn principes en procedures. Als ik dat dan voorstel bij een landmachtkazernes, dan ik krijg ik als antwoord. Maar wacht even, ik wil hier geen zand hebben. Ik wil dit niet. En zo kan ik een middag met je praten over allerlei voorbeelden.

*Ik denk dat er zo, door het Korps Mariniers, over het algemeen wel wordt gekeken naar de Landmacht.*

We zaten in Sarajevo en hij zei, de vis begint bij de kop te stinken en dat zei hij ten aanzien van de landmacht, net na Srebrenica. Ik kwam bij Sarajevo en daar was een landmacht generaal Pollee en hij werd Geile Polleke genoemd. En ik wist dat helemaal niet, dus ik zei, maar hij heet toch Generaal Pollee? Ja! Geile Polleke. Ik zeg, Geile Polleke? Dus de man is al direct, omdat hij pornofilms keek, en dat deed iedereen, daar gaat het niet om, maar hij was blijkbaar de aanjager. Hee, hebben we nog een leuke pornofilm? Ja, dan verlies je, vind ik alle geloofwaardigheid en als je dat ook nog toestaat. Dus wij kwamen daar binnen en we zaten aan een kop koffie. Hij stelt zich voor en toen zei hij ook zijn voornaam. Hij vroeg, hoe heet jij dan? Sergeant. Ik was toentertijd Kapitein. Hij heeft dan direct een soort van aversie tegen dat tutoyeren en dat allemaal Jan, Kees, Piet en Ali, dat gezellig zijn met elkaar. Dat doen wij ook steeds meer. Om met jou te praten, vind ik het makkelijker, maakt het gesprek veel informeler dan dat we die afstand houden. Maar ik denk erover na.

*Ik vind dat zelf ook lastig met mailcontact voor interviews. De ene wilt het wel en de ander wilt het niet. Daarom begin ik altijd maar gewoon netjes.*

Als je een directe relatie hebt, ben ik daar niet zo snel in. Ik zeg tegen de sergeant-majoor, ik vind het niet erg als je me soms Jan noemt, maar dat is alleen als we privé zijn. Dat heeft een verkeerd effect op de rest. Oh, het is niet meer commandant, het is Bas en Jan. Dus met hem heb ik die afspraak, als we met zijn tweeën zijn, vind ik het geen punt, maar het is voor jou denk ik makkelijker om gewoon commandant te zeggen.

*Ik blijf dat een lastig puntje vinden. Hoe meer ik mezelf verdiep, hoe interessanter ik het vind worden om toch misschien het leger in te gaan.*

Mijn dochter is klaar met Journalistiek en ze zei, pap, ik wil misschien wel naar de Luchtmacht. Wat vind je daarvan? Ik vind het leuk en ik zei, jij bent wel van de structuur en ik denk dat het jou helpt. Als je dan in Pr/communicatie terecht komt en dus toch nog een link hebt met je journalistiek. Het mooie van werken van Defensie is, is dat je gegarandeerd om de 2 a 3 jaar een andere functie krijgt. De diversiteit is hartstikke leuk, het product moet je wat mee hebben en over het algemeen werken we met mensen die goed opgeleid zijn, omdat er veel tijd in wordt gestopt om mensen kwalificaties te geven. Dat zie je in heel veel bedrijven niet, dus luchtmacht, landmacht, marine, dat maakt mij dan niet zoveel uit.

*Ik ben verder erg benieuwd, omdat ik nu uw mening weet over de landmacht, hoe de landmacht, volgens u, tegenover het Korps Mariniers staat. Hoe zien zij jullie?*

Ik denk dat zij ons een ratje bamboe club vinden, met de nadruk op het beest ratje. Omdat wij ons te weinig aantrekken van allerlei formaliteiten. Dat we alles gewoon op onze eigen manier doen en we maken ze wat, een bepaalde arrogantie is ons niet vreemd. En dat zij in die grote, veel strakker georganiseerde bureaucratie, die vrijheid niet kunnen nemen, omdat dat enigszins ook wat jaloezie en afgunst geeft. Maar ook af en toe wel, dat zeggen sommige landmacht generaals, aan de ene kant jaloezie, omdat het wel lekker werken is, zoals jullie doen. Jullie trekken dan gewoon je eigen plan en je doet het gewoon. Jullie zeggen ook nooit, en dat vinden ze ook wel lastig, jullie zeggen nooit nee. Dus er komt een vraag van de minister en ze vragen dit of dat. Nou, neem even de kapingen bij de Punt. Die vraag is gesteld en wij hadden eigenlijk niet eens een anti-terreureenheid, maar we zeggen gewoon dat we het kunnen.

*Daarna is er natuurlijk wel een anti-terreur eenheid gekomen.*

Ja, maar dat was er natuurlijk toen nog niet. Het was de 11<sup>e</sup> compagnie en die was hier wat mee aan het stoeien. Die was zich een beetje aan het ontwikkelen en op een gegeven moment komt die opdracht binnen. Datzelfde geldt voor Cambodja, ja, kunnen jullie naar Cambodja? Ja, natuurlijk kunnen wij naar Cambodja, want wij kunnen overal naartoe. Er wordt niet eens nagedacht, want pas daarna gaan we nadenken.

*Cambodja is dan inderdaad een goed voorbeeld, omdat er drie detachementen waren, terwijl er eigenlijk maar twee bestonden. Eigenlijk was er dus te weinig man.*

Ik zat in nummer drie en dat werd inderdaad overal vandaan getrokken om een derde bataljon van te maken. En wat er toen gebeurde, vond ik wel mooi. Intern kreeg het de naam van 'sprokkel bataljon', maar dat gaf ons een enorme saamhorigheid, omdat we niet een bestaande eenheid waren. We konden juist excelleren ten opzichte van de eerste 2, die die 2 rotaties al hadden gedaan. Je zag een enorm sterk derde bataljon en al met al kun je zeggen dat die missie in een extreem ver van Nederland gelegen, niet een gebied waar we veel hadden getraind. Wel in het verleden natuurlijk, voormalig Indonesië, maar daarna hebben we alleen maar getraind in Noorwegen en Schotland en dat stelt geen reet voor. De Derde Wereldoorlog vanuit het Warschaupact en dat was onze taak. Dat is ook nog een antwoord op de vraag hiervoor. Dan zetten we een zware opleiding hier neer, dus iedere vent die hier die baret haalt, heeft echt wel eventjes op het tandvlees gezeten. En dan is het daarna niet over, want je gaat daarna nog echt een paar keer op het tandvlees in Schotland, Noorwegen of de Jungle. Sommige zeggen wel eens dat dat zwaarder is dan mijn initiële opleiding. En ik denk dat dat ook een verschil is bij de landmacht, want ja, die opleidingen zijn ook zwaar, maar hoeveel zit er nog daarna in waar ook eventjes de lat ver wordt gelegd.

*De vraag die ik heel vaak krijg en waar ik niet zo goed het antwoord op weet is, het Korps Mariniers is onderdeel van de Marine. Maar als je kijkt naar de afgelopen 100 jaar, hoe vaak hebben zij nou daadwerkelijk op het water geopereerd? Daar zitten jullie ook wel eens in de clinch met de landmacht, want als je naar Cambodja kijkt of Afghanistan kijkt, is dat allemaal op het land.*

Er is weinig te vechten, dat klopt, op het water voor mariniers. Dat was het in de tijd van de Ruyter wel, omdat er geslingerd werd van het ene schip naar het andere en Chatham. Dus dat was echt werken vanuit een schip en niet alleen het andere schip met vuren van kanonnen, maar ook met het enteren met mariniers, met zeesoldaten. Dat is er niet meer. Maar als je kijkt naar de Tweede Wereldoorlog, en niet zozeer naar Normandië, maar naar wat ik je net zei, die eilanden in de Pacific. Deze eilanden zou je, niet eens met zoveel fantasie, ja, dat is Cambodja ook wel. Ze komen er vanaf Thailand in en dat was al een toeristisch land en redelijk stabiel. Maar uiteindelijk worden ze neergezet en jongens, 'get the job done'. In een extreem gebied,

met niet direct allerlei steun en logistiek. De operatie, dat was ook in de jaren 90, in Noord-Irak met de Koerden waar ik bij was. Daar kwamen ook Amerikaanse mariniers vanaf de 6<sup>e</sup> vloot in de Middellandse zee. Zij werden in gearachuteerd in Turkije en we gingen met elkaar, licht en kortstondig, dus het profiel van die marinier, die van zeesoldaat, heeft zich ontwikkeld. Het werd opeens bruikbaar, omdat het onderscheidend was ten opzichte van het grote, massale en veel zwaardere landleger. Totdat je luchtmobiel krijgt.

*Ja, want ik denk dat dat in het begin van de jaren 90 vooral voordelig was voor de mariniers en ik denk dat het goed was voor het Korps Mariniers dat zij dat imago hadden. Ze zijn redelijke goed door de reorganisatie heen gekomen en misschien ook wel door dit. Omdat er veel vraag toen was en er waren veel missies.*

*Maar midden jaren 90 krijg je de afschaffing van de dienstplicht en daar hadden jullie niet zoveel last van als de rest. Ik denk dat dat een voordeel is geweest. Want wat is uw visie op de reorganisatie? Hoe heeft het Korps Mariniers dit gedaan?*

De belangrijkste survival stap is geweest dat we ons eigen unieke hoofdkwartier hier in Rotterdam hebben losgelaten en volledig zijn geïntegreerd binnen de Marine. We kunnen er nu niet meer 1, 2, 3 uit. Er is een vergaande integratie met de Marine. Als ik heel eerlijk ben, zie ik nog wel makkelijk mogelijkheden om het los te snijden.

*Hoe is die relatie, want het is natuurlijk wel een heel ander iets dan de marine? Je hebt natuurlijk de 'vlootmensen' en je hebt de mariniers. Dat is wel degelijk een verschil. Het geld is natuurlijk voor de Marine en het Korps Mariniers krijgt daar een deel van. Dat is lastig. Maar de Marine, de blauwe pakken, die beseft zich dat als wij worden losgeweekt uit de Marine, dat zij nog kleiner zijn dan de Marechaussee en de luchtmacht. Zij beseffen zich dat het in Den Haag uiteindelijk gaat om de getallen. Wij zitten nu op een kleine 9000 a 10000 aan mensen. Als zij bijna 3000 mensen zouden verliezen, dan zijn zij een soort Belgische Marine. Dus ze hebben die aantallen, ze hebben niet zozeer ons profiel nodig, want ze vinden het eigenlijk raar dat die groene mannen erbij horen. Het gaat uiteindelijk om die mooie schepen op zee, maar zo slim als ze zijn, zeggen ze ook, ja, we kunnen niet zonder jullie. Het geeft ons de massa.*

*Niet met en niet zonder elkaar?*

Met steeds meer. Het is een kwestie van tijd voordat ze het zien, en het helpt natuurlijk dat we nu een marinier hebben die Commandant Zeestrijdkrachten is. Een aantal jaren terug was Zuyderwijk dat. Dus dat helpt wel. In het begin, Doorn, daar kwam niet eens de marine. Ook toen we hier het hoofdkwartier hadden, toen ging de generaal van het Hoofdkwartier, die zat toen aan in Den Haag, want daar zat de Admiraliteitsraad, het zware bestuursorgaan van de Marine. Dan mocht de generaal van de mariniers daar aanzitten. Hee, Egbert Klop, heb jij ook nog een vraag? Nou ja, onze mariniers in Noorwegen hebben eigenlijk geen goede jassen. Dan werd er gezocht en gesteund. Ja Egbert, je vraagt wel wat he. Je vraagt toch even om, nou, als ik kijk naar de begroting, dat is toch al gauw misschien twee miljoen. Dan kwam Egbert terug in Rotterdam, helemaal blij. Jongens, het is gelukt. We mogen een nieuwe jas en een steelpannetje. Als je dat nu vertelt aan de marine, die lui lagen in een duik. Voor een appel en een ei hielden ze dat Korps zoet, maar de echte bedragen gingen natuurlijk in die schepen. Als er een sonar werd afgevaren door een vent die niet wist hoe diep het was, dan was dat een schadepostje van vijf miljoen. Nu kunnen ze dat niet meer. Nu zitten we verweven en je ziet eigenlijk ook met de verschuiving naar de vloot. Zeg zeggen, jullie zijn ook eigenlijk een beetje onze redding geweest waardoor we nog een aanzienlijke vloot, ja, zij vinden het niks, maar dat er nog wat ligt.

*Wat ik ook heel veel las, het viel mij op, omdat ik volgens mij dat stuk met Klop heb gezien, dat ze echt moesten vragen en het liefst met een alsjeblieft. Er werd in dat stuk wel drie keer bedankt voor de medewerking. Ik vond dat heel, een soort van onderdanig. Meer van, mogen wij alsjeblieft ook wat?*

Ja, nu is dat veel meer in balans, maar hij ging dan ook naar Den Haag en die kreeg eerst nog te horen: ja, maar die mariniers rijden heel veel ongelukken met de Land Rover. En dat is een schadepost van zoveel. Toen pakte Cammaert zo eens zijn papier erbij. Even, de Hare Majesteit schip die en die heeft daar dit en dat aan schade. Hij had even zijn huiswerk gedaan en gaf, bats, even dit terug. Gevolg was, deze man gaat niet in Nederland generaal worden, want deze man legt de vinger op de zere plek en is een beetje recalcitrant. Nou, dat was die tijd. Het voortbestaan van het Korps heeft eigenlijk ook wel de Marine ingezien en dan moeten wij ze ook omarmen en moeten we ze inderdaad veel meer aan de borst nemen. En de verdere integratie tot stand brengen. Mijn persoonlijke mening is, je had veel eerder, maar dat komt doordat de krijgsmacht geen 1 team is, het is verdeeld. Je had veel eerder tegen de landmacht moeten zeggen, na het wegvallen van de dienstplicht, het vallen van de Muur, waarom zijn jullie bezig met Luchtmobiel? Is er ergens een behoefte dat er weer een lichte infantrieforce is? Waarop is dat gebaseerd? En dat is toch een soort genoegdoening geweest, omdat ze vonden, nou, die landmacht krijgt nu zoveel klappen, ze mogen nu, omdat de vraag naar expeditionair groter was, meer inzet all over the world. De landmacht dacht, maar wacht even, die lui doen er dus toe, zitten overal en worden gewaardeerd. Er wordt niet op ze bezuinigd, dan moeten we ook een soort luchtmobiele. (Ondertussen wordt er een schilderij opgehangen van weer een groot marinier in het kantoor van Ten Hove en wat hebben ze een plezier, Goed gedaan mannen!).

*Ik ben verder nog benieuwd naar, je zei van, het imago is een beetje aan het slijten. Het slijpt er een beetje in. Wat zijn nou eigenlijk echt de doelen en uitdagingen voor nu en de komende jaren? En hoe ziet de toekomst eruit? Je hebt namelijk nog steeds die grote landmacht. Wat is uw visie daarop?*

Mijn visie is dat Defensie moet blijven reorganiseren en dat geldt voor ieder bedrijf. Je moet blijven aanpassen, je moet adapteren en dat doen we niet uit angst voor de bonden. Het zit een beetje vast en denken, ja, reorganiseren klinkt meteen een beetje negatief. Het klinkt als ontslaan. Maar nee, daar gaat het niet om. Je moet kijken naar, wat is er nu voor een behoefte aan die war in 2020? Wat voor een oorlog is dat? Dat is niet helemaal duidelijk en dat zegt ook Ingo. Hij zegt, dat is een oorlog op meerdere fronten en dat kan economisch, terreur, virtueel en nog steeds staal op staal. Het kan een mix zijn. Wat voor een soort force heb je daarvoor nodig en is die force op dit moment flexibel genoeg? Dan vind ik dat dat niet zo is. We gaan heel erg mee met de Nederlandse bureaucratisering van processen en regels waardoor we de echte ellende, zoals je ziet in Raqqa en Mosul. Daar prepareren we onze leiders niet op, want die zitten heel erg in een vastgesteld patroon. Dus die krijgsmacht van de toekomst moet veel flexibeler zijn, die moet meer efficiënt zijn en de rare franje moet eruit. Ik ben daar trouwens best wel apart en vooruitstrevend in. Ik vind ook dat verpampering in de gehele maatschappij ook in de krijgsmacht aan de orde is. Alles wordt verzorgd. Als we nu iemand hebben, die heeft een bepaalde angst voor spinnen, dan moeten we er wat mee doen. Dat is natuurlijk heel vervelend als je bang bent voor spinnen, dan kun je daar een trauma van krijgen. Ja jongens, even, gaan we dat serieus nemen? Oh, jij denkt niet aan je personeel? Hee zeg, ik denk wel aan mijn personeel. Dus we slaan allerlei vormen van zorg, zorg is een business geworden. PTSS is bijna een business geworden om dat te accommoderen. Ik had een vent in Cambodja die daar helemaal niet functioneerde, maar wat bleek, die was in zijn jeugd door zijn vader misbruikt. Dat is geen PTSS, alleen de missie is de katalysator waarbij



er iets uitkomt. Je kunt zeggen, dat is een foutje van de keuring. Heeft hij wel eerlijk alles verteld, want dit is een jongen die niet stabiel is. Hij heeft zoiets verschrikkelijks meegemaakt, maar dat komt niet door de missie. De missie heeft alleen wel iets naar boven gebracht en ik denk dat we daar nu zo erg in doorslaan, maatschappij breed. We doen aan een soort veiligheidsspasme en alles moet uber veilig worden gedaan. We accepteren eigenlijk geen ongeluk meer. De brand in een discotheek in Volendam met kerststukjes, nergens meer kerststukjes of ze moeten ongeveer 30 keer zijn ingespoten met een anti-brandmiddel, want anders is dat gevaarlijk. Dit helpt in ieder geval de krijgsmacht niet, want daar gaat dan ook de krijgsmacht in mee met allerlei regelgevingen en voorschriften. Ik heb het jaren geleden tegen Minister Kamp gezegd en hij moest lachen. Ik zeg, als ik nu naar de Veluwe ga en dit soort mannen staan met pech of zonder benzine, het eerste wat ze doen is het fluoriserende vestje aan. Oh ja, de autogordel moet natuurlijk eerst los, want we moeten allemaal met gordels rijden. Het wapen zit achter vier vleugelmoeren vast, want dat mag niet door de cabine gaan. Dan pakt hij de milieudeken, want als hij wat benzine verspeelt, is er een milieudelict, dus hij legt een milieudeken uit. Pakt dan zijn jerrycan en vervolgens zoekt hij de eenheid waar hij heen moet met munitie. Kijkt waar de dixies staan, de porto cabins voor toiletten voor poep en pies, oh daar staan ze. Je kan tenslotte niet tegen een boom plassen. Hij komt daarnaartoe, hij moet de blikken meenemen. Als je dit niet weet te pareren, waar zijn we met zijn alle mee bezig? Dan wordt het niet gedaan en je ziet dus dat we daar allemaal in meegaan. Maar er moet toch ergens iemand opstaan, die zegt, dit is te gek.

*Dat is wat ik ook zie hoor. Ik denk dat de Landmacht ook naar jullie, mariniers, zo kijkt. Jullie verzorgen de mensen niet goed genoeg en wij wel. Je kan het inderdaad ook andersom zien: zij verzorgen teveel.*

Ik had gisteren een mail van de coördinator regelgeving van de Marine. Ik wist niet eens dat hij bestond en die viel weer onder een ander bureau. Ik denk, oh my god. Dus hoe ziet die toekomst eruit? Er is een drastische reorganisatie nodig, er is een permanent joint headquarters nodig en niet alleen een CDS. De hoofdkwartieren die ze nu nog her en der hebben, ook wij in Den Helder en de Landmacht in Utrecht, dat wordt echt door 1 team, paars, aangestuurd en waarbij we, wat mij betreft, de methode licht en snel van het Korps als uitgangspunt nemen. Ik wil hier morgen weg kunnen. Het kan toch niet zo zijn, dat als er in de wereld wat uitbreekt, dat we dan eerst een soort van zes maanden opwerktraject nodig hebben.

*Jullie hebben een 48 uur ready factor of drie dagen en dat zou dus eigenlijk moeten?*

Ja, dat moet toch voor iedereen? Het kan toch niet zo zijn dat je eerst missiegericht en heel het opleiden. Maar de Landmacht is zo dominant daarin, want die zeggen, ja maar, wacht even. Wanneer heb jij voor het laatst geschoten en wanneer dit? Jongens, niet iedereen hoeft op die missie te schieten. Je hebt een fighting force en een ondersteunende force en ja, ze moeten wel een wapen.

*Ik denk dat dit ongelofelijk doorwerkt in de politiek. Je merkt ook in de politiek deze strijd en ik denk dat dat nu het Nederlandse leger niet ten goede komt en dat is jammer.*

Wat er primair nodig is, ik ben 2,5 jaar weg geweest als consultant, weggegaan bij het Korps, omdat ik het helemaal had gehad. Ik heb voor een Engels bedrijf gewerkt en dat was opgericht door een Engelse marinier, een Royal marine. Hij heeft de methodiek, die we toepassen op missie, gebruikt en die implementeerden wij bij bedrijven. Ik ben met plezier weer terug gekomen. Ik dacht, weet je, nu snap ik het echt. Ik heb het nu echt leren doorgronden. Als ik nu terug ben, ga ik kijken of we het ook in de Nederlandse dagelijkse bedrijfsvoering kunnen gebruiken. Dus ik praat met Tom Middendorp, niet de minste, maar hij snapt het dus niet,

vind ik. Ja, Jan, dat doen we toch? Nee, Tom. Ja, je doet het in Mali en Afghanistan en daar zie je ook dat de verschillende krijgsmachtonderdelen best wel goed 1 team zijn. Waarom? De missie, het objective, het doel in Mali is helder, waardoor een Marechaussee, een Luchtmacht, een Landmacht gezamenlijk dat fixen. Vraag dat nu in Nederland. Als ik hier nu met Tom Middendorp een post-it geef en vraag, schrijf even jullie gezamenlijke doel op. Dan begint Tom, oh, we hebben vorige week op de hei gezeten. Nou prima, dan zie ik allemaal bij jullie op de post-its, wat jullie gezamenlijke doel is. Maar dat gaat niet gebeuren. De ene begint, wat bedoel je precies Jan? Ik zeg, nou, wat moet je eind dit jaar gerealiseerd hebben? Of laten we het anders stellen. Een visie, wat moeten jullie over vier of vijf jaar? Dat is ongeveer een visie. Wat moet je gerealiseerd hebben als Nederlandse krijgsmacht, Defensie, waar jullie leiding aan geven. Maaiké, dat gaat niet komen. Het gaat niet komen. We zullen zien. De basisgereedheid moet op orde. Hij zegt, dat klopt, dat moet in 2 jaar tijd. Oke, wat ga jij bijdragen om de basisgereedheid op orde te brengen en weet jij ervan? Ik zeg, want dat is een team. Als je niet van elkaar weet wat jouw bijdrage is aan het team en dat zo naar beneden, dan krijg je een optimaal allined team met een heldere focus, de basisgereedheid op orde. Als de basisgereedheid op orde is, waarom gaan we dan nog met een club naar het carnaval van, zie ik je nog een keer? Er gebeuren allerlei dingen waarvan je denkt, hoe is het mogelijk?

*De visie van het Korps zou dus eigenlijk doorgetrokken moeten worden? Dan komt het helemaal goed met het Nederlandse leger?*

Ik vind dat de Landmacht, met name op de logistiek, waar wij niet zo sterk in zijn, dingen goed voor elkaar hebben. Ik vind dat de Landmacht zich moet richten op langdurige conflicten, waar zij het voortzettingsvermogen en de capaciteit voor hebben. Dat hebben wij niet. Daarom moet de Luchtmobiele Brigade ook opgeheven worden, want we hebben niet twee lichte brigades nodig. Als je het Korps Mariniers hebt, heb je daar je licht brigade, die je snel ergens in kunt zetten. Blijven we er langer? Dan moeten de forces van de Landmacht komen, wordt er een kazerne gebouwd en dan gaan we langdurig in dat gebied, in bijvoorbeeld Afghanistan, opereren. Maar moeten we kortstondig ergens, we zeggen wel eens 'de deur intrappen', dan doe wij dat. Maar wil Nederland er langer blijven, dan hebben we het voortzettingsvermogen van de Landmacht nodig.

*Je zegt, de Luchtmobiele brigade op heven. Waarom dan niet het Korps Mariniers?*

Dat kan ook. Dat heb ik ook wel eens geopperd en dan richten wij ons alleen nog maar op de maritieme Special Forces, de SEAL teams. Dat zou ik wel bij de marine houden. Je kikkers, je speciale team. Ik zou ook bij de Marine houden, je service assault group, dus de boten als onderdeel en dan doe je de rest van het Korps op. Dan houd je inderdaad de Luchtmobiele Brigade als een lichte, in plaats van het Korps, als een lichte eenheid. Dan heeft de marine alleen nog maar een Korps van ongeveer 1200 man, 1500 man max. Dat is ook een oplossing. Dan zit je niet in elkaar vaarwater. Dus het is of, je haalt het lichte spul weg bij de Landmacht, of je haalt de bataljons weg bij de marine. Eerlijk gezegd, ik heb daar niet eens zo gek veel emotie bij, omdat je nog steeds het Korps hebt. Een andere denkrichting of visie is, je zegt, het Korps en het Corps Commandotroepen, die worden gezamenlijk de forces van de Bv. Nederland, maar worden ook kleiner. Nederland heeft geen 3000 special forces nodig, dus dan zeg je, die twee eenheden, die vallen onder Special Operations Command en dat wordt trouwens binnenkort opgericht. Dat is ook omdat er geen visie is, want het komt er, omdat het Korps Mariniers en het Corps Commandotroepen op hoog niveau niet goed kunnen samenwerken en er niet gezamenlijk uitkomen. De special forces van de Landmacht en de Marine werken goed op uitvoerend niveau, on the ground, werken ze goed samen. Dit is ook bewezen. Kom je terug in Nederland, nou, dan stagneert dat. We gunnen elkaar het licht niet in de ogen.

## Appendix 2

*Questionnaire Ingo Piepers*

*By email*

*Date: 17<sup>th</sup> of December 2017*

### **Mijn antwoorden zijn gebaseerd op mijn ervaring/observaties 1980-1998.**

#### **Hoofdvraag**

*Hoe heeft het Korps Mariniers zich geprofileerd binnen de Marine, de gehele Nederlandse krijgsmacht en op internationaal niveau na de val van de Berlijnse muur?*

Het Korps Mariniers heeft zich consequent geprofileerd (in ieder geval daartoe pogingen gedaan) als een 'betrouwbare' militaire capaciteit, met grote politieke gebruikswaarde. Altijd gereed, 'zo wijd de wereld strekt'.

#### **Deelvragen**

##### **Profilering/identiteit van het Korps Mariniers binnen de krijgsmacht**

*Wat zijn de kenmerken en vaardigheden die een goede marinier, in uw ogen, moet bezitten?*

Dat is nogal een vraag: Een goede marinier, is resultaat gericht, betrouwbaar, neemt gepast initiatief, en begrijpt ook wat op het spel staat met de militaire missie waarvoor hij/zij wordt ingezet.

*Waar komt de bekende 'can do' mentaliteit vandaan?*

De can-do mentaliteit komt uit 'zelfvertrouwen', plichtsbetrachting, maar zeker ook uit een zekere geldingsdrang, zowel op praktisch werkniveau, maar ook op managementniveau. In de opleiding wordt een marinier geleerd, dat een marinier doorgaat - moet doorgaan - waar een niet-marinier stopt. Grenzen zijn er om verlegd te worden. De geldingsdrang op meer strategisch niveau van het Korps, is ook ingegeven door een zeker angst als Korps opgeheven te worden. Er bestaat een sterke drang telkens weer aan te tonen 'onmisbaar' te zijn 'door de beste te zijn'. "U (politiek) vraagt, wij draaien (Korps)".

*Waarin onderscheiden de mariniers zich van de rest van de krijgsmacht? Wat is het grote verschil als je het Korps Mariniers of de Landmacht naar een operatie stuurt?*

Dat verschil was in eerste instantie groot. Tot 1991, maar zeker ook enige tijd daarna (tot in ieder geval 1998). De KL was gedurende de Koude Oorlog in hoge mate 'gefixeerd' op een inzet in de Centrale Sector (Noord Duitse Laagvlakte), om een massale Sovjet-aanval te stoppen. De KL was een dienstplichtleger, en in hoge mate een 'opleidingsfabriek'. De inzet in het vakgebied van het Eerste (KL) Legerkorps (toen), was in hoge mate - tot in detail - voorbereid.

Het Korps Mariniers was voorbestemd voor inzet op de Nood- en (mogelijk) Zuidflank. Dat vereiste expeditionair optreden, en flexibiliteit. Het Korps Mariniers was 'lichte infanterie'; een mariniers een infanterist met een wapen. Een KL-eenheid was een zware eenheid, uitgerust met zware wapens; het wapen (en de capaciteiten daarvan) stonden centraal, niet de bemanning.

Na 1991, viel de Sovjet-derging weg, en bleek niet (direct) meer behoefte aan een eenheid als het Eerste Legerkorps. Lichte infanterie, expeditionair optreden was vereist. De KL moest een inhaalslag maken, en een transitie 'ondergaan' van een dienstplichtleger/opleidingsfabriek naar een expeditionair en professioneel leger. De Luchtmobiele brigade was het antwoord. In ieder geval gedurende de jaren 90, was het Korps Mariniers beter getraind en opgeleid, etc. om een adequaat antwoord te kunnen geven op (ver weg) dreigingen, of VN-operaties (zoals Cambodja).

Het Defensiebudget nam af. De koek werd kleiner; de strijd om het budget (in den Haag) intensiever. Het Korps Mariniers - als onderdeel van de KM, met als core-business operaties ter zee, en vanaf zee (amfibische operaties) - was opgehangen aan een krijgsmachtdeel dat andere belangen had (grote schepen). Terwijl het Korps Mariniers juist dat deed (en kon) wat de core business van de KL zou moeten zijn.

*Hoe was/is de relatie tussen de Koninklijke Marine en het Korps Mariniers?*

Het Korps Mariniers opereerde vooral 'handig' door te laten zien (in de media en Den Haag), dat het Korps Mariniers altijd paraat was (in tegenstelling tot de KL). Het Korps Mariniers was nogal 'defensief' t.o.v. de KL, in de wetenschap dat het ook een soort concurrent was, en zeker zou (kunnen) worden.

*Hoe kijkt de rest van de krijgsmacht naar de mariniers? Zijn het daadwerkelijk drie verschillende bloedgroepen, zoals er bij 'Kijken in de Ziel: militairen' werd uitgelegd?*

Ik weet niet waar je precies op doelt met "bloedgroepen". Ik denk dat de KL - zeker het KCT- een grote inhaalslag heeft gemaakt, en zich zeker kan meten met het Korps Mariniers. Zo hoort het ook. Ik vraag mij wel eens af of het denken van het Korps Mariniers niet te kortzichtig en te beperkt is (ik doel op het management).

### **Het Korps Mariniers tijdens en na de reorganisatie in de jaren 90**

*De vaste verdeling van de Defensiebegroting, Landmacht de helft en Marine en Luchtmacht een kwart, werd na de bezuinigingen los gelaten. De Defensienota van 1991 werd geschreven en een grote hervorming werd gestart. Wat betekende dit voor het Korps Mariniers? Hoe heeft het Korps Mariniers zich ten tijde van deze ontwikkelingen geprofileerd tijdens de politieke onderhandelingen?*

Zie hierboven. Dit soort 'onderhandelingen' vond plaats op het niveau van de (toen) bevelhebbers van de krijgsmachtdelen. De BDZ (Bevelhebber der Zeestrijdkrachten) sprak (uiteeraard) ook namens het Korps Mariniers. Het Korps 'pushte' voor amfibische capaciteit bij de KM, en daarbuiten. ook door rechtsreeks politici uit te nodigen op het Hoofdkwartier Korps Mariniers. De BDZ/KM dacht daar anders over. Men wil vooral varen op vechtschepen, en niet zo zeer een amfibisch platform bedienen, waar de maritieme operaties ondergeschikt zijn aan operaties te land. De vraag was - en misschien nog steeds is - of de boterham van het Korps Mariniers (zeker toen) wel het beste werd gesmeerd bij de KM, misschien was intensievere samenwerking met de KL (ondanks het superioriteitsgevoel bij het Korps Mariniers) een beter optie geweest. Het Korps Mariniers is een onderdeel van de KM, en dus zijn de (ontplooiings)mogelijkheden voor het Korps bij de KM beperkt. Er is een 'plafond' in de KM. Probleem is, dat een professionele militaire organisatie (dus ook het

Korps) ook een minimale kritische omvang moet hebben, om zeker te kunnen stellen dat het noodzakelijk professionalisme in huis is (en blijft).

Overigens, gedurende met name de periode tot eind jaren negentig was het Britse korps mariniers - de Royal Marines - die professionele life-line voor het Korps (al vanaf de jaren zeventig), het gaf (internationale) status om partner met de RM's te zijn (UK/NL Amphibious Force), politieke verankering in een internationaal samenwerkingsverband; bovendien kon operationele ervaring van de Britten in de Falklands (1982), Noord-Ierland, etc. worden benut (voor de eigen professionalisering).

*In 1994 is er een discussie geweest over het wel of niet paraat stellen van een derde mariniersbataljon. Hoe is deze discussie verlopen en wat zijn de andere grote discussies geweest begin jaren 90, zoals de personele reductie en het 'krimpen zonder kramp' model? Dat (derde mariniers bataljon) was een overweging. Het Korps bedacht allerlei (ook wel kunstgrepen) om te voorkomen dat het Korps moest inleveren (in het kader van de bezuinigingen die plaatsvonden). Daarvoor werd (ook) het derde mariniersbataljon 'opgevoerd' (als ik me goed herinner). Echter, voor zo'n derde bataljon was veel te zeggen, ook operationeel. Als eea net wat slimmer was aangepakt, zou een mariniersbrigade opgetuigd kunnen worden (met drie bataljons). De vraag is of de marine (blauw) dat zou willen, een te groot, en te dominant onderdeel in een krimpende marine met een krimpend budget. Uiteindelijk is niet bezuinigd op het Korps, maar wel op de blauwe marine. Je kon toen prima uitleggen waarom meer expeditionaire lichte infanterie eenheden nodig waren, maar niet al die tanks (bij de KL) en fregatten bij de KM (om onderzeeboten van de Sovjet-Unie op te sporen, die er niet meer waren).*

*In 1997 werd de Nederlandse dienstplicht opgeschort. Wat voor invloed heeft dit op het Korps Mariniers gehad?*

Niet veel; dienstplichtige mariniers werden vooral gestationeerd in de West.

*Hoe werd er in de jaren 90 gekeken naar een samenwerking tussen het Korps Mariniers en bijvoorbeeld Korps Commandotroepen of de Luchtmobiele Brigade?*

Vanuit het Korps Mariniers met scepsis, samenwerking vanuit het Korps kwam niet van de grond. Af en toe kwam de zorg mogelijk opgedoekt te worden weer boven.

*Zijn er verschillen tussen het Korps Mariniers van voor de jaren 90, in de jaren 90 en nu?*

Er zijn vooral oppervlakkige verschillen. Maar ook verschillen die met de tijdgeest te maken hebben.

### **De mariniers op internationaal niveau**

*Wat heeft de samenwerking tussen de Nederlandse mariniers en de Amerikaanse en Engelse mariniers gebracht?*

Veel, zoals gezegd een professionele life-line, status, ervaring, etc.

*Wat was de plaats en de rol van het Korps Mariniers op internationaal niveau?*

Het Korps heeft zich professioneel en goed gemanifesteerd, daar geen misverstanden over. Ik geloof ook wel dat de inzet heeft bijgedragen aan een goede (beter) reputatie van de Nederlandse krijgsmacht.

*Het Korps Mariniers is regelmatig ingezet tijdens VN-vredesoperaties. Waarom viel de keuze op het Korps Mariniers?*

Zie hierboven. Goede track record, het beste voorbereid. Toen, in ieder geval.

### **Het Korps Mariniers en de toekomst**

*Hoe ziet u de plaats van het Korps Mariniers binnen de Nederlandse krijgsmacht in de aankomende jaren?*

Dat is een goede vraag. De hele krijgsmacht moet serieus op de schop. Het concept van een krijgsmacht is niet meer van deze tijd. Er wordt ook veel te veel geklungeld. Externe en interne veiligheid zijn nu verweven. Andere competenties zijn benodigd, ook vanwege cyber, etc. De krijgsmacht is ge-implodeerd, door haar (self-inflicted) fixatie op bezuinigingen. Fundamentele keuzes zijn nooit gemaakt, de structuur en (bijna) alle capaciteiten zijn in stand gehouden (hoe beperkt ook), ten koste van de instandhouding van een aantal cruciale capaciteiten. Gebrek aan visie, en het voortduren (achter de schermen) van een stammenstrijd tussen krijgsmachtdelen.

*Per 1 januari 2017 werd het Korps Mariniers opengesteld voor vrouwen. Waarom denkt u dat het dit jaar is opengesteld?*

Je bedoelt waarom niet eerder of juist later? Het Korps heeft dit besluit lang weten 'af te houden', maar nu is het zover. Ik denk dat vrouwen wel degelijk aan de eisen/kwalificaties kunnen voldoen.