

‘The Sound of Freedom’

The regional socioeconomic impact of the American presence at Soesterberg Air Base (1954-1994)



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Abstract

Soesterberg, the cradle of Dutch military aviation, has a long, well documented, military history. The American 32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron, stationed at Camp New Amsterdam (the American section of Soesterberg Air Base) from 1954-1994, has similarly received substantial literary and public attention. However, few studies have sought combine an analysis of the motivations for the Dutch-American military cooperation at the base with an investigation into the Americans' regional socioeconomic impact. This thesis seeks to fill that gap. The central research question for this thesis is: 'What social and economic effects did the US presence at Soesterberg Air Base have on the region?'. Three sub questions guide the investigation towards a broader understanding of the American presence at the base, and place the American impact in a larger context. An analysis of base politics and soft power and how these theories apply to the American presence at Soesterberg Air Base reveal its role in the larger, global, American base network. An analysis of the Dutch and American motivations highlights the asymmetrical relationship that emerged between the countries after the Second World War. An examination of the Americans' economic impact on the region found that it was quite limited. Similarly, the extensive range of clubs and facilities offered at the base restricted the Americans' direct social impact. Moreover, a comparison with the socioeconomic impact of American bases in West Germany further illustrates the small scale of the American presence at Soesterberg Air Base. Nonetheless, the American presence at Camp New Amsterdam has received a prominent position in the regions military history, which itself has seen increased in public interest since the opening of Park Vliegbasis Soesterberg in 2014.

Keywords: USAF, KLu, Soesterberg, Soesterberg Air Base, base politics, soft power, Cold War, NATO, Wolfhounds, American Empire

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Chapter 1: Introduction

‘You are one of the luckier ones, for this assignment can be one of the finest and most rewarding experiences of your life.’¹ These were some of the welcoming words the arriving American personnel of the 32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron (32nd TFS), nicknamed ‘the Wolfhounds’, received at Soesterberg Air Base. From the arrival of the first supersonic F-100 Super Sabre jetfighters on the 16th of November 1954, until the squadron’s departure on the 19th of April 1994, Camp New Amsterdam (CNA) was the home of the Wolfhounds. CNA was the American section within the larger Soesterberg Air Base, which was operated by the Royal Netherlands Air Force (KLu). CNA incorporated different facilities and events to accommodate the steadily-growing American presence. Though a wealth of literature documents the American presence in overseas military bases, there has been little attention for US troops in the Netherlands and how the local Dutch residents experienced their new American neighbours. Amongst other things, the base brought the region thousands of well-paid soldiers, new infrastructure, visiting airplane enthusiasts, an impulse of American culture and festivities, but also widespread protests, increased sound and air pollution, and a string of aircraft and automobile accidents. Nonetheless, before their arrival, local newspapers such as the *Soester Courant* warned the locals not to have too high expectations of the American impact on the region.² This thesis seeks to reveal if this initial scepticism proved correct.

¹ Rolf de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013), p.200

² ‘Als de Amerikanen komen...’, *Soester Courant*, October 15, 1954.

1.1 History of Soesterberg Air Base

The town of Soesterberg has been host to an airfield for over one hundred years. It began when in 1910 two car dealers from The Hague, Jacob Verwey and Barend Lugard, decided to establish an airfield in an empty field close to Soesterberg for the newly founded 'Maatschappij voor Luchtvaart' (Society for Aviation). Though a second airfield in Ede saw the first Dutchman fly over Dutch territory that same year, the decision was made to expand Soesterberg with an aerodrome to facilitate the anticipated public interest. However, in 1912 the above-mentioned company went bankrupt due to a lack of interest and unaffordability for the public. The Dutch military purchased the Soesterberg location and set up the first air division of the Dutch military. Until 1953, this division fell under command of the Army and was very limited. The division's commander stated in the 1920s that the air base was little more than a centre of education and schooling.³ Unsurprisingly, when Germany invaded the Netherlands on the 10th of May 1940, the 125 mostly outdated Dutch planes were quickly defeated by the 1000 superior planes the German *Luftwaffe* deployed.⁴ (Nonetheless, about 350 German aircraft were lost before the Dutch surrendered.) The following day the *Luftwaffe* arrived at Soesterberg and began to rapidly expand and modernize the base.⁵ The iconic 'A' shaped concrete runway, a series of hangars, and bunkers were built to allow German planes to reach England and defend the Dutch coast. By the end of the war, the airfield had been extensively bombed by allied forces and needed substantial repairs. Following a brief period of private ownership, it was officially reopened as a military air base on the 6th of July 1951 and further expanded. Two years later,

³ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013), p.15.

⁴ Ibid., p.17

⁵ Ibid., p.105

Soesterberg Air Base hosted the most important moment in Dutch military aviation, as the Royal Netherlands Air Force (KLu) was founded, with prince Bernhard as its inspector-general.⁶ The following year, on the 16th of November, the first Super Sabres of the American 512th Fighter Day Squadron (512th FDS) arrived at Soesterberg Air Base. The Americans quickly began their operations at a section of the base designated for USAF, Camp New Amsterdam (CNA), a reference to the former Dutch trading post New Amsterdam (now New York), and a homage to the centuries old relationship between the two countries. Similarly, in 1955 the 512th FDS was renamed the 32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron, a squadron that hunted German submarines in the Antilles during the Second World War⁷. Hereby, a historical connection was established between the squadron and the host country, setting an optimistic tone for the coming 40 years of intensive military cooperation at the base.

1.2 Research Questions

To guide the focus of this thesis, the following research question is investigated: 'What social and economic effects did the US presence at Soesterberg Air Base have on the region?' This research question requires elaboration. Social effects include interactions (or lack thereof) between American troops and their families and the Dutch troops and the locals. However, it also extends to the broader (sometimes national) protest movements against the US presence and nuclear weapons which manifested itself in the 1970s and 1980s. The local economic and political impact of the US troops is analysed in addition to

⁶ Quirijn van der Vegt, *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013), p.109.

⁷ Note: the 32nd TFS' role in the Second World War is also the source of the units' nickname, 'The Wolfhounds', as the German submarines they hunted travelled in groups known as 'Wolfpacks'.

the geopolitical interactions between the US and the Netherlands. The arrival of American troops in 1954 and their subsequent departure in 1994, sets the temporal parameters of the investigation. Nonetheless, it is necessary to investigate the Dutch and American foreign policy and interaction in the years before and during the Second World War to place these events into context. The region mentioned refers to the neighbouring cities and towns, primarily Soest and Zeist which border the base. However, the region can be extended to include the larger city of Amersfoort which is only 15 minutes away by car. Utrecht is largely left out of the analysis, as its large size makes it difficult to measure the direct influence of US troops, who only infrequently visited the city. Though the thesis is focused on the Americans' influence on these areas, at times (especially when discussing the protest movements) it will adopt a broader scope, which includes much of the Netherlands to illustrate the widespread national sentiments.

Four additional sub-questions examine theoretical aspects of base politics and its influence on the American presence at Soesterberg. The first question: 'Why did the US establish military facilities in Soesterberg?' seeks to highlight the US incentives for stationing troops in the Netherlands. Here, the theory of base politics plays an important role in explaining US motivations. In turn, the second question: 'Why did the Netherlands allow the Americans to establish a military presence in Soesterberg' investigates the Dutch incentives. This will not only provide an opportunity to explore the local incentives, but also the national motivations. Here, historian Geir Lundestad's claim that the US is 'an empire by integration' is addressed.⁸ These sub-questions will highlight the differing goals and expectations of military cooperation between the two states. The sub-question: 'Was the

⁸ Geir Lundestad, *"Empire" by Integration: The United States and European Integration, 1945-1997* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Netherlands part of an American empire?’ seeks to address the overall nature of the relationship between the two countries following the Second World War. Finally, the sub-question: ‘In what ways is the socioeconomic impact of the Americans stationed at Camp New Amsterdam comparable to that of the Americans stationed in West Germany during the Cold War?’ seeks to place the 32nd TFS’ regional impact within the larger American base network that emerged after the Second World War.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. An introduction which sets the research agenda and provides a preliminary history of Soesterberg Air Base prior to the American arrival. Thereafter, the methods used throughout the research are explained. Next, a brief historiography of the relevant literature illustrates the shifting scholarly perspectives on American base politics. Subsequently, the theoretical concepts of base politics and soft power are introduced. Then, the economic impact of the American presence at Soesterberg is analysed, followed by the social impact. A conclusion summarizes the findings of this thesis and provides possibilities for further research.

1.3 Methods

Several types of sources were consulted throughout this research. Secondary sources form the backbone of the theoretical research on base politics and soft power. The ways these sources have shifted their tone and focus over the past four decades is discussed in the historiography section. In addition to providing a basis for the theoretical approach of this thesis, the secondary literature, such as *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009* by Hans Krabbedam et al, also offers a comprehensive overview of the longstanding relationship between the Netherlands and the United States. Furthermore, numerous studies have been written about the history of Soesterberg Air Base and the

development of the Royal Netherlands Air Force. These have provided valuable insights into the American experience at the base and introduced interesting topics and stories that could be further investigated through primary sources. The archives of the Roosevelt Institute for American Studies (RIAS) were consulted during my research internship there, and provided access to a wealth secondary literature on base politics and Dutch-American relations.

A range of primary sources complement these secondary sources. Three types of sources form the bulk of the primary material that was consulted: archival material, newspapers, and interviews. Archival material was gathered from three locations: the Nationaal Archief (NA) in The Hague, the Nationaal Instituut Militaire Historie (NIMH) at the Frederikkazerne in The Hague, and the Eemland Archief (EA) in Amersfoort. The Nationaal Archief contains the formal agreements and contact notes between the Dutch and US governments. The Soesterberg Technical Agreement, which is the legal document outlining the conditions of the American presence at Soesterberg, was crucial to understanding the nature of the military relationship, and the way the base would develop over the four decades after the agreement. Furthermore, the exchange of notes between the Dutch and American commanders also gave a good insight into the formal military relationship. The archive also housed local complaints made towards the air base and various government departments, illustrating some of the frustrations the US presence (and general presence of such a large air base) caused. The NIMH holds various books and magazines related to Soesterberg Air Base, which provided general information about the base and the 32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron stationed there. The *Soesterberg Interceptor*, the weekly newspaper of the 32nd TFS at Soesterberg, provides an extremely detailed recollection of the USAF activities at the base, and its interaction with the locals. The Eemland Archief

houses a complete collection of the *Soester Courant*, Soesterberg's local newspaper. This digitalized collection provides detailed insights into eventful moments of Soesterberg's history, ranging from car accidents and robberies to the opening ceremony of the Apollo neighbourhood. The newspaper proved to be a useful source for finding the various ways the Americans interacted with the locals. The online archives of Delpher.nl contain a plethora of newspaper collections, which reflect the different perspectives certain groups had on issues and events originating from the base. Therefore, these newspapers not only detailed eventful moments of the American presence at Soesterberg, but also reflect the different public responses which contributes towards a comprehensive understanding of the locals' experience.

Interviews conducted with Soesterberg residents who interacted with the Americans provide unique examples of the American impact. Though, oral interviews were initially planned and prepared to supplement the existing literature and primary sources, the discovery of an extensive oral history project conducted on the topic in 2015 and put into the book *De verhalen achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: de invloed van veertig jaar Amerikaanse aanwezigheid op de omgeving* made this largely redundant.⁹ New interviews would likely add little to the many diverse and detailed accounts presented in the book. For this reason, the decision was made to forgo new interviews and use the existing interviews instead.

⁹ Frits Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving* (Scherpenzeel: Gebiedscoöperatie O-gen, 2016).

1.4 Historiography

The secondary literature consulted for this thesis can be divided into four categories: base politics, Dutch-American relations, Soesterberg Air Base and the 32TFS, and soft power. Over time the literature covering these topics has shifted tone and focus, especially those related to base politics. Periodizing the literature on base politics, reveals a trend towards a more critical/sceptical perception of US basing intentions. The literature on base politics used for this thesis can be divided into four periods: 1945-late 1970s, late 1970s-1990, 1990-2000, 2001-present. Compared to later decades, the amount literature concerning base politics published following the Second World War and up to the 1970s is relatively limited. Peter Hill-Norton, a Royal Navy officer between 1929-1977 and author of *No Soft Options: The Politico-Military Realities of NATO* (1978), explores the role of NATO and its members. The book reflects the dominant realist perception at the time, which saw the USSR as the primary threat, and deterrence as the main guarantee for safety.¹⁰ For this reason, military alliances with the US (through NATO and supplementary bilateral agreements) were seen as necessary for security.

However, by the 1980s this view shifted due to setbacks in US foreign and economic policy. The US failure in the Vietnam War, the breakdown of its alliances with a number of Asian states, a departure from the Bretton Woods system, a switch from net-loaner to net-debtor nation, and an expanded Soviet nuclear arsenal that now rivalled that of the US, all contributed to the growing pessimism about US hegemony, and speculation of US decline.¹¹ Moreover, by this time Europe no longer received financial support from the US and was

¹⁰ Peter Hill-Norton & Baron Hill-Norton, *No Soft Options: The Politico-Military Realities of NATO* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1978), p.21.

¹¹ Geir Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952," *Journal of Peace Research* 23, no.3 (1986): p.273

continuing its economic and political integration (which the US supported¹²), which reduced its dependency on the US. It was in this time that new critical perspectives emerged in the literature. Historian Geir Lundestad's 1986 article 'Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952' proposed three perspectives of the motives behind US expansion following the Second World War: the traditionalists who emphasized security and the spread of democracy, the revisionists who argued that US expansion was necessitated by the demand for new export markets, and the post-revisionists who argue that Great Powers (like empires of the past) are bound to expand.¹³ The growing critical view on American (and by extension NATO) foreign policy became physically evident through the many popular protest movements against American influence and nuclear proliferation in the early 1980s. Additionally, feminist writer Cynthia Enloe's book *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (1989) granted much needed attention to the role of military spouses and families living within the US base network.

The unexpected fall of the USSR in 1991, which even prominent historian Joe Volk did not predict in his 1991 book *The Sun Never Sets ...: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, heralded a period of optimism for the newfound hegemony of the US. However, the 9/11 attacks of 2001 and the US shift in foreign policy that followed, sparked a dramatic increase in literature addressing US basing motives and its sustainability. Historian Kent Calder's *Embattled Garrisons: Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism* (2007) illustrates the newfound interest and attempts to explain the motives and strategy

¹² Lundestad, "Empire" by Integration: *The United States and European Integration, 1945-1997*, p.13-23.; Note: The US's motives for supporting European integration were fivefold: Europe would become more rational, Europe would become more efficient and thereby economically beneficial to the US, a stronger Europe would place less of a burden on the US, it would help contain the USSR's sphere of influence, and it would help stabilize and control West Germany.

¹³ Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952", p.268

behind the US basing network through a new theory of base politics, which was introduced by political scientist Alexander Cooley in his 2005 article 'Base Politics'. The period has also seen literature emerge that was critical of the US motives and survivability. Geir Lundestad's 2012 book *The Rise and Decline of the American "Empire": Power and Its Limits in Comparative Perspective*, Kenneth Macleish's 2007 book *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*, and Henfried Münkler's 2007 book *Empires: The Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States*, illustrate the growing criticism and scepticism on the global US base network.¹⁴ Antony Hopkins' 2018 book *American Empire: A Global History*, is the latest addition to the wealth of secondary on American expansionism and its base-network, and is illustrative of the growing critical perspective many scholars have adopted over the past two decades.¹⁵

1.5 Definitions of terms used in base politics

Military bases located in foreign territories have traditionally been associated with empires, particularly the maritime empires of the colonial era. However, in 2009, the United States had over 190,000 troops and 115,000 civilian employees spread over at least 909 military facilities across 46 countries and territories.¹⁶ The US's gradual development of these overseas bases has led some scholars to argue for the classification of the US as an empire. However, it is important to clarify some important reoccurring terms, before

¹⁴ Geir Lundestad. *The Rise and Decline of the American "Empire": Power and Its Limits in Comparative Perspective* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).; Kenneth Macleish, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts* (New York, New York University Press, 2010).; Henfried Münkler, *Empires: The Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007).

¹⁵ Antony Hopkins, *American Empire: A Global History* (Princeton: Princeton Press, 2018).

¹⁶ Macleish, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*, p.1.

delving into the wealth of literature on American base politics, as different authors use these terms to describe different concepts.

Since the 1980s, there has been an increased focus on overseas military facilities/bases and the politics that surrounds them, leading Kent Calder to the term 'base politics' in his book *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*.¹⁷ The term 'base politics' encompasses 'the interaction(s) between "basing nations" and "host nations" on matters relating to the status and operation of local military facilities in the host nations, together with related transnational interactions involving nonstate actors'.¹⁸ Here, the basing nation refers to the state placing personnel and/or facilities in a foreign state. Conversely, the host nation refers to the state where these foreign troops/facilities are located. As this thesis is focused on relations between the Netherlands and the US, these terms will be altered to 'host-state' and 'basing-state' to use the correct terminology and avoid possible confusion.

The classification of military bases and facilities is often used interchangeably, even by informed scholars. However, their distinction is important, as they represent different scenarios, possess different privileges, and are targeted towards different goals. Often, the difference is incorrectly attributed to size, with bases assumed to be larger. In his book, *United States Overseas Basing: An Anatomy of the Dilemma*, James Blaker, formerly a high-level executive within the US Department of Defense, defined military bases as 'installations routinely used by military forces', creating a relatively subjective notion of what classifies as a base.¹⁹ In *Embattled Garrisons*, Calder provides a clear distinction between military bases

¹⁷ Kent Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

¹⁸ Ibid., p.65.

¹⁹ James Blaker, *United States Overseas Basing: An Anatomy of the Dilemma* (New York: Praeger, 1990), p.4.

and facilities. In military bases the user has 'exclusive extraterritorial control, either via compulsion or treaty'.²⁰ In this case, the host-state has abandoned all control over the base. In contrast, if the host-state retains control of the facility, or there is cooperation on an ad-hoc basis, the military instalment is referred to as a military facility. Under these definitions, Camp New Amsterdam, the American part of Soesterberg Air Base, would be categorized as facility, as the Netherlands retained command over the base. Though such a command structure for USAF was unique during the Cold War, currently 'almost all overseas (military) access involve(s) facilities and not bases'.²¹ However, despite this technical distinction, Soesterberg Air Base, and the American section Camp New Amsterdam (CNA), will be referred to as a base for convenience and clarity.

'Empire' is another recurring term in the literature of US base politics that requires clarification. An empire is defined by 'a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society'.²² Historically, imperial borders reflect graduations of power emanating from the centre, with the borders of the empire ending where its influence ends. Moreover, different regions in the empire may receive different rights.²³ What follows is an explanation/periodization of the US's imperial expansion. The extent to which the US acts as an informal empire are discussed separately.

²⁰ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*, p.15.

²¹ Ibid., p.15.

²² Noel Parker, "Empire as a Geopolitical Figure", *Geopolitics* 15, no. 1 (2010): p.110

²³ Münkler, *Empires: The Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States*, p.5.

1.6 Periodization of the American Empire

Though several scholars have made the case that the United States is an empire, it is certainly a unique case.²⁴ Since its independence from the British Empire, the US has consistently expanded its borders. The Louisiana Purchase in 1803 from the French was the first official Westward expansion of the new state, and was quickly followed by the purchase of Florida from the Spanish in 1819, the annexation of Texas in 1845, and the Oregon Treaty with the British (1846). The American victory in the Mexican-American War (1846-1848) forced Mexico to cede large portions of its territories in the South-West and along the Pacific coast. In 1853, the Gadsden Purchase from Mexico marked the formation of the current US borders. In the second half of the 19th century, the US continued its territorial expansion, acquiring several areas outside its continental borders through a series of wars, annexation and purchases. These include; Alaska (1867), Hawaii (1898), a series of trophies from the Spanish-American War (1898) (including Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and Guam), the Panama Canal Zone (1903), the Virgin Islands (1917), Kingman Reef (1922), Kanton and Enderbury Islands (1938).²⁵ American control over these areas and the incorporation of various heterogenous groups with different status and rights reflect characteristics traditionally associated with empires. To this day, the residents of US territories cannot vote in Federal elections. This expansion was largely driven by two factors. The American belief in 'manifest destiny', which held that the American peoples and institutions were 'uniquely virtuous' and therefore 'had a God-given mission to remake the world in their own image'.²⁶

²⁴ Parker, "Empire as a Geopolitical Figure", p.124; Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*; Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952, p.263-277.

²⁵ Note: Kingman Reef, Kanton Island, and Enderbury Island are located in the Pacific Ocean

²⁶ George Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p.180.

And, a pragmatic assessment of valuable resources and trade routes. The 19th and early 20th century territorial expansions are often regarded as the first phase of the American Empire.²⁷

The second phase of American expansion occurred during the Second World War. Following the American entry into the war, the US began buying/leasing facilities from its allies, as well as constructing new ones to limit further Japanese and German expansion.²⁸ A huge global network of military facilities quickly took shape. By the end of the war in 1945, the US operated approximately 30,000 military facilities in about 100 countries, a phenomenal growth considering the US operated only fourteen military bases outside its continental territories in 1938.²⁹ Though this number had been reduced to 2,000 overseas military facilities by 1948, the US network now had a global reach.³⁰ However, this network was not entirely stable, as it had been 'derived from a combination of conquests, agreements with allies, and temporary arrangements with neutrals and exile regimes'.³¹

Following the war, the US began creating a global liberal institutional framework. The United Nations provided a forum for international politics and codified several human rights conventions, the introduction of the Bretton Woods system stabilized the international economy which was largely reliant on the US dollar, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) both sought to promote international economic cooperation. However, growing tensions with the Soviet

²⁷ Joe Volk, *The Sun Never Sets ...: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases* (Boston: South End Press, 1991), p.11.

²⁸ Macleish, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*, p.12.

²⁹ Ibid., p.10.

³⁰ Ibid., p.10.

³¹ Robert Harkavy, *Great Power Competition for Overseas Bases: The Geopolitics of Access Diplomacy* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1982), p.112.

Union saw the world divide into two camps. One under the leadership of the US, the other under the leadership of the USSR. A series of multilateral and bilateral military agreements in the late 1940s and early 1950s saw the US enter into military alliances with 42 states throughout the world. These agreements included the Rio Treaty (1947), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (1949), Mutual Defence Treaty between with the Philippines (1951), the ANZUS Treaty (1951), the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security with Japan (1952), the Mutual Defence Treaty with South Korea (1953), the SEATO Treaty (1954), the Mutual Defence Treaty with Taiwan (1954), and a strong US involvement in the Baghdad Pact (1955).³² Though the intricacies of the Cold War falls outside the scope of this investigation, it is important to illustrate that the growing tensions contributed to the US maintaining many of the facilities it gained throughout the war. Europe, particularly West Germany, became 'the centre of the United States' overseas basing network' from 1945 until the 1990s.³³

There is some debate regarding the third phase of American expansion, as some Cold War era scholars have argued that the late 1970s and 1980s saw a shift in American policy. This period saw growing tensions between Europe and the US military presence, and a gradual decoupling of the global base network, as US interests began to diverge from those of Europe and Japan.³⁴ During this period the US realized it would need help to 'manage the world' and looked to its allies, especially the former colonial powers, to share

³² Harkavy, *Great Power Competition for Overseas Bases: The Geopolitics of Access Diplomacy*, p.129.: Note: ANZUS Treaty a non-binding collective security agreement between Australia, New Zealand, and the US. Similarly, SEATO was a collective security agreement between Australia, New Zealand, Pakistan, The Philippines, Thailand, France, the United Kingdom, and the US. The Baghdad Pact, also known as the Central Treaty Organization (CENTO) was a military and economic alliance between Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey, and the UK.

³³ Volk, *The Sun Never Sets: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, p.199.

³⁴ Ibid, p.12.

the burden.³⁵ The 1980s also witnessed a change in the perceived threats to the US (and its Western allies), away from the Communist East and towards the Third World South.³⁶

Other scholars, writing after the Cold War, have argued that the third phase of American expansion better suits the 1990s and early 2000s, when the US engaged in a series of military interventions throughout the Middle East (and have maintained a semi-permanent presence since the Second Iraq War). During this period the US base network shifted towards smaller, more temporary bases in 'New Europe, North Africa, West Africa, Asia, and the Gulf'.³⁷ Moreover, US protection was considered less essential in the now unipolar world and more states have since begun to curtail US access.³⁸ However, though relevant for the US departure from Soesterberg, this third phase as documented by post-Cold War scholars lies beyond the scope of this research. In summary, similar to past empires, the US global basing network was 'derived from a combination of conquests, agreements with allies, and temporary arrangements with neutrals and exile regimes' over the past two-hundred years.³⁹ For the reasons listed above, the US (and its sphere of influence) may accurately be labelled an empire.

³⁵ Volk, *The Sun Never Sets: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, p.219.

³⁶ Ibid, p.209.

³⁷ Kenneth Macleish, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*, p.115.

³⁸ Robert Harkavy, *Strategic Basing and the Great Powers, 1200-2000* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p.147.

³⁹ Harkavy, *Great Power Competition for Overseas Bases: The Geopolitics of Access Diplomacy*, p.112.

Chapter 2: Base Politics

Growing critique on the US base (and missile) network in the 1980s, and the multiple interventions in the Middle East in the following three decades, sparked a renewed interest for base politics and overseas military facilities, as ‘alliances and security commitments have become weaker and more tenuous’.⁴⁰ Though overseas military facilities have existed for centuries, recent technological advancements, geopolitical shifts, and economic developments have given the bases of the 20th and 21st century distinct functions. Primarily, overseas bases provide military and strategic access to the basing state.⁴¹ Military access refers to the basing nation’s ability to station military personnel and material in the host state. Political scientist Robert Harkavy argues that military presence at overseas bases serves two basic functions: the provision of military support near an anticipated deployment scene, and providing military presence in ‘locations critical to national policy and to overall foreign policy credibility’.⁴² Soesterberg conforms primarily to the former, as will be discussed later. Historian Joe Volk also includes the projection of conventional power and preparations for nuclear war in missions of foreign US bases.⁴³

In contrast, strategic access encompasses the access to new markets, raw materials, investment opportunities, increased cultural influence, and intelligence access. Often there is overlap, especially with the larger bases such as Soesterberg. Other, less common, base functions include training exercises which are not available in the basing state (such as

³⁸ Harkavy, *Great Power Competition for Overseas Bases: The Geopolitics of Access Diplomacy*, p.5.

⁴¹ Ibid., p.14.

⁴² Ibid., p.16.

⁴³ Volk, *The Sun Never Sets: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, p.13.

training for winter, desert, or jungle operations), and the maintenance of communications facilities.⁴⁴

Military bases can be divided into two groups: static bases and naval/air bases. Static bases are intended to defend the host state and serve as a tripwire for larger retaliation. Therefore, these bases are generally considered to be the most stable form of overseas bases.⁴⁵ These bases generally host a large military force and a network of support facilities to enable a sustainable long-term presence. In contrast, naval (and to a certain degree also air) bases are mainly concerned with the 'replenishment of consumables, intelligence and communication, repairs, and direct combat support'.⁴⁶ As their central function does not lie with the protection of the host state, these bases are more vulnerable to political pressures. Soesterberg Air Base classifies as the latter, as it served as an important midway point between the USAF bases in the UK and the large static bases in West Germany, though certainly also acting as a tripwire for possible Soviet aggression in North-Western Europe. In sum, overseas military bases can take several different forms and serve a number of diverse (often overlapping) purposes.

Despite all these differences, base politics has four defining traits. Firstly, it operates on two interrelated levels: the domestic, and the international.⁴⁷ The bulk of this research is focused on the domestic level and the base's effects on the local population. Nonetheless, the international level and the various geopolitical motives that accompany it are discussed as well. Secondly, military bases interact differently with different groups in the country.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Harkavy, *Great Power Competition for Overseas Bases: The Geopolitics of Access Diplomacy*, p.19,29.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.17.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.23.

⁴⁷ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*, p.67.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p.67.

Often, there is a distinction between the elite and mass political experience and interests surrounding the base. In the Netherlands, defence affairs have traditionally been handled by a small group of elites which contributed to a tension between the military and the rest of society.⁴⁹ Moreover, the elite's experience with the base differs greatly from that of the locals living in its vicinity.

Thirdly, military bases each have their own unique institutional features determined in the basing agreements. Basing agreements are mostly created through bilateral agreements, creating unique legislative and institutional structures that can vary considerably per country. The American presence at Soesterberg was regulated in bilateral and multilateral agreements between the US, the Netherlands, and NATO. Three agreements regulated the majority of privileges and restrictions of American troops in the Netherlands: the NATO Status of Forces Agreement, the Soesterberg Technical Agreement, and a separate bilateral agreement. Status of Forces Agreements (SOFAs) 'provide for rights and privileges of covered individuals while in a foreign jurisdiction and address how the domestic laws of the foreign jurisdiction apply to (military) personnel'.⁵⁰ The US has over 100 agreements that can be regarded as SOFAs, varying in length from 1-200 pages.⁵¹ The NATO SOFA, a multilateral SOFA agreement signed by its members in 1951, states the legal framework for the daily activities of military personnel in allied NATO countries.⁵² The NATO SOFA addresses a range of topics from regulations concerning the wearing of uniforms, to driving licenses and the use of radio frequencies.

⁴⁹ Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, *Armed Forces and the Welfare Societies: Challenges in the 1980s* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1982), p.54,56

⁵⁰ Chuck Mason, "Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA): What Is It, and How Has It Been Utilized?" *Congressional Research Service*, (2012): p.1

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p.1.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p.6.

In addition to the extensive NATO SOFA, more detailed rules pertaining to the US presence in Soesterberg were outlined in the eleven articles of the Soesterberg Technical Agreement (STA) (1954). Article 3 specifies that ‘the USAF will be permitted to deploy to and operate from Soesterberg Airfield those air and ground units comprising a tactical fighter squadron, together with necessary support units. In the accomplishment of such deployment and operation, the USAF may bring in, store and maintain necessary provisions, supplies, equipment, and material’.⁵³ This represents the foundations of the American presence in Soesterberg, and directed the development and operation of the base over the following five decades.

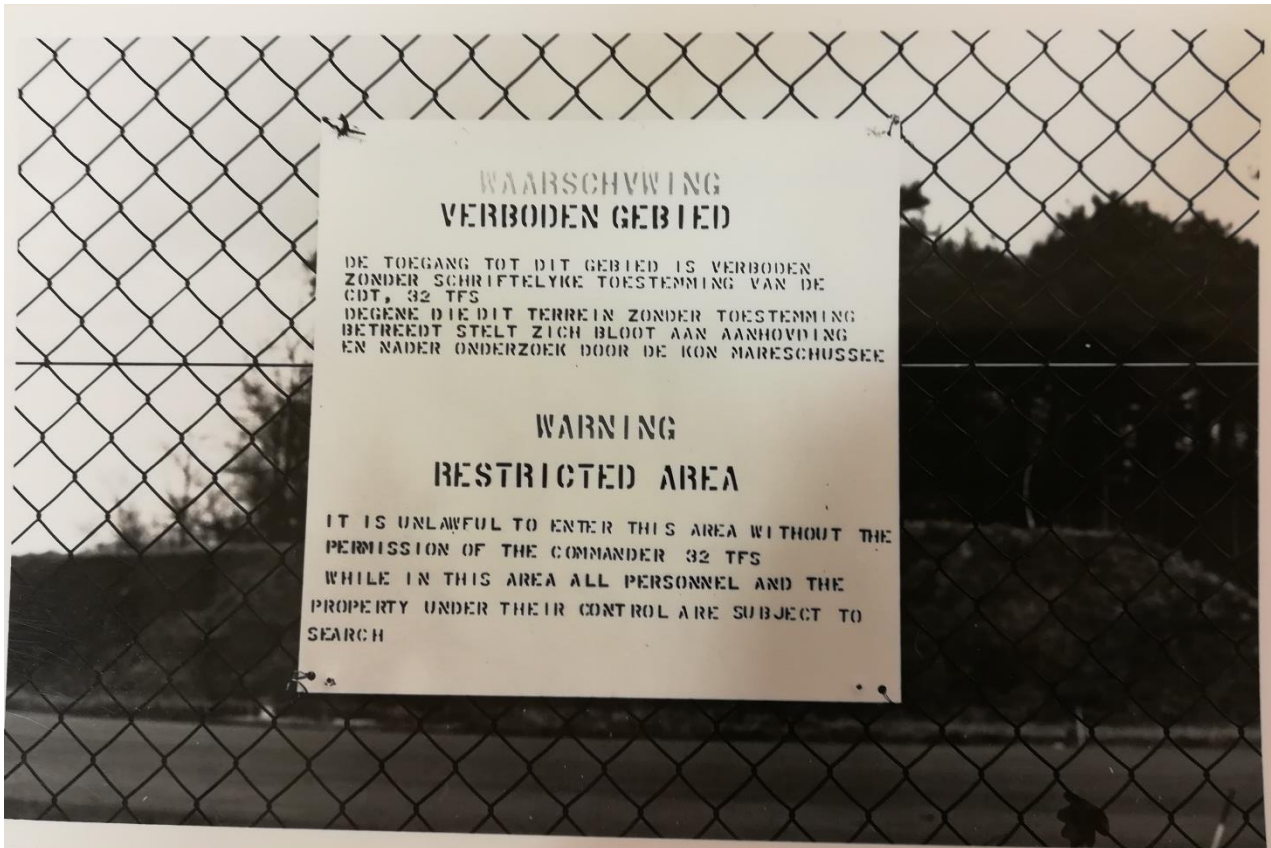
Additionally, appendix I of the STA lists a number of buildings to be constructed at the base, ranging from paint and ammunition storage to a dependents school and supermarket. This illustrates how Soesterberg developed as a largely self-sufficient and self-contained community from its inception. Interestingly, the two following articles (4 and 5) stress that ‘command of Soesterberg Airfield is retained by the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf)’ and that standard procedures like governing air traffic will ‘be a matter of joint consultation’.⁵⁴ The command status of the USAF unit in Soesterberg was truly unique, as the squadron was (and remains) the only USAF unit that was not under direct control of an American commander.⁵⁵ Throughout the 32nd TFS’ time at CNA, several minor incidents and misunderstandings occurred that illustrated the unit’s unfamiliarity with a subordinate command position. For example, in March 1973, the Dutch commander of Soesterberg Air Base, filled a complaint against the American commander for placing no-trespassing signs

⁵³ Technical Agreement Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 2.13.113, Box 2209, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.175.

Image 1: *Dutch Commander's Complaint to the USAF Commander*



One of the images the Dutch Commander submitted with his complaint, depicting the US Commander's breach of the Soesterberg Technical Agreement.

Image retrieved from: Stukken betreffende de gewijzigde Technical Agreement tussen Nederland en de Verenigde Staten inzake het gebruik van vliegbasis Soesterberg 1963-1987, Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951-1986, 2.13.113, Box 2210, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

that listed the US commander as contact person for access. Despite being somewhat trivial, the Dutch commander attached pictures and a copy of the STA to remind the American commander of the unique command structure at the base.

Article 6 states that ‘the RNLAF will provide, without cost to the US, essential elements of base support including those elements provided exclusively for US’.⁵⁶ As the USAF, and the 32nd TFS in particular, was constantly updating its equipment, Soesterberg soon grew to become one of the most modern and best equipped military bases in Europe.⁵⁷ Article 7 states that ‘the RNLAF will be responsible for the employment and administration of Netherlands civilian personnel utilized by the USAF’, a point that may seem minor, but had significant impact on the direct financial influence and job opportunities provided by the Americans.⁵⁸ Moreover, appendix II specifies that all repairs, maintenance, and additional installations requirements be conducted by ‘the local BABOV (Bureau Aanleg Beheer en Onderhoud Vliegvelden) agency’, essentially restricting such work to the Dutch Ministry of Defence.

An agreement signed by the Dutch government details additional conditions for the American presence at Soesterberg Air Base. It states that the USAF squadron can stay for 18 months, upon which the agreement will be reviewed and possibly extended.⁵⁹ Most importantly, this document granted US military personnel extraterritoriality. The Netherlands relinquished all legal action against Americans, except in exceptional cases (of which none were found). The US authorities were therefore responsible for controlling and disciplining the behaviour of US personnel.⁶⁰ Though the Dutch government was cautious to

⁵⁶ Technical Agreement Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 2.13.113, Box 2209, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

⁵⁷ Quirijn van der Vegt. *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013), p.139.

⁵⁸ Technical Agreement Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 2.13.113, Box 2209, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

⁵⁹ Overeenkomst voor de legering van een Amerikaans squadron op Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het gewoon en geheim verbaalarchief van het Ministerie van Oorlog/Defensie, 1946 - 1963, Box 6237, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

⁶⁰ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.171.

grant this privilege as American soldiers now had a degree of immunity similar to the status of diplomats, the Americans reassured them that they strongly enforce their rules.⁶¹ The Netherlands was amongst the first states to grant this privilege, but it soon became common in subsequent SOFAs signed by the US. In sum, these institutional features are created in unique bilateral agreements and determine the military function and local impact of the military base.

Fourthly, there is a strong psychological dimension associated with base politics. Bases can evoke strong nationalistic sentiments in the local population and create some degree of economic dependence.⁶² Moreover, as will be analysed later in part on the base's social impact, military bases can become a prominent aspect of the locals' lives and the area where it is located. Depending on the circumstances, this can be positive or negative.

In the book *Embattled Garrisons: Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*, Calder presents a number of hypotheses regarding base politics. Perhaps most interesting for this research is the 'contact hypothesis', which holds that when other variables are constant, 'the level of civilian personal contact with bases determines attitudes toward them'.⁶³ The rationale behind this hypothesis is twofold. Firstly, 'American soldiers tend to be young, active, and often culturally insensitive', which makes conflict with locals more likely. Secondly, the existence of the base will be more disruptive in highly populated areas due to the higher possibility of crime and increased contact with the different forms of pollution emitted by the bases (environmental, sound, etc.). Furthermore, the presence of a military base may drive down housing prices and cause unrest in this way. Calder compared

⁶¹ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.175.

⁶² Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*, p.67.

⁶³ Ibid., p.86.

the population density of four different countries hosting US military bases (Turkey, Japan, South Korea, Germany), and found that the trend holds true both between and within these countries. Countries with a higher population density were found to have stronger anti-base sentiments, and different bases within a country produced higher levels of opposition when they were located in highly populated areas. The ratio of US military personnel to locals seems play a role as well. Interestingly, Soesterberg does not seem to conform to the findings Calder presents. At 506 people per square kilometre, the Netherlands has one of the highest population densities in the European Union.⁶⁴ Moreover, Soesterberg Air Base was located in the centre of the country, between Utrecht and Amersfoort. Yet, the local complaints towards the US presence (which will be addressed later) seemed limited, especially when compared to the high tensions between US personnel and locals in countries such as Japan and South Korea, which also have a high population density. However, in the Japanese and South Korean cases greater cultural differences between the local population and the US personnel may have also contributed to higher tensions. Moreover, both these states contained much larger US bases than the Netherlands, and included US Navy bases (which typically create more criminal behaviour than other types of bases), both factors that increase the likelihood of encountering problems with the locals.⁶⁵

A state's history also influences the population's acceptance of foreign military bases. States which have been colonized tend to have stronger anti-base sentiments, because for some the presence of these bases stands in the way of establishing true independence.⁶⁶ Non-liberating occupations (such as the German occupation of the

⁶⁴ The World Bank. "Population Density." The World Bank. 2018. Accessed July 17, 2018. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.POP.DNST>.

⁶⁵ Macleish, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*, p.32.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.76.

Netherlands during the Second World War, or cases where the occupying power has are complicit with the old order like in South Korea between 1945-1948) also generate greater resentment, especially if they are unable to provide security. In contrast, 'liberating occupations where a noncolonial power displaces a totalitarian, illegitimate regime lead to stable base politics thereafter'.⁶⁷ Though the American presence in the Netherlands was not regarded as an occupation, they were regarded as a liberating force because of their role in the Second World War (together with other the other Allied countries like Canada, the UK, etc.) and were perceived as safeguarding the Netherlands from possible Soviet aggression. These factors contributed to the acceptance of an American military presence in the Netherlands, the relative stability throughout the base's presence, and continued military cooperation with the US.

⁶⁷ Macleish, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle against U.S. Military Posts*, p.76.

Chapter 3: The Role of Soft Power

This thesis utilizes concept of 'soft power' to help explain Dutch and American incentives for cooperation, and the subsequent socioeconomic influences of the American presence at Soesterberg (and of America on Dutch society in a broader sense). The term 'soft power' was first introduced by American political scientist Joseph Nye in the late 1980s, as an alternative to coercive forms of power. However, states had been aware of the strategic use of information and culture towards diplomatic purposes long before these publications. Compared to other states such as France and Britain, the United States was late to utilize this new diplomatic strategy. The establishment of the Committee on Public Information (CPI) by President Woodrow Wilson in 1917, is often regarded as the beginning of the US's use of soft power, though the organization was disbanded after the war, because it generated suspicions of spreading propaganda.⁶⁸ George Creel, head of the CPI, stated the CPI resembled "a vast enterprise in salesmanship, the world's greatest adventure in advertising".⁶⁹ Nonetheless, it was not until Nye coined the term in the late 1980s that the concept became widely used by politicians and state-strategists, and received a wide range of academic and literary attention. Nye defines power as the ability 'to get others to do what they otherwise would not', and continues to divide it further into two categories: hard power and soft power.⁷⁰ Hard power encompasses all coercive methods of influencing another's behaviour.⁷¹ Traditionally, this included military and economic threats/incentives. In contrast, soft power refers to the ability to influence another party through persuasion or attraction. Nye argues that 'when you can get others to want what you want, you do not

⁶⁸ Joseph Nye, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 616 (2008): p.97

⁶⁹ Ibid., p.97.

⁷⁰ Joseph Nye, "Soft Power" *Foreign Policy*, no. 80 (1990): p.154

⁷¹ Nye, "Soft Power", p.154; Niall Ferguson, "Power," *Foreign Policy*, no. 134 (2003): 18–24

have to spend as much on sticks and carrots to move them in your direction'.⁷² Therefore, soft power influences behaviour by changing to target's preferences, whilst hard power influences behaviour by changing their circumstances.⁷³ Though military and economic strength have traditionally determined power relations, recent decades have shown a shift towards the increasing importance of technology, education, and economic growth.⁷⁴ These areas offer states new means of generating soft power.

Nye argues a states' soft power is primarily created through three resources: its culture, political values, and foreign policy.⁷⁵ On all three fronts the US appealed to certain groups within the Netherlands. The spread and reception of American culture in the Netherlands is well documented, and evident through the 'Americanization of Dutch society' that had begun after the Second World War and gained significant momentum in the 1960s.⁷⁶ The Netherlands and the United States shared several political values like freedom, capitalism and democracy, which were reaffirmed with the Allied liberation of the Netherlands. These values, the US' important role in the liberation of the Netherlands, and the drastic shift in Dutch foreign policy in the late 1940s (when it aligned its political, economic, and security interests with that of the US), likely contributed to the Dutch publics' positive reception and image of the US. However, this thesis will focus on the ways in which the US military personnel in Soesterberg utilized its culture to generate soft power. Alexander Vuving, a professor of international relations and Asia-Pacific studies, categorizes three different sources of soft power: benignity, brilliance, beauty.⁷⁷ Benignity refers to the

⁷² Nye, "Soft Power and American Foreign Policy", p.256.

⁷³ Alexander Vuving, "How Soft Power Works," *SSRN Scholarly Paper* (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, 2009): p.6

⁷⁴ Nye, "Soft Power", p.154

⁷⁵ Nye, "Public Diplomacy and Soft Power", p.96

⁷⁶ Hans Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2009), p.588.

⁷⁷ Vuving, "How Soft Power Works," *SSRN Scholarly Paper*, p.9-10

reciprocal effect of kind and unselfish behaviour. In international relations brilliance generates admiration and manifests itself through a strong military, a wealthy and vibrant economy, a peaceful and well-run society, and technological advancements. In turn, a states' beauty is demonstrated through its ideals, values, and visions. These three sources of soft power can be applied to the Dutch-American case to determine the extent of American soft power in the Netherlands.

In her book *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, feminist writer Cynthia Enloe explores the role of American wives and family within the global US base-network. Enloe argues that 'a military base, even one controlled by soldiers of another country, can become politically invisible if its ways of doing business and seeing the world insinuate themselves into a community's schools, consumer tastes, housing patterns, children's games, adult's friendships, jobs, and gossip'.⁷⁸ In this regard, the wives and children of American military personnel can play a large role in determining the locals' acceptance of the base. Already by the end of the nineteenth century the role of diplomatic wives in international relations was increasing, as 'diplomacy and hostessing had become tightly intertwined'.⁷⁹ The woman's role as a host was deemed important to 'facilitate the transaction of business'.⁸⁰ However, it was not until the tremendous expansion of the US base-network after the Second World War that the role of military spouses was emphasized by the US military.

⁷⁸ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), p.66.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p.97.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.99.

Between 1950-1960 the number of dependents living with military personnel stationed abroad quintupled.⁸¹ During this period, the US military began to view 'women's domestic work and wifely duties (as) essential to military strength', because women were 'thought to threaten or enhance a diplomat's, businessman's or soldier's ability to serve his government effectively'.⁸² In the 1950s, the USAF magazine *US Lady* actively promoted the dependent's role/contribution, stating that 'the family is the real heart of the U.S. Air Force'.⁸³ Moreover, a strong nuclear family was thought to act as a cultural and ideological weapon against the spread of Communism.⁸⁴ This emphasis on the nuclear family may also help explain the US military's strong stance against homosexuality, even towards the end of the 20th century when such practices were accepted in countries like the Netherlands (where homosexuality had been decriminalized in 1811, and became accepted in the Dutch military in 1973). Ultimately, the increasing number of dependents living at US military bases had a direct impact on their design. Without conscription, it became important to keep the wife and kids content when stationed abroad, leading to increasing recreational facilities and a more American-style of living.⁸⁵ The growing variety and luxury of the recreational and commercial facilities at Camp New Amsterdam reflect the growing American community that accompanied the military personnel.

Though the term soft power would only be introduced by Nye in the 1980s, the US military was long aware that positive relations between US military personnel (and their families) and the locals was important to the acceptance of the American presence. Already

⁸¹ Donna Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965* (New York: NYU Press, 2007), p.73.

⁸⁰ Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965*, p.65.; Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, p.96.

⁸³ Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965*, p.66.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p.61.

⁸⁵ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, p.71.

in the 1950s, pamphlets were distributed to US personnel in Europe and the Pacific discouraging 'offensive behaviour, particularly rudeness, arrogance, drunkenness, and cultural insensitivity'.⁸⁶ Especially drunkenness was a reoccurring concern that could undermine military discipline and lead to incidents that harmed relations with the locals (such as the string of car accidents discussed in Chapter 6). Through newspapers, presentations, and events, the USAF actively sought to introduce its personnel to the host country's customs, culture, history, and language phrases. Furthermore, families (women in particular) were expected to project favourable qualities like friendliness, compassion, and respect for different cultures.⁸⁷ These resemble the soft power theories of Nye and Vuving which argue a favourable culture (in this case the strong family unit) and benignity improve the host's reception of American presence. The availability of popular American culture through its music, movies, food, clothing, etc. also contributed to the warm reception of American culture in the Netherlands. Another source of soft power that Vuving eludes to, beauty, is reflected by the US's alleged support for democracy and human rights.⁸⁸ Pragmatic basing agreements the US concluded with dictators and undemocratic countries during the Cold War undermined some of the US's credibility in supporting democracy and human rights, but the backdrop of the Cold War allowed the US to downplay such inconsistencies. The US demonstrated Vuving's third source of soft power, brilliance, through its economic success and military dominance. The Dutch 'economic miracle' was aided by the adoption of US technological innovations, and new planning, and

⁸⁶ Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965*, p.51.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p.61.

⁸⁸ Alan Hunter, "Soft Power: China on the Global Stage," *The Chinese Journal of International Politics* 2, no. 3 (2009): p.390

organizational forms.⁸⁹ Moreover, Dutch military security now largely relied on NATO and bilateral agreements with the US as demonstrated by the Soesterberg case.

Finally, the large degree of cultural exchange between the US and the Netherlands, is evident in the Americanization of Dutch society which began after the Second World War. Historian Hans Krabbendam has argued that these factors (technological innovation, new planning and organizational methods, and Americanization) 'stimulated far-reaching cultural changes that were the essence of Dutch society's modernization until the early 1970s'.⁹⁰ It is therefore difficult to quantify the degree to which the American presence at CNA contributed to the Americanization of Dutch society, though it certainly contributed by spreading and establishing elements of American culture in the region (as discussed in Chapter 6).

Furthermore, since its introduction by Nye in the 1980s, there has been an ongoing debate about the efficacy of soft power. Historian and political commentator Niall Ferguson has highlighted the failure of US soft power throughout the Islamic world, where 'bottles of Coke, Big Macs, CDs by Britney Spears and DVDs starring Tom Cruise' are enjoyed but have seemingly had little impact on the appreciation for the US.⁹¹ In a 2003 article, he argues that 'power is partly about monopolizing as far as possible the means of projection (of power), which mainly include material things: guns, butter, people, money, oil.'⁹² The US dominance in these fields was particularly evident in the economic boom of the 1990s, and decisive victory in the Gulf War which highlighted US military superiority. In response to such criticisms Nye has revisited his concept of soft power and introduced the concept of 'smart

⁸⁹ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.761.

⁹⁰ Ibid, p.761.

⁹¹ Niall Ferguson, "Power", *Foreign Policy*, no. 134 (2003): p.21

⁹² Ibid, p.24.

power', which refers to the combined use of soft and hard power. Through this term Nye hopes to clarify the 'misperception that soft power alone can produce effective foreign policy'.⁹³ In many regards smart power better describes the US' foreign policy the past century, as it sought to export its culture, values, and economic success throughout the world, but always had the military option to intervene where it deemed necessary. The fact that the US still has hundreds of military bases in allied countries reaffirms this realist approach.

⁹³ Joseph Nye "Get Smart: Combining Hard and Soft Power" *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 4 (2009): p.160

Chapter 4: 'Politics of asymmetry'⁹⁴

4.1 Dutch motivations for military cooperation

From the establishment of the kingdom in 1815 until the Second World War, the Netherlands maintained a strict policy of armed neutrality.⁹⁵ However, the devastation of the Second World War and five years of German occupation led the Netherlands to abandon its 'political and military isolation' and create a situation where 'both the foreign and security policies were (...) firmly based on political alliances and military cooperation'.⁹⁶ The huge expansion of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs from 60 officers and employees plus 110 consular employees on the eve of the war (in 1938 there were only 38 posts), to 860 department employees in 1957, reflects the increasing Dutch participation in international politics.⁹⁷ Following the Second World War, the Netherlands had two major foreign policy concerns: maintaining (though it may be better described as regaining) the colonial possessions in Indonesia, and fear for future German aggression.⁹⁸ During the Second World War Japan had occupied the Dutch East Indies and allowed nationalist movements to emerge. Following the Japanese capitulation, the Netherlands deployed nearly all of its military to regain control over its colonial possessions but was unable to decisively defeat the Indonesian republican movement.⁹⁹ The international community strongly criticised the Dutch attempts to quell the Indonesian republicans by military force. Without the support

⁹⁴ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.579.

⁹⁵ Hans Loeber, *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1965: A Partnership Illusions and Facts* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1992), p.76.; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.18.; Harries-Jenkins, *Armed Forces and the Welfare Societies: Challenges in the 1980s*, p.55.

⁹⁶ Loeber, *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1965: A Partnership Illusions and Facts*, p.76.

⁹⁷ Amry Vandenbosch, *Dutch Foreign Policy Since 1815: A Study in Small Power Politics* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1959), p.42.

⁹⁸ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.581.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.581.

of the US and the newly established UN, the Dutch government finally conceded its loss and formally granted Indonesia its independence on 27 December 1949.¹⁰⁰

The Second World War had a devastating effect on the Netherlands. In addition to the loss of life and traumas suffered by the population, the material losses totalled \$6,284,000,000, which was 'about one-third of the total national wealth'.¹⁰¹ Initially, 'the Netherlands wanted to make it impossible for Germany to threaten her security again, yet Germany's economic recovery was essential to full Dutch economic recovery'.¹⁰² This position was evident shortly after the war in the Dutch refusal to join the Treaty of Dunkirk (1947) on grounds that it was too anti-German.¹⁰³ Nonetheless, the Netherlands became a founding member of the Treaty of Brussels (1948). This treaty was an attempt at stimulating military, economic, social, and cultural cooperation, largely to protect its member states from future German and Soviet aggression.¹⁰⁴ Multiple scholars view the Treaty of Brussels as the moment the Netherlands abandoned its long-held position of armed neutrality, and aligned itself to the other Western European states.¹⁰⁵ Military sociologist Gwyn Harrier-Jenkins has argued that already during its period of armed neutrality the Netherlands showed a 'remarkable and moralistic interest in the development of international law and supranational bodies', and that its membership of the various international institutions and alliances 'only formalized a situation that had already been in existence for centuries'.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰ Note: Some controversy surrounds this date. Though the UN and the Netherlands adhere to the 1949 independence date, the Indonesian government maintains it gained independence on the 17th of August 1945 when the Proclamation of Indonesian Independence was read/declared by future president Sukarno

¹⁰¹ Vandenbosch, *Dutch Foreign Policy Since 1815: A Study in Small Power Politics*, p.292.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p.300.

¹⁰³ van der Vegt. *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973*, p.28.

¹⁰⁴ Vandenbosch, *Dutch Foreign Policy Since 1815: A Study in Small Power Politics*, p.302.

¹⁰⁵ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.18.; van der Vegt. *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973*, p.29.; Vandenbosch, *Dutch Foreign Policy Since 1815: A Study in Small Power Politics*, p.302.

¹⁰⁶ Gwyn Harrier-Jenkins, ed., *Armed Forces and the Welfare Societies: Challenges in the 1980s* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1982), p.90., p.55.

Nonetheless, the Netherlands maintained an Atlanticist stance and strongly believed 'its interests were best served by a political and military alliance of Western Europe that included the US'.¹⁰⁷ In fact, both Belgium and the Netherlands argued that a military alliance without the US was of little value.¹⁰⁸ The creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949, which included the United States among its 12 founding members, relieved these concerns. The protection offered by the US, notably its nuclear arsenal and the large military bases in West Germany, was a solution to the growing Soviet threat as it moved an anticipated conflict area further eastward. Furthermore, the Netherlands was one of eight European states that signed a military aid treaty with the US following the Second World War.¹⁰⁹ Initially, this was the Military Assistance Program (MAP), but it was replaced by the Mutual Defence Assistance Program (MDAP) after NATO was established. The MAP and later the MDAP, were economically very favourable for the Netherlands. For example, the US would pay for the material costs for the establishment of six Dutch tactical fighter squadrons and one photo-reconnaissance unit.¹¹⁰ The MDAP in particular proved crucial for rebuilding the Dutch military.

Following the war, the Dutch military required a significant overhaul, and the government looked to the US and Britain. During the war, the Dutch military had cooperated with the Americans, British, and Australians in an attempt to repel the Japanese invasion.¹¹¹ Though 'the first Dutch military cooperation with the United States had not been successful', as the American-British-Dutch-Australian Command (ABDACOM) had failed

¹⁰⁷ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.583.

¹⁰⁸ Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952", p.269.

¹⁰⁹ Ine Megens, *American Aid to NATO Allies in the 1950s - the Dutch Case* (Purdue University Press, 2003), p.63

¹¹⁰ van der Vegt. *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973*, p.132.

¹¹¹ Note: the American-British-Dutch-Australian Command (ABDACOM) was established in 1941 as the supreme command of Allies forces in South-East Asia and saw action throughout the Pacific during the war.

to prevent the capitulation of the Dutch forces on Java on the 8th of March 1942.¹¹²

Nonetheless, this laid the groundwork for future cooperation. For the remainder of the war the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army Air Force and the Royal Navy were relocated to Australia and then Jackson's Army Air Base, Mississippi, to receive further training and equipment.¹¹³ Here the Royal Netherlands Military Flying School (RNMFS) was established, and about 550 Dutch soldiers completed the training under British Command. Colonel C. Giebel, commander of the RNMFS stated, 'I do not believe that in any other country in the world could we have found the training possibilities which we have found here. We found here the best equipment, the best training methods; moreover, we found here an assistance and goodwill from all members of the American Air Force of all ranks, which has been beyond praise...'.¹¹⁴ As Colonel Giebel became the Chief of Air Staff of the Netherlands between 1947-1950, it is not unlikely this positive experience influenced the decision for closer cooperation between the Dutch and American military. Moreover, already in 1947, General Kruls, the Chief of Defence (1945-1951) and General Spoor, the Chief of Staff of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army (1946-1949) had agreed to transition over to American equipment and organizational structure.¹¹⁵ On the 11th of March 1953, the largest organizational change occurred as the air force, which had previously been 'but a tiny branch of the Army', became its own royal military institution, the Koninklijke Luchtmacht (KLu).¹¹⁶ By 1953, about 365 Dutch pilots and 2000 ground personnel had received their initial training from the US.¹¹⁷ Though the KLu also initially received significant support from

¹¹² Loeber, *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1965: A Partnership Illusions and Facts*, p.78.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.78.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p.80.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p.87.

¹¹⁶ Loeber, *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1965: A Partnership Illusions and Facts*, p.82.

¹¹⁷ van der Vegt. *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973*, p.138.

the Royal Air Force (RAF), the 1950s and early 1960s confirmed the anticipated switch from British equipment and doctrines to their American counterpart.¹¹⁸ In short, the Dutch military incentives for cooperation with the Americans went beyond the direct security guarantees cooperation with the US offered (through stationed troops and nuclear weapons), as it encompassed a complete revival of the Dutch military.

Though an extensive analysis of the Dutch economic motivations for economic and cultural cooperation with the US falls outside the scope of this research, some important factors need mentioning. Following the war, the Dutch government had a large debt with the Americans and was a major recipient of the Marshall Plan. Though polls reveal a majority of the Dutch public believed the main goal of the Marshall Plan was to provide the US national economy with a new market, the plan's drive for 'greater European production, productivity, and economic interdependence' ran parallel with Dutch interests and therefore saw little protest.¹¹⁹ Moreover, the plan provided the Netherlands with access to raw materials, which were much needed for the renewal of the Dutch military.¹²⁰ In short, the Dutch government believed that a US hegemony in Europe would provide stability and liberalize Western economies. Therefore, though the establishment of an American fighter squadron at Soesterberg was not intended to directly provide a boost for the Dutch economy (as discussed in the section about the bilateral basing agreement between the Netherlands and the US), it fits into a larger picture of the Netherlands aligning itself politically, militarily, and economically with the US.

¹¹⁸ Megens, *American Aid to NATO Allies in the 1950s - the Dutch Case*, p.197; Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.626.

¹¹⁹ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.766.

¹²⁰ Loeber, *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1965: A Partnership Illusions and Facts*, p.72.

4.2 US motivations for military cooperation

The US incentives for military cooperation with the Dutch also rested primarily on economic and military reasons, but to a far lesser degree than on the Dutch side. Following the war, the US had determined that 'a healthy economy was the precondition for political stability in Europe', and as a result provided economic aid through projects like the Marshall Plan.¹²¹ However, these forms of assistance also firmly aligned their recipients to the Western camp, as 'trade within Western Europe had to be liberalized, trade with Eastern Europe curtailed, (and) American investments encouraged'.¹²² Additionally, the Netherlands' Atlanticist orientation made it an important trading partner for the US. This is demonstrated by the Netherlands' long-held position as the third largest direct foreign investor in the US.¹²³ From an economic perspective, the US decision to station the 32TFS in the Netherlands fits into the larger geopolitics of the early Cold War period which saw the US provide economic and military support to its allies in an attempt to contain the influence of the USSR.

Perhaps more importantly, the US had a number of military incentives for establishing an air base at Soesterberg. US military bases in the Netherlands, like Soesterberg Air Base, allowed the US to provide military support near to the anticipated deployment scene (West Germany), and gave credibility to the US's foreign policy which guaranteed safety for its allies (and in turn gain significant economic and cultural influence). This matches the two functions of overseas bases proposed by Harkavy as explained in the base politics section. Moreover, Soesterberg Air Base was well situated within the existing

¹²¹ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.762.

¹²² Lundestad, "Empire by Invitation? The United States and Western Europe, 1945-1952", p.268.

¹²³ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.799.

global American base network following the war. As Denmark refused to allow US troops to be stationed on its territory during peacetime, the Netherlands was chosen to defend Northern Europe.¹²⁴ In case of a conflict with the USSR, Soesterberg Air Base would play a supportive role for the larger bases in West Germany. In peacetime, the larger US bases in the United Kingdom and West Germany allowed Soesterberg to be well stocked and equipped. This reflects how 'foreign military bases are designed to integrate the host nations into US military strategies and structures'.¹²⁵ The favourable conditions the US was able to gain in its SOFA with the Netherlands likely influenced the US decision as well. Tax free import possibilities from bases in Germany, extraterritorially for American personnel, and a wide range of military and recreational facilities provided by the Dutch government were but a few of the major benefits the SOFA included for the US. Finally, the military aid the US provided to the Netherlands resulted in an Americanization of the Dutch armed forces and increased military expenditure by the Dutch government. Until the 1960s, the Dutch defence budget was the largest part of the government budget, as the Netherlands complied with the US call for its European partners to increase military expenditures.¹²⁶ As shown in Table 1: *Dutch Defence Budget, 1960-1980*, Dutch military expenditure continued to increase throughout the Cold War, though its share of total government expenses decreased as the Dutch economy grew and social welfare expanded. Nonetheless, historian Rolf de Winter argues that American concerns about the lacking Dutch contribution to NATO led the Dutch government to invite an American squadron under favourable conditions.¹²⁷

The standardization protocols in the MDAP and Americanization of the Dutch military

¹²⁴ van der Vegt. *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973*, p.139.

¹²⁵ Volk, *The Sun Never Sets ...: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, p.9.

¹²⁶ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.625.

¹²⁷ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.170-171.

strongly incentivized the purchase of American equipment. In this regard the American military incentives may go beyond defence and overlap with the economic incentives.

Table 1: <i>Dutch Defence Budget, 1960-1980</i>			
Year	Defence budget in millions of guilders	Public expenditure in millions of guilders	Defence budget as percentage of total public expenditure
1960	1728	9420	18.3
1961	2013	11178	18.0
1962	2186	11484	19.0
1963	2307	12342	18.7
1964	2661	14463	18.4
1965	2714	16900	16.1
1966	2790	18773	14.9
1967	3008	20719	15.5
1968	3322	24719	13.6
1969	3625	26599	13.6
1970	4000	29931	13.4
1971	4476	35216	12.7
1972	5018	38405	13.1
1973	5434	45390	12.0
1974	6275	52181	12.0
1975	7395	65366	11.3
1976	7829	76479	10.2
1977	9457	84348	11.2
1978	9667	96831	10.1
1979	9975	105624	10.0
1980	1085	110614	9.8

Table obtained from Hans Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2009), p.625

4.3 Conclusion

In summary, the power relations in the Dutch-American relationship were inherently asymmetrical. The relationship was 'determined to a large extent by the great movements that took place in post-war world politics', where the US 'pursued a global foreign policy' and the Netherlands 'adapt(ed) as best as possible to the radically changing circumstances'.¹²⁸ The Netherlands needed the US for its security (through the stationing of US troops and through an extensive rebuilding of the Dutch military) and economic recovery. In contrast, the American need for Dutch military cooperation was limited, but the economic and military support provided by the US firmly incorporated the Netherlands into its sphere of influence. Moreover, the US gained a 'model ally' that has consistently supported the US foreign interventions.¹²⁹ This Dutch loyalty/support of the US was clearly visible in 1970, when the Netherlands was the only NATO member that supported the US invasion of Cambodia.¹³⁰ Dutch support for the US invasion of Iraq in 2003 and other US missions in Africa and the Middle East, and continued military purchases from the US (like the Joint Strike Fighter program which has far exceeded its initially anticipated costs) demonstrates that this trend continues into the 21st century.

¹²⁸ Krabbendam, *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations, 1609-2009*, p.580.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p.688.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p.688.

Chapter 5: Stingy Dutch? Stingy Americans!

5.1 Factors limiting the economic impact of Camp New Amsterdam

The arrival of the 32nd TFS in 1954 only saw a minor direct economic contribution to the region. This was primarily because Camp New Amsterdam sought to be self-sufficient and contained a range of facilities that limited the Americans' need (and likely desire) to leave the base and frequent local shops.¹³¹ As is evident from the construction plans outlined in the Soesterberg Technical Agreement, numerous social and commercial amenities were planned alongside the military facilities. Some of the those included in the original agreement were: a dental centre, a hospital, a snackbar, a theatre, a post office, a laundry office, an armament and office shop, a school for the personnel's children, a commissary, and a clothing store.¹³² These amenities reflect about half of those constructed on costs of the Dutch government. The agreement also allowed the USAF to construct an engine shop, an armaments and electronics shop, and a bowling centre (fittingly named 'The Netherlands'), alongside the necessary military installations. This illustrates that already in its planning, Camp New Amsterdam was intended to resemble a small self-contained community with all the necessary facilities. These constructions were carried out by Bureau Aanleg Beheer en Onderhoud Vliegvelden (BABOV), an agency belonging to the Dutch military. Therefore, local construction companies saw little benefit, and instead these projects cost the Dutch government approximately 2,400,000 guilders (about 6000 guilders per American at the base, which totalled about 400 Americans in 1954).¹³³

¹³¹ 'Stukje "thuis" in Nederland', *Utrechtsch Nieuwsblad*, February 8, 1964.

¹³² Technical Agreement Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 2.13.113, Box 2209, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands.

¹³³ Bouwkundige voorbereidingen voor de legering van een Amerikaans squadron op de Vliegbasis Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het gewoon en geheim verbaalarchief van het Ministerie van Oorlog/Defensie (1946 – 1963), Box 6281, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands.

As mentioned earlier, BABOV was also responsible for all subsequent construction and repairs at the base. Over time, as the number of Americans at the base increased, the services expanded to include a book store, a sport store, a hairdresser, a bank, two sport centres, and a craft shop.¹³⁴ Again, these facilities further limited the Americans' need to frequent local stores, and reinforced the social isolation of the base, as is discussed in the following chapter. Moreover, as the base stores were exempt from taxes, local stores found it difficult to compete. Particularly the Commissary (also known as the base 'exchange' or base grocery store), which was 'originally conceived as necessary to satisfy basic needs of military members assigned at remote installations throughout the US', but have since 'come to be regarded as an important benefit' of foreign deployment, kept the stationed personnel from shopping at local supermarkets.¹³⁵ Additionally, the goods stocked at the Commissary were not bought locally, but instead flown in from the larger stationary US bases in Germany. Almost every day a massive transport plane (a Lockheed C-141 Starlifter) arrived to supply the base.¹³⁶ These food supplies imported from Germany totalled about 60 tonnes per month.¹³⁷ This massive movement of goods brings the immense scale and interconnectedness of the US base-network into perspective. A 1977 article in the *Soester Courant* stated that the Commissary was so popular amongst the American troops that those stationed in Brunssum would occasionally fly over by helicopter to do their groceries.¹³⁸ Other shops at CNA, such as the music store, were also able to sell equipment

¹³⁴ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.198-199.; *Soester Courant*, January 10, 1975.

¹³⁵ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, February 7, 1975.

¹³⁶ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.54.

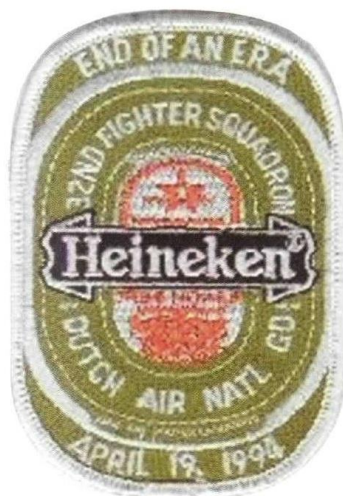
¹³⁷ Hans Loeber and Gerard Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron* (Dieren: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1984), p.32.

¹³⁸ 'Commissary naar Apollo wijk', *Soester Courant*, 22 December, 1977.

cheaper than the local competitors.¹³⁹ Furthermore, newly stationed troops could import their personal belongings tax free within the first six months of their arrival.¹⁴⁰ This likely decreased the number of things purchased by the Americans when furnishing their home.

Nonetheless, in an interview with the *Utrechts Nieuwsblad* in 1964, the wife of a stationed soldier remarked that she went to the Dutch butcher, because it was cheaper than at the base.¹⁴¹ Similarly, other sources indicate that the local bakeries were popular with the American families, because they stocked fresh bread and Dutch delicacies.¹⁴² Finally, Dutch beer, Heineken in particular, proved very popular with the American troops. In fact, it was so popular that a special Heineken patch commemorating the 32nd TFS was presented to the Americans when they left in 1994.¹⁴³ Overall, despite the arriving troops being told that

Illustration 2: *The 32nd TFS' Heineken Patch*



The Heineken Patch presented to the 32nd TFS upon their departure in 1994. Image retrieved from: Lutgard Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)* (Utrecht: Oud Utrecht, 2005), p.165.

¹³⁹ Lutgard Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)* (Utrecht: Oud Utrecht, 2005), p.171.

¹⁴⁰ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.175.

¹⁴¹ 'Stukje "thuis" in Nederland', *Utrechtsch Nieuwsblad*, February 8, 1964.

¹⁴² Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.48.

¹⁴³ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.165.

‘Holland is not cheap (...) taxes are extremely high, very wealthy people are rare, and budgeting is tight’, the Americans found that they could live in the Netherlands very cheaply.¹⁴⁴

Not only did the tax exemptions for consumer goods incentivize the Americans to shop at the base, it also generated a black market. Already during the initial negotiations about the stationing of American troops, Dutch negotiators raised concerns about the black market that might emerge because of the tax exemptions.¹⁴⁵ Dutch officials were aware of the large black market that had emerged around the American bases in West Germany, and feared a similar situation might appear with the resale of coffee, cigarettes, and fuel.¹⁴⁶ The scarcity of products in the Netherlands following the war likely contributed to these fears.¹⁴⁷ To prevent the emergence of a black market, the Dutch government agreed to allow the US to import ‘reasonable amounts of stocks and other goods’ which were to be distributed through official channels.¹⁴⁸ Moreover, the American officials implemented several rules at the base to try and prevent the resale of goods. For example, ration cards were issued for cigarettes, limiting the number of packs soldiers could purchase.¹⁴⁹ If soldiers wished to buy more than their ration permitted, they could purchase up to three more packs at the bar for a higher price of \$0.20. These measures might have helped somewhat, but they were certainly imperfect, as many locals recall buying (or being gifted) cigarettes from the Americans.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁴ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.198.; ‘Stukje “thuis” in Nederland’, *Utrechtsch Nieuwsblad*, February 8, 1964.

¹⁴⁵ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.174.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.174.

¹⁴⁷ Loeber, *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1965: A Partnership Illusions and Facts*, p.130.

¹⁴⁸ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.175.

¹⁴⁹ ‘Stukje “thuis” in Nederland’, *Utrechtsch Nieuwsblad*, February 8, 1964.

¹⁵⁰ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.42.

5.2 Camp New Amsterdam's economic contribution to the region

5.2.1 Housing

Despite the Americans doing most of their shopping at the base, they did have a substantial economic impact in other areas. The Netherlands is seemingly in a perpetual state of housing shortages, making the provision of sufficient housing for the Americans a difficult task and a lucrative business opportunity for the locals. Already in 1954, with just 400 Americans, the Dutch government was unable to provide enough housing at the base itself.¹⁵¹ As a result, many Americans looked to the private market to find housing outside the base barracks. This was often referred to as 'living on the economy'.¹⁵² In an interview Ilse de Rijk, a local resident, recalled that almost all of the houses on the Nieuwe Doldersweg (which lies adjacent to Camp New Amsterdam) were rented to American officers who rather lived outside the base, and the later constructed Apollo and Mercury neighbourhoods.¹⁵³ De Rijk, who was married to an American soldier stationed at Soesterberg, remembered that renting to the Americans helped many locals pay off their mortgages. Similarly, local resident Karel Verbeek recalled the many Americans looking to rent in the area, and how they would pay up to double what the Dutch residents offered.¹⁵⁴ At the start of the 1980s when the average monthly Dutch income was 782 guilders netto, high monthly rent prices of 750 guilders and above were not uncommon.¹⁵⁵ Next to the houses and apartments that were rented out, some locals rented out their spare rooms to

¹⁵¹ Loeber and Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron*, p.54.

¹⁵² Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.16.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p.49.

¹⁵⁴ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.81.

¹⁵⁵ 'Inkomens vanaf 1970', *GemiddeldInkomen*. 2018, accessed May 2018. <https://www.gemiddeld-inkomen.nl/inkomens-vanaf-1970/>; Fred van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', *Military Aviation Magazine* (1984): p.44

American soldiers to capitalize on the housing shortage. For example, Ankie van der Wind-Wolff, a local resident whose husband worked at the Dutch side of the base, rented out a spare room with kitchen to numerous American soldiers.¹⁵⁶ This illustrates the different ways the local population was able to capitalize on the demand for housing. Despite the high prices, the persistent housing shortage at the base forced most Americans to live on the economy, which was fairly uncommon for US bases in Europe, where most personnel was housed on the base or in gated communities.¹⁵⁷

In response to the continued housing shortage and increasing number of Americans stationed at the base (400 in 1954, to over 3,500 by the 1970s of which 1400 military personnel), a new residential neighbourhood was constructed specifically for the Americans.¹⁵⁸ The additional housing was much needed as years earlier, the 'bleak prospects for finding housing for newcomers assigned to Camp New Amsterdam had caused the base to cancel concurrent travel' (meaning service members had to wait for their dependents to join them abroad).¹⁵⁹ In 1978, the new Apollo neighbourhood was completed, providing the American troops with 200 American style family residences. The houses were constructed close to the base on ground belonging to the Dutch Ministry of Defence by the private firm 'Planconsult Breda'.¹⁶⁰ The Apollo neighbourhood boasted modern, American style houses, with luxuries not yet common in Dutch households (large kitchens, carports, two bathrooms, a dryer, etc.).¹⁶¹ It is unclear as to the costs and profits

¹⁵⁶ Peter Nekkers, 'Stars and stripes in Soesterberg: 'Superioriteitsgevoel zit in de aard van het beestje'', *UtrechtAltijd*, 2016, <http://www.utrechtaltijd.nl/verhalen/s/stars-and-stripes-in-soesterberg-superioriteitsgevoel-zit-in-de-aard-van-het-beestje/>

¹⁵⁷ Loeber and Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron*, p.55.

¹⁵⁸ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.200.

¹⁵⁹ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, October 22, 1976.

¹⁶⁰ 'Overdracht Apollo Wijk', *Soester Courant*, June 1, 1978.

¹⁶¹ 'Officiële overdracht van wijk Apollo aan gemeente Soest', *Soester Courant*, May 18, 1978.; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.200.

these properties brought, but given the high rent prices discussed earlier, and the addition of 100 houses in 1980 (the Mercury and Gemini streets), it may be assumed that this project was fairly lucrative for Planconsult. Moreover, after the Americans left Soesterberg in 1994, these houses were sold off to Dutch buyers. Despite the construction (and expansion) of this American neighbourhood, the housing shortage persisted, and locals continued to profit from the high rents the Americans were willing to pay until their departure, as is evident from the many housing advertisements that continued to appear in the bases' newspaper, *The Soesterberg Interceptor*.

5.2.2 Jobs

As discussed earlier, the Soesterberg Technical Agreement (1954) prevented the Americans from directly employing Dutch workers and made the RNLAf 'responsible for the employment and administration of Netherlands civilian personnel utilized by the USAF'.¹⁶² Dutch workers were employed by the Dutch Ministry of Defence, which had its own workforce at the Dutch side of the base. Therefore, it is difficult to quantify the number of job opportunities directly created by the American presence. Nonetheless, a small number of jobs at CNA were occasionally promoted in local newspapers. Particularly in the 1960s, newspaper advertisements seeking transportation agents and language specialists appeared.¹⁶³ Karel Verbeek, a local resident and former soldier at Soesterberg Air Base, worked as a transport-driver for the Americans between 1980-1994, transporting American

¹⁶² Technical Agreement Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 2.13.113, Box 2209, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

¹⁶³ 'Language Specialist', *Trouw*, July 22, 1961.; 'Transportation Agent', *De Volkskrant*, July 22, 1961.; 'Language Specialist', *Het Parool*, July 22, 1961.

personnel and material between the many US bases scattered throughout Europe.¹⁶⁴

However, despite working for the Americans, he was officially employed by the Dutch Ministry of Defence. Therefore, though some job opportunities were created for Dutch workers, these were limited to government employees and excluded local companies that offered similar services.

Nonetheless, a few locals did receive contracts directly from the Americans. Hans Stevens, the base's hairdresser between 1968-1976, was one of the few locals that was directly employed by the Americans.¹⁶⁵ Stevens, who was the hairdresser for both the Dutch and American troops and therefore saw many visitors, recalled in an interview the American commanders sending up to 40 men at once. However, as everyone got a buzzcut, the job was not particularly challenging.¹⁶⁶ In addition to the financial benefits of being the base's hairdresser, the presence of African American troops allowed Stevens to gain new skills. Stevens recalls how the Americans flew in someone from the US to train Dutch hairdressers working at different US bases how to cut afro hair.¹⁶⁷

Perhaps the major local economic benefactor of Camp New Amsterdam was the hospitality business. In addition to the booming rental market, local restaurants and bars were frequented by the Americans, and likely saw increased profits. Café Spitfire, located in Huis ter Heide, was very popular amongst the American personnel.¹⁶⁸ Next to its convenient location, the café was one of the few places outside the base where Americans were

¹⁶⁴ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.76.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p.38.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p.38.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p.38.

¹⁶⁸ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.166.; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.202.

permitted to wear their military uniform. Moreover, the café was smart to play into the American preferences, advertising themselves as ‘hamburger specialists’.¹⁶⁹ Quickly, Café Spitfire became a place where Dutch and Americans socialized. It was also the place where many romances with Dutch women started. The social impact of the Americans, and the role local bars and clubs played, is discussed in chapter 6. It is difficult to quantify the extent of the American economic impact on local bars and restaurants, but the closure of the once extremely popular Café Spitfire in 2015 suggests some locations depended on their American customers.¹⁷⁰

5.2.3 Sporadic economic opportunities

Finally, there were some sporadic ways in which the region saw economic benefits from the American presence. Local catering businesses and entertainment providers were employed for events at Camp New Amsterdam. For example, Open Days held at the base attracted large crowds and employed Dutch companies to provide a variety of services. Similarly, the bicentennial celebration of American Independence hosted a carnival, and employed the local catering company ‘Cadi’.¹⁷¹ The opening of the Apollo neighbourhood was followed by a week of festivities, which likely generated some economic opportunities for local businesses. However, perhaps the best example of the sporadic economic opportunities the American presence provided was a request made to the local pastry chef, Hans Regnery, in 1962. He was commissioned by CNA to bake a cake for 400 people. The

¹⁶⁹ Programmaboekjes van feestavonden, Stukken betreffende het officierscasino en het zogeheten Wehrmachtheim, Box 201, Nederlands Instituut voor Militaire Historie.

¹⁷⁰ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.177.

¹⁷¹ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, May 28, 1976

cake he produced measured 120cm by 90cm, weighed 27.5kg, and included a marzipan Delta Dagger aircraft on top.¹⁷² Though Regnery likely made a decent profit from the cake, this commission reflects that for many locals the direct economic opportunities provided by the Americans were sporadic at best.

Moreover, the weekly periodical of CNA *The Soesterberg Interceptor* contained job opportunities for the youth at the base. The title of an article from September 5, 1986 reads: 'Summer hires: we are the future', and outlined numerous summer jobs for 'CNA's young adults'.¹⁷³ The article boasted that 'in newspapers and magazines you see how a lot of unemployed people are teenagers. Here there were more jobs than teens to work them.'¹⁷⁴ This illustrates how CNA preferred to hire American teenagers (the children of stationed personnel), rather than outsource these simple tasks to locals or the Dutch Ministry of Defence. Similarly, the Commissary and other stores at Camp New Amsterdam employed Americans. Finally, local car dealers and petrol stations saw an increase in sales.¹⁷⁵ However, because the cars had non-Dutch license plates and were exempt from the road tax, they could not be resold to Dutch citizens, so these cars were often resold (several times) within the American community.¹⁷⁶ Therefore, the car sales may not have been as great as is sometimes remembered/assumed by locals.

¹⁷² *Soester Courant*, July 3, 1962.

¹⁷³ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, September 5, 1986

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.50.

¹⁷⁶ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.52.

5.3 Conclusion

In sum, the American arrival brought a limited number of economic opportunities to the local community. Camp New Amsterdam housed a range of stores, these were tax free and stocked from US bases in Germany, which reduced the need for American personnel to visit local stores. Moreover, their tax-exempt status (and subsequent low prices) created a black market in certain goods like alcohol and cigarettes, though not on a scale comparable to the black market in West Germany (as is examined in chapter 7). Nonetheless, the Americans did provide some economic opportunities to the region. The housing shortage made renting to the Americans very profitable. Furthermore, a few individuals found jobs working at CNA (either directly or indirectly), and others benefited from sporadic contracts. However, considering the size of CNA, its economic impact on the region seems to have been rather limited.

Chapter 6: The American bubble

At its peak, Camp New Amsterdam totalled about 3500 Americans (1400 military personnel and 2100 dependents), almost ensuring a social impact on the small town of Soesterberg which had a population of about 7000.¹⁷⁷ However, the American's social impact was restricted by the short-term contracts, and the self-sufficiency of the base and the global American base network as a whole. Nonetheless, housing, romantic relationships, and a wide range of cultural exchanges ensured a degree of interaction and influence in the region. Moreover, the protests that occurred at the base in the 1980s would attract national and international attention.

6.1 Factors limiting social impact

6.1.1 Life within the American base network

The structured life US personnel experience within the American base-network was a major cause of the limited interaction between the American personnel and the Dutch locals. Firstly, the contracts at CNA lasted three years with the possibility to extend with one year.¹⁷⁸ This relatively short deployment period meant that 'most Americans only got an impression of Dutch life without really participating'.¹⁷⁹ As a node within the much larger US base network, military personnel knew their time was limited and they would soon be

¹⁷⁷ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.200.

¹⁷⁸ Loeber and Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron*, p.55.; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.197.

¹⁷⁹ Loeber and Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron*, p.55.; Note the original reads '...zodat de meeste Amerikanen slechts een indruk hebben kunnen krijgen van het Nederlandse leven zonder er echt aan deel te nemen.'

transferred to the next base. The younger troops in particular tended to be more isolated, as they spent more time on the base (possibly because of the housing arrangement).

Secondly, the US military actively tried to foster a sense of community within and between the different bases. For example, many events were organized to introduce newcomers and establish contacts at the base. The *Soesterberg Interceptor*, the base's weekly periodical, provided (amongst other things) important information regarding the base, upcoming events and activities, and tips for living in the Netherlands. The articles in the magazine demonstrate the close and active American community. Introductory activities promoted in the *Soesterberg Interceptor* include: 'Orientation day: Learning the life of a Wolfhound', and a 'Wives Champagne Breakfast'.¹⁸⁰ Conversely, the base's family support centre provided help and information for leaving personnel.¹⁸¹ In 1993, a year before the Americans departed, the *Soesterberg Interceptor* included a lengthy article titled 'Saying goodbye: The PCS move for children' which offered tips for parents to make the move easier on the children.¹⁸² Enloe (2014), argued that the elimination of the draft/conscription has made the happiness of the personnel's family much more important.¹⁸³ Therefore, programs that aid a family's redeployment and seeks to foster a sense of community (in addition to the range of facilities offered at the base) play an important role within the military structure.

Camp New Amsterdam was designed to be largely self-sufficient and went beyond providing the troops and their dependents with only the necessities by including a wide range of recreational facilities. As discussed in the section on the 32nd TFS' economic impact

¹⁸⁰ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, April 12, 1985.; *Soesterberg Interceptor*, February 7, 1975.

¹⁸¹ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, September 3, 1993.

¹⁸² *Soesterberg Interceptor*, September 3, 1993.; Note: PCS stands for Permanent Change of Station

¹⁸³ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, p.71.

(chapter 5), a variety of tax-free stores that were stocked with flown-in American goods discouraged Americans to shop in Dutch stores. Similarly, the base included most of the necessary facilities for an American standard of living and the conveniences connected to it. Amongst these amenities there was a post office, a laundromat, a bank, and a medical clinic (the base's medical facility was expanded in the 1980s when a hospital was constructed in Zeist).¹⁸⁴ These allowed American personnel to perform necessary tasks on the base, limiting the need to use Dutch alternatives and interact with locals. The construction of an American school which was 'easily available for the children of American families', worked to further isolate the children from Dutch society.¹⁸⁵ The school had well-trained teachers (American and Dutch) and good facilities (such as a music room, cafeteria, etc.), and at the height of the American presence totalled about 800 students from elementary through high school.¹⁸⁶ Following the American model, the children were brought to school by school bus and received a hot lunch at the cafeteria, further limiting their contact with locals.¹⁸⁷ Though events and competitions were held with local Dutch schools, such as the gymnastics competition in June 1976 and the annual 'Boomplantdag', many competitions were done with other American schools in Europe (of which there were over 200 in the 1980s).¹⁸⁸ Similarly, the CNA child centre made it unnecessary for American personnel to place their children at Dutch child centres, further limiting contact with local children and parents.

¹⁸⁴ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.197.

¹⁸⁵ Verslag van de besprekingen, gehouden op de Luchtmachtstaf op 28 Mei 1954 betreffende de stand van zaken met betrekking tot het onderbrengen van een F-86 USAFE-squadron op de vliegbasis Soesterberg, Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 2.13.113, Box 2209, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

¹⁸⁶ van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.44

¹⁸⁷ van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.44; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.199

¹⁸⁸ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, June 11, 1976.; *Soester Courant*, March 22, 1973.; van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.45

Similar to the essential facilities described above, the recreational facilities available at CNA reduced the need to interact with the Dutch locals, and encouraged participation (and at times competition) within the larger American base network. The initial 1954 Soesterberg Technical Agreement already included a range of recreational facilities, and these continued to be expanded over the next four decades. The amenities included sports facilities, the officer's casino, the airman's club, the Base Chapel, a theatre, and various facilities for the base's different social clubs. The sports facilities encompassed a bowling centre, sport fields, and a sport centre that included a gym, sauna, and courts for racket sports.¹⁸⁹ Though there were competitions against local teams, the main competition was with teams from other US bases in Europe. For example, though the CNA basketball team, the CNA Kegglers, played with locals, its main competition lay in the 'American Division'. This league included teams from Soesterberg, Wiesbaden, Hahn, Rhein-Main, and Berlin, again reflecting the close community of the American base network in Europe.¹⁹⁰ However, the competition between US bases was not restricted to the military personnel, as the children also represented the various bases in their own league. The school's softball team, The Wolfhounds, competed with the softball teams of other American schools throughout Europe.¹⁹¹ The *Soesterberg Interceptor* tracked the various teams' accomplishments, and would interview certain outstanding athletes. Again, this worked to reinforce the CNA community, but simultaneously isolated its members from their Dutch neighbours.

Next to the sport teams, Camp New Amsterdam had social clubs for a variety of different interests. The clubs included a car club, an audio club, a photo club, a theatre club,

¹⁸⁹ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.198-199.

¹⁹⁰ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, January 10, 1975.

¹⁹¹ van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.45

a square dance club, and a country club.¹⁹² Much like the sport teams, these clubs strengthened the CNA community. However, they had limited contact with their Dutch counterparts (and the decreased incentive to join an equivalent Dutch club), further working to limit the everyday contact between the Americans and the Dutch locals. Moreover, as discussed in the economic section, much of the equipment needed for these clubs was sold at the base stores at cheaper prices than local competitors, further reducing the need to leave the base.

The Base Chapel played an important role for many CNA service members and their families, but much like the other recreational facilities, limited their contact with the local population. The Base Chapel was constructed in 1968, could seat 150 people, and provided Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish services.¹⁹³ Next to attending service at the Chapel, many soldiers and their dependents also held social functions there.¹⁹⁴ The Chapel therefore played an important role in connecting the CNA community. A sign outside the chapel that read 'The family that prays together, stays together', displays the US military's active promotion of a strong (traditional/nuclear) family unit as discussed in section on soft power (chapter 3).¹⁹⁵ Though the Chapel had employed the Dutch Father Henry Scholtens as auxiliary chaplain, it represents yet another missed opportunity for interaction with the local population. Nonetheless, the Base Chapel had a lasting impact on the region through the introduction of Gospel music, as will be examined in the following section.

¹⁹² de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.198-199.

¹⁹³ van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.41

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p.41.

¹⁹⁵ van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.41; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.198.

Finally, the housing situation at CNA hindered social interaction between the Americans and the local population. As discussed before, Americans at CNA had two options regarding housing: on base or on the economy. Naturally, the troops living in the various barracks throughout the base had significantly less contact with locals than their off-base counterparts. However, the immediate housing shortage the Americans encountered forced them to explore options amongst the local population and created a fairly unique situation in Europe, where most US military personnel resided on the base or in gated communities.¹⁹⁶ Amersfoort, Woudenberg, Leersum, Soest, and Soesterberg became popular areas for American personnel because of its proximity to the base, though some Americans found housing as far away as Nieuwegein, Barneveld, and Bunschoten-Spakenburg.¹⁹⁷ Though these houses/apartments confronted many Americans with aspects of Dutch culture, particularly the small kitchens, steep stairs, and narrow roads, overall 'personal contact (outside work) with the Americans was rare'.¹⁹⁸

In the 1970s, the Dutch Ministry of Defence addressed the growing housing problem, and proposed plans (following a US request) to construct a new neighbourhood next to Soesterberg Air Base for the Americans. In 1978, the Apollo and Mercury neighbourhoods were completed, providing the US personnel with dependents 192 new family homes.¹⁹⁹ As examined in the economic section, these houses were modelled in an American style and included many conveniences/luxuries American families were accustomed to.²⁰⁰ The

¹⁹⁶ Loeber and Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron*, p.55.

¹⁹⁷ van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.44; Loeber and Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron*, p.55.

¹⁹⁸ Loeber and Sprenger, *32 TFS: Het enige "Koninklijke" Amerikaanse squadron*, p.55.; Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.57.

¹⁹⁹ 'Officiële overdracht van wijk Apollo aan gemeente Soest', *Soester Courant*, May 18, 1978.

²⁰⁰ 'Officiële overdracht van wijk Apoloo aan gemeente Soest', *Soester Courant*, May 18, 1978.; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.200.

American personnel was able to influence the house's design through 'family housing surveys conducted on Camp New Amsterdam during the previous four years'.²⁰¹ Moreover, these houses were built to accommodate the cyclical redeployment of American personnel as is evident in their minimal maintenance requirements, good insulation, and inclusion of 110 volt plugs (suitable for American appliances).²⁰² Recognizing a divide between the Dutch locals and the new American residents, the local government was cautious not to isolate the neighbourhood and inadvertently create an 'American ghetto'.²⁰³ Therefore, several festivities (including a fair, a drum festival, and performances by Caroline van Hemert and the Apollo men's choir) were hosted on the day of the opening ceremony to lay some contacts between the locals and their new neighbours.²⁰⁴ Nonetheless, though certainly not becoming a ghetto, the neighbourhood quickly adopted an American style of living and its residents had limited contact with the Dutch residents in bordering neighbourhoods.²⁰⁵ Furthermore, the housing shortage continued despite an expansion of the neighbourhood in 1985.²⁰⁶ However, to this day the neighbourhood remains an iconic reminder of the large American presence in Soesterberg.

²⁰¹ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, February 7, 1975.

²⁰² 'Officiële overdracht van wijk Apollo aan gemeente Soest', *Soester Courant*, May 18, 1978.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁴ 'Overdracht Apollo Wijk', *Soester Courant*, June 1, 1978.

²⁰⁵ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.200

²⁰⁶ Raadsbesluit d.d. 22-08-1985 tot het beschikbaarstellen van een krediet voor het bouwrijpmaken van de grond ten behoeve van de bouw van 50 woningen voor Amerikanen en 60 Bemog-woningen in de wijk Mercury in het gebied Zeisterspoor-Zuid, Gemeentebestuur Soest (1976-1987), Box 973, Eemland Archief, Amersfoort, Netherlands

6.1.2 From Wolfhound to Cheese-head: adjusting to Dutch culture

Military bases generally try to limit their disruption of the host society, and Camp New Amsterdam was no different. Upon arrival, new personnel were reminded of their role as ambassadors between the US and the Netherlands. An introductory pamphlet given to arriving personnel in the 1970s stressed that 'by making an effort to 'fit in' and taking an interest in the Dutch way of life, we can all make an important contribution to Dutch-American relations and keep the welcome mat out for future members of the squadron'.²⁰⁷ It is therefore no surprise that CNA provided its personnel with tips and information to help fit in and prevent 'culture-shock'.²⁰⁸ Firstly, new personnel was provided a mentor who would give them an overview of Dutch culture and lifestyle. Most tips seemed to be about practical matters such as the lack of heating in Dutch houses (for US standards) and that the cobblestone roads ensured 'shoes do not last as long as in the States'.²⁰⁹ Thereafter, those that were interested could visit the information office, where individuals could learn about Dutch culture, language, customs, and sight-seeing locations.²¹⁰

The personnel that did not want to visit the information office could find help in the *Soesterberg Interceptor*, CNA's weekly magazine. In addition to providing important information about USAF, CNA, US foreign politics, and upcoming activities/events, the magazine featured a section titled 'Dutch culture, society, laws'. Throughout the year this section presented a range of information about the Netherlands to help personnel adjust and inspire them to go sightseeing. The magazine often covered the 'Dutch centuries old

²⁰⁷ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; *Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.200.

²⁰⁸ Ibid, p.201.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p.198.

²¹⁰ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.48.

war with the sea...’, praising their irrigation and land reclamation projects with quotes such as ‘God made the earth, but the Dutch made the Netherlands’.²¹¹ Articles explaining the Dutch obsession with football (soccer) and the national competition, encouraged US personnel to engage such national hobbies. Moreover, in 1977 a section titled ‘Holland Happenings’ was added, outlining and providing information on upcoming events throughout the Netherlands: Carnival, opening of the Keukenhof, Queen’s Day, the Efteling, Zandvoort Circuit, Sinterklaas, etc.²¹² Concerning Dutch society the magazine provided tips like: the Dutch love for flowers, never closing their curtains, the conservative dress of the older generation, the youths love for denim, and the Dutch respect for privacy.²¹³ Moreover, the Dutch are ‘inveterate handshakers’ and use their bicycle for ‘just about everything the average American uses his car for’.²¹⁴ Finally, Dutch laws were a consistent feature in the *Soesterberg Interceptor*, with bike/moped laws and the introduction of seatbelts present in many issues.²¹⁵ Furthermore, alcohol and drug abuse was a reoccurring subject in the magazines, suggesting a problem amongst some CNA personnel. By highlighting the risks and intensive USAF crackdown on users through drug tests, CNA hoped to reduce the resulting incidents (mostly automobile accidents), as will be covered in the protests section. The many attempts CNA personnel made to adapt to Dutch culture/society reflect the idea that bases can become ‘politically invisible if its ways of doing business and seeing the world insinuate themselves into a community’s schools, consumer tastes, housing patterns,

²¹¹ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, July 23, 1976.

²¹² *Soesterberg Interceptor*, March 4, 1977.

²¹³ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; *Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.201

²¹⁴ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, July 23, 1976.

²¹⁵ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, January 10, 1975.; *Soesterberg Interceptor*, February 7, 1975.; *Soesterberg Interceptor*, December 7, 1984.

children's games, adult's friendships, jobs, and gossip', and thereby limit their impact on Dutch society.²¹⁶

6.2 Factors contributing to the social impact of the Americans on the region

6.2.1 Romances with the locals

Despite the many factors limiting the social interaction and impact of the American presence, the myriad of relationships between USAF personnel and Dutch locals indicates there was significant interaction. In fact, nowhere else were the numbers of US soldiers married to (non-US) white-women so high.²¹⁷ USAF pilots at CNA joked to the new arrivals that 'if you don't have a girlfriend within two weeks you're a homo'.²¹⁸ Local residents recall the popularity of USAF pilots amongst Dutch women, and the many relationships that were formed. The Spitfire Café, the 32nd TFS' favourite pub, became a popular place for Dutch and Americans to interact and witnessed many relationships emerge.²¹⁹ The café's popularity can be attributed to its close proximity to CNA, and its 'gezellige' (the Dutch word for cosy) atmosphere.²²⁰ In a 2008 interview with magazine *The Receptor* the Café's owner from 1970, Linda Grollitsch, recalls how Dutch girls were fond of the USAF members in uniform. In the 1980s, the parking was packed with large American cars and taxis bringing Dutch women.²²¹ Single and divorced women from the region (Utrecht and Zeist in particular)

²¹⁶ Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics*, p.66.

²¹⁷ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.202.

²¹⁸ Tim Dekkers, 'Een hond heeft meer rechten dan een homo', *Trouw*, June 16, 1987.; Note, the original reads: 'Iedereen zei tegen de nieuwkomers: als je binnen twee weken geen vriendin hebt, ben je een homo.'

²¹⁹ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.166.; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.202.

²²⁰ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.24.; Leendert van der Valk, 'Soesterberg van pilotendorp tot toeristenoord', *NRC*, December 6, 2008.

²²¹ Ingeborg Brounts, 'Café Spitfire', *The Receptor*, September 2012.

would flock to the café, sometimes coming in 'taxi busses that could fit ten people'.²²² The 'backroom', a separate smoking room where patrons shuffled, saw the emergence of many romances.²²³

At this time many Dutch families viewed the addition of an American to the family positively, especially because of the increased social status the American's wealth and culture brought.²²⁴ However, Grollitsch remarked that of the 100 Dutch women that followed their American lovers back to the US, 99 returned, usually because the soldiers' situation at home was far less luxurious than it had been at Soesterberg, where they enjoyed tax-free goods and stood out from the Dutch locals with their large TVs and cars.²²⁵ The language barrier many women faced also challenged the viability of the relationships. Grollitsch recalls translating for many of the Dutch women. Once she was called up in the middle of the night by a Dutch woman to explain to her American lover that he was snoring too much, and again in the morning to ask him what he wanted for breakfast.²²⁶ Grollitsch described the bar as 'one big family', and still has some contact with former Dutch and American patrons.²²⁷

Next to the Spitfire Café, Camp New Amsterdam was itself another popular place for USAF personnel to bring their Dutch dates. The base had numerous recreational facilities and ties to American culture that the locals enjoyed. For example, Josien Schipper, a Soesterberg resident who met her American lover (Dale) at Café Spitfire, recollects their

²²² Brounts, 'Café Spitfire'; Note the original reads: Er kwamen hordes gescheiden vrouwen uit Utrecht. 'Met van die taxibusjes waar ze met z'n tienden in konden.'

²²³ Brounts, 'Café Spitfire'

²²⁴ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.167.

²²⁵ Brounts, 'Café Spitfire'

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

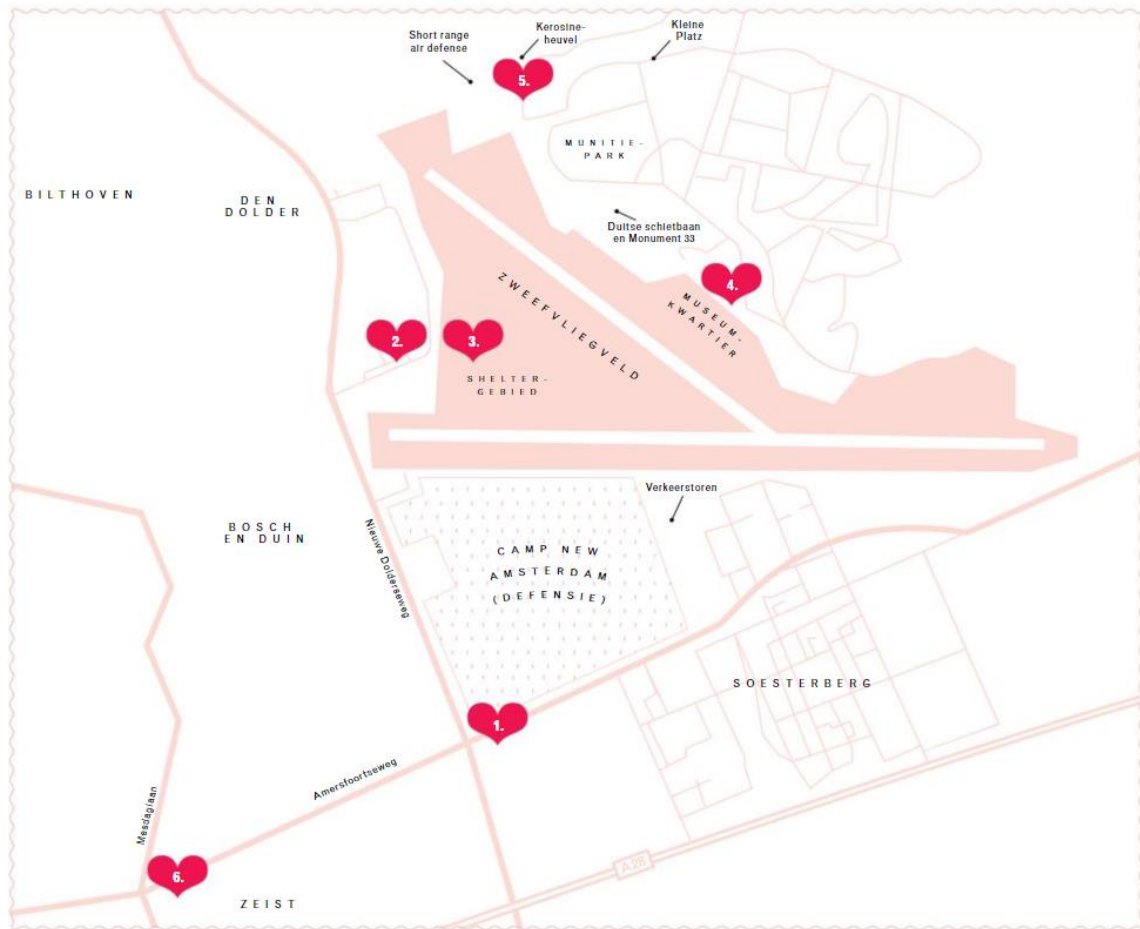
visits to CNA's theatre and the thrill of watching American movies with popcorn.²²⁸ Similarly, Ilse de Rijk, a resident of Soest, met her husband on the 4th of July festivities the base held in 1992.²²⁹ However, like most relationships between American and Dutch women at CNA, both relationships did not last. Moreover, as most relationships were short-lived and emerged at CNA or the Spitfire Café, their overall social impact on the region seems limited. Nonetheless, the inclusion of a map depicting 'The Looooove Route' in the September 2012 edition of *The Receptor* suggests these relationships have remained important to those involved (and possibly the children that resulted from it).

²²⁸ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.32.

²²⁹ Ibid., p.46.



THE *LOOOOOVE* ROUTE



'The Looooove Route' posted in *The Receptor* (September 2012). The locations mark (1) the McDrive at Huis ter Heide, (2) the 'hole in the fence', (3) Bunker 600, (4) the National Military Museum, (5) the 'kerosene hill', (6) Café Spitfire.

Though far less common than heterosexual relationships, Camp New Amsterdam also witnessed several homosexual relationships. The stark difference between the Dutch and American acceptance of homosexuals presented a serious threat for gay American personnel. In the Netherlands homosexuality had been decriminalized in 1811 (though the age of homosexual consent was raised to 21 between 1911-1971), allowed in the military from 1973, and largely accepted/tolerated by the public. In contrast, throughout the American presence at Soesterberg (1954-1994) homosexuality was not tolerated in the US,

especially in the military services.²³⁰ Until 1962, all US states persecuted gays through sodomy laws (only in 2003 were the last 14 states forced to abandon their sodomy laws because of the Lawrence v. Texas case).²³¹ Moreover, until 1993 gays were barred from US military service, reflecting the conservative family values described earlier. In fact, all US bases had an undercover police unit (Secret Investigation Police) which was tasked with finding secret homosexuals.²³² For this reason, most homosexual USAF personnel kept it secret, only coming out in safe private situations. This makes it difficult to determine the extent of homosexual relationships with locals. Nonetheless, a series of incidents with homosexuals at CNA received national attention.

One example from 1988 is Jack Green, a USAF Sergeant at CNA, who was discharged for homosexual behaviour with his Dutch boyfriend.²³³ Green sued the Dutch government, claiming that the Dutch border-customs informed CNA officials about his homosexuality, which led to his arrest in Germany and deportation back to the US.²³⁴ In 1987, CNA employee Tim Meagher, was caught by undercover police at a gay party with five CNA service members (two of which turned out to be undercover USAF police) and three locals.²³⁵ He was flown back to the US and forced to resign, but moved back to the Netherlands to live with his boyfriend in Utrecht.²³⁶ By 1987, 40 homosexuals had been caught and expelled from CNA.²³⁷ These stories were ill received by the Dutch public and

²³⁰ Note: LGBT rights in the US were expanded through a series of court cases between 1996 and 2015

²³¹ Note: The Lawrence v Texas case (2003) was monumental for LGBT rights in the US as the Court ruled that intimate consensual sexual conduct was a liberty protected under the 14th Amendment (which guarantees equal rights to all US citizens).

²³² Dekkers, 'Een hond heeft meer rechten dan een homo'

²³³ 'Homo-segeant eist schadevergoeding', *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, December 12, 1988.

²³⁴ Ibid.

²³⁵ Dekkers, 'Een hond heeft meer rechten dan een homo'

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid.

several publications emerged criticizing the US' (the US military in particular) treatment of homosexuals. Some of the titles included: 'A dog has more rights than a homo', 'The secret war against the homo-soldier', and 'US hunts homos'.²³⁸ Despite generating controversy in the Netherlands, the US military paid little attention to the criticisms, justifying the crackdown with the growing fear of AIDS, and reminding the public because of the extraterritoriality granted in the Soesterberg Technical Agreement US laws applied at the base. By bringing the US military's persecution of homosexuals to the Dutch public's attention, the homosexual relationships at CNA can be said to have had a national social impact.

6.2.2 Cultural Exchange

Through its clubs, music, TV and radio, and festivities the 32nd TFS' presence prompted several forms of cultural exchange which have had a lasting social impact on the region. Though most clubs at CNA restricted contact with the local population, two children clubs actively stimulated interaction. The *Soesterberg Interceptor* revealed that the American boy scouts actively cooperated/trained with Dutch boy scouts to complete certain certifications. A 1985 article titled 'Boy scouting crosses nations' reflected on the Dutch-American cooperation to fulfil their firemanship requirements.²³⁹ Similarly, American children could bring their Dutch friends to the teen club at the base.²⁴⁰ Both examples illustrate USAF's expectation that women and children socialize with locals, conveying

²³⁸ Dekkers, 'Een hond heeft meer rechten dan een homo'; 'VS jaagt op homo's', *De Telegraaf*, June 6, 1987.

²³⁹ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, May 31, 1985.

²⁴⁰ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.171.

American ideals and preventing the isolation of the American force.²⁴¹ Moreover, both cases demonstrate the US' use of soft power (as described in chapter 3), though the former likely happened unintentionally.

Two adult clubs at CNA that had a significant social impact, were the square dance club and the country club. CNA's square dance club, fittingly called 'The Holland Windmillers', was the Netherlands' first square and only dance club from 1957-1970.²⁴² By 1980, there were eleven square dance clubs in the Netherlands and the Holland Windmillers were performing at large festivals like the Third European Old Time and Bluegrass Festival.²⁴³ The Holland Windmillers could therefore be regarded as the pioneers of square dancing in the Netherlands, where square dancing has remained popular, in 2005 there were about 25 square dance clubs (including the Holland Windmillers) and is set to host the 10th European Square Dance Convention in Amsterdam in the summer of 2018.²⁴⁴

Similarly, Camp New Amsterdam's Country Club, 'The Dutch Stickbuddy Club', was the first of its kind in the Netherlands. Established in 1957, the club provided country entertainment for the base personnel, most of whom were big country fans.²⁴⁵ The most famous country band to emerge from CNA was 'The Wagon Wheels', whose mission/goal was to 'provide homegrown American entertainment for the American forces at CNA,

²⁴¹ Alvah, *Unofficial Ambassadors: American Military Families Overseas and the Cold War, 1946-1965*, p.77.

²⁴² Ibid., p.168.

²⁴³ 'Trots op squaredance vereniging uit CNA', *Soester Courant*, October 29, 1980.; 'Blues estafette '81: kwaliteit overtreft die van vorige jaren', *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden*, November 9, 1981.

²⁴⁴ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.177.; '10th European Square Dance Convention Amsterdam 2018: Beyond Mainstream', European Square Dance Convention, accessed June 2018, <http://www.europeanconvention2018.nl/>.

²⁴⁵ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.168.

Germany, and Belgium'.²⁴⁶ Next to the multiple performances for American personnel, the band performed about ten times per year for the Dutch public. The band helped CNA become a household name in the country magazine *Country Gazett*, whose reporter Hans van Dam frequently visited the base, and *Strictly Country*, which was located in Zeist.²⁴⁷ Furthermore, several Dutch country bands emerged in the region (The Summerset from Zeist, The Continental Uptight Band and Tenderfoot from Utrecht), but also in other areas with an American presence (The Tumbleweeds from Waalwijk, and Pussycat from South-Limburg).

The social impact of the music coming out of Camp New Amsterdam was by no means limited to country music. The New Cascades, a CNA rock band, was active in the early 1970s and performed in Amsterdam, Utrecht, and Amersfoort up to two times a week.²⁴⁸ Around the same time, Liberation of Man, soul band from CNA with three African-American singers and one white saxophonist, was gaining notoriety. With the growing popularity of disco music, Liberation of Man released its first singles in 1976, with 'Love's under control' and 'You're my number one' (which was written by a Dutch production team) making it into the Top-40 hits.²⁴⁹ The band quickly gained national and international attention and toured throughout Europe. Several Dutch bands from the region had credited CNA, particularly its funk/future scene, with influencing their music: Powerlight (a future band from Utrecht), De Novo Band (a future band from Zeist), and Urban Dance Squad (a rock/rap crossover from Utrecht). In fact, the famous Dutch Indo-Rock band The Blue Diamonds became acquainted

²⁴⁶ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.175.; note, the original quote reads 'Zelfgekweekt Amerikaans entertainment verzorgen voor de Amerikaanse strijdkrachten op CNA, in Duitsland en in België'.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, p.175.

²⁴⁸ Ibid, p.171.

²⁴⁹ Ibid, p.173.

with the American music by babysitting for CNA personnel living in Driebergen between 1957-1959.²⁵⁰ Working for the Americans allowed the duo to develop an American accent and gave them early access to the new hits from America (the Everly Brothers in particular), which they would reinterpret and release to the Dutch market, often before the original Everly Brothers version was available.²⁵¹ Some scholars have suggested that the availability of American radio in Indonesia, coming from the US radio stations in the Philippines, familiarized the Indonesians and Moluccans with American music, and this a reason why Indo-rock dominated the Dutch rock scene between 1956-1965.²⁵² The availability of US radio in the distant Dutch East Indies also illustrates the vast reach of the global US base network. Additionally, they were occasionally taken to CNA itself to shop where they could select jeans, t-shirts, or Lucky Strike cigarettes as a reward for babysitting. Such connections raised their status, and after their hit *Ramona* (1960), they began performing at US bases throughout Germany (where they were paid significantly more) and reached no.72 in the American Billboard pop chart.²⁵³ This represents just one case, where the American presence and affinity for music at CNA inspired a local Dutch band.

Another form of musical influence came from the Base Chapel, which introduced gospel music into the region. Unlike the other genres, gospel music was largely restricted to the chapel and not commercially promoted.²⁵⁴ Edith Kastelijn, a local resident, came into

²⁵⁰ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.167.

²⁵¹ Ibid, p.167.

²⁵² Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.167.; Note: The classification of Indo-rock is somewhat misleading as it also included Molokan bands. The bands rarely stated their heritage directly, but instead gave hints through colours: blue=Indonesian, black=Moluccan.

²⁵³ Mutsaers, Lutgard. "Indorock: An Early Eurorock Style." *Popular Music* 9, no. 3 (1990): 312

²⁵⁴ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.174.

contact with gospel music through her contacts at CNA and is credited as the first Dutchman to practice gospel music.²⁵⁵ Following the American departure in 1994, Edith started a gospel choir called 'Dutch Combined Mass Choir', and later released multiple albums like '*Oh...Happy Day!!*'²⁵⁶ Therefore, despite not attaining the same popularity as other American music styles, gospel music also outlived the American presence at Soesterberg.

Over the years, several prominent American musicians visited Camp New Amsterdam, leaving an impact beyond the US personnel as the Netherlands watched. Especially Jayne Mansfield's visit to the base in 1957 generated excitement throughout the Netherlands and would be later be credited 'the visit of the century'.²⁵⁷ Similarly, a local myth has emerged that Bill Haley visited the base during a 1958 tour of US bases in Germany. However, compared to the much larger bases in Germany, CNA's popularity amongst US celebrities was limited.

Finally, CNA's involvement with the American Forces Network connected many locals to American culture. Originally launched from London in 1943 and moved to Frankfurt am Main following the war, the broadcast covered American sports, news, and music.²⁵⁸ Despite its poor reception beyond the South and West Netherlands, it was extremely popular, especially amongst younger audiences. It was not until CNA constructed a new radio tower in 1964 that the base's personnel and the local residents gained a good connection.²⁵⁹ The construction of a larger tower in 1984 had an even greater reach of

²⁵⁵ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.174.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., p.174.

²⁵⁷ Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.165.; Note, the original quote reads: 'Bezoek van de Eeuw'

²⁵⁸ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.199.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., p.163.

20km, and provided the American personnel with access to American tv.²⁶⁰ CNA's radio presence was further expanded in 1986, when it gained its own affiliate channel 'AFN Soesterberg' (later changed to EagleFM). The base produced two local radio shows: the morning show Touch and Go, and the afternoon show Afterburner.²⁶¹ Dutch interest in AFN declined somewhat as new Dutch radio channels emerged that provided alternatives to the state-licensed stations located in Hilversum and played music which was popular amongst the youth. The language barrier AFN encountered also made competition with these new Dutch stations more difficult. Nonetheless, AFN Soesterberg remained popular in the region, especially when considering it is a military radio station. AFN Soesterberg was disbanded after the American departure, but different AFN channels continue to be broadcast from Americans stationed in Brunssum, Volkel, and bases in Germany and Belgium.

6.2.3 Events with the locals

A few times a year Soesterberg Air Base, and CNA, hosted events and opened its doors to the public. Though the base's modern equipment ensured it was a popular spot for plane spotters year-round, most public interest was shown during the open days. The Open Day of 1984 holds the base's record, attracting over 300,000 spectators.²⁶² Though visitors likely regarded the open days as a form of entertainment, the events also demonstrated USAF's power and successful cooperation with KLu. Other CNA events like 'bring your Dutch neighbour day' were more direct in their attempts to stimulate interaction between the

²⁶⁰ van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.45

²⁶¹ 'AFN Soesterberg', Aljo.net, accessed May 2018, <http://www.afn.aljo.net/soesterberg/soesterberg.html>.

²⁶² van den Brink et al., 'Wakend boven Nederland: De geschiedenis van het Amerikaanse 32ste squadron', p.47; de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.167.

American personnel and the local population.²⁶³ Moreover, the celebration of American holidays such as the 4th of July often attracted locals.

6.2.4 Protests

Despite the American efforts to adjust to the Dutch culture and the Dutch efforts to accommodate their American guests, protests against the base occurred throughout their entire 40-year presence. In *Embattled Garrisons*, Calder identifies three types of anti-base protesters: ideological protestors (who oppose the base on philosophical or political grounds), nationalistic protestors (who oppose the base primarily on cultural grounds and see it as an impeachment of the states' sovereignty), and pragmatic protestors (who oppose the base because of the way it functions).²⁶⁴ There were a few ideological protests against the base, as evidenced by the Communist Party of the Netherlands' (CPN) refusal to sign the agreement in the Dutch 1st and 2nd chambers, and the writing of 'Ami Go Home' and 'Geen H-Bom maar Vrede' on streets in Soesterberg shortly after the American arrival.²⁶⁵ However, these were limited, and were similar to the Communist attempts to prevent the establishment of American bases in France and West Germany. Regarding the Soesterberg case, nationalistic and especially pragmatic protestors were far more common.

The pragmatic protests towards the base began almost immediately after the American arrival, with locals frustrated by the increased sound pollution. However, it was when the 32nd TFS upgraded to the much louder supersonic F-100c Super Sabres in 1956,

²⁶³ Soesterberg Interceptor, May 2, 1975.

²⁶⁴ Calder, *Embattled Garrisons. Comparative Base Politics and American Globalism*, p.84.

²⁶⁵ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.175.; Mutsaers, *Door Het Geluid: Muzikale impact van Camp New Amsterdam op Soesterberg en omgeving (1954-1994)*, p.159.

that the number of complaints skyrocketed.²⁶⁶ Depending on their political affiliation, Dutch newspapers referred to these planes with differing levels of criticism. The *Utrechts Nieuwsbald* referred to them as ‘speed monsters’ (‘snelheidsmonsters’), whilst the communist newspaper *De Waarheid* labelled them ‘super-Yankee-noise machines’ (‘super-Yankee-knalpotten’).²⁶⁷ In 1962, the ‘Adviescommissie Geluidshinder door Vliegtuigen’ conducted research which revealed 58% of consulted residents had trouble maintaining conversation, 33% had sleeping troubles, and 66% reported moments of fear because of the sound.²⁶⁸ The report also strongly suggested adhering to a maximum noise level of 45KE (KE limits reflect the total noise pollution a base can create over the course of a year). The local protests/complaints sparked new regulations, forcing the planes to fly at a minimum altitude of 2km and mainly practice above the North Sea.²⁶⁹ However, complaints continued, and in 1969 the 32nd TFS (and the stationed KLu units) implemented several additional precautions to limit the sound pollution. Practice flights were (largely) restricted to Monday-Friday between 8:00-17:00, pilots had to adhere to designated flight paths more strictly and reach the minimum flying height of 2km as quickly as possible, and trainings incorporated more manoeuvres to reduce the number of training flights.²⁷⁰

Nonetheless, a 1975 report found a significant increase in noise pollution between 1970-1975, which easily surpassed the suggested 45KE limit, and concluded the Dutch

²⁶⁶ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.183.; van der Vegt. *Take-off: De opbouw van de Nederlandse luchtmacht 1945-1973*, p.140.

²⁶⁷ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.183

²⁶⁸ Stukken betreffende de geluidsbelasting bij Bosch en Duin door vliegveld Soesterberg 1978-1979, Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 22.13.113, Box 388, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands.

²⁶⁹ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013*; Bakermat Soesterberg, p.184.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, p.184

commander had addressed the issue 'very poorly'.²⁷¹ The report included five demands from the locals: that the plane and helicopter traffic be halved, that the military presence be moved to De Peel air base, that the commander adhere to previous agreements, that Soesterberg only serve a military function, and that a sound-tax and damage compensation be implemented.²⁷² The local residents felt they were being treated worse than residents living around other air bases, stating 'the people around Soesterberg are not less than those in Eindhoven!'²⁷³ However, few if any of these demands were met, and complaints continued. The most notable case of local complaints about sound pollution came in 1978 from the residents of Ons Belang, a neighbourhood adjacent to the base. After years of complaints and reports, the Dutch government decided in 1978 that the 78 houses would be demolished, and the residents relocated.²⁷⁴ The introduction of the new (quieter) McDonnell Douglas F-15 Eagles, and the construction of 'blast shields' and a 'deadman's tie-down' to limit the noise of the planes' power checks came too late for these residents.²⁷⁵ However, complaints continued to come in that the sound and smell of exhausts killed the trees and made life impossible for man and animal.²⁷⁶

Furthermore, locals living next to the base complained about the pollution caused by the crowds of plane-spotters the base attracted. In 1978, residents of Postweg 77-93 (a road located next to the base's runway and offering a great view of the aircraft) filed a complaint

²⁷¹ Stukken betreffende de geluidsbelasting bij Bosch en Duin door vliegveld Soesterberg 1978-1979, Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951-1986, 22.13.113, Box 388, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands.

²⁷² Ibid.

²⁷³ Ibid.; note original reads; 'De mensen nabij de basis Soesterberg zijn toch niets minder als in Eindhoven!'

²⁷⁴ Ibid.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.; Note: the use of blast shields and a deadman's tiedown made the warming of the engines more efficient and redirects some of the sound

²⁷⁶ Ibid.; Note the original reads; 'Hierdoor stikt de omgeving in de uitlaatgassen, sterven de bomen en het urenlange lawaai maat mens en dier het leven onmogelijk. (wist U dat?)'

to the Dutch Minister of Defence (Willem Scholten) when the forested area between the road and the runway was cut down. The residents complained that the trespassing plane-spotters (who hoped to get a better view of the runway), entered private property, urinated in private gardens, damaged private property, posed a fire hazard to the straw-roofed houses by bringing barbeques and lighting open fires, caused traffic problems, and reportedly committed theft in a few cases.²⁷⁷ In response to the myriad of complaints, the trees were replanted the following year (1979).

In short, though the Dutch and American command was aware of the local's complaints about the base's pollution and introduced new regulations and the latest equipment to combat the problem, the locals remained unconvinced. By the late 1970s, many concerned locals believed all future suggestions 'were doomed to fail'. Nonetheless, it should be noted that this group was a minority, and many local residents simply accepted it, calling it 'the sound of freedom'.²⁷⁸ For these locals the sound pollution was a by-product of the NATO defences which protected the 'free' West from a perceived Soviet threat.

Pragmatic protesters were also concerned about the many car and aircraft accidents occurring at the base. Accidents with aircraft were especially common when the Super Sabre and Starfighters were in use. During this four-year period, six planes were lost and multiple deadly accidents occurred.²⁷⁹ Three accidents in particular caused public concern. On November 20th, 1956, a Super Sabre crashed sending a 20kg piece of metal through a

²⁷⁷ Stukken betreffende de geluidsbelasting bij Bosch en Duin door vliegveld Soesterberg 1978-1979, Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951-1986, 22.13.113, Box 388, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands.

²⁷⁸ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.169.; Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*.

²⁷⁹ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.185.

residential house located behind the runway.²⁸⁰ On May 28th, 1957, an American pilot was killed when he refused to activate his ejection seat to steer the malfunctioning plane away from a housed area.²⁸¹ The most deadly incident occurred on November 14th, 1957, when a Super Sabre caught fire after take-off and crashed into the Kolonel Palmkazerne (a Dutch military barracks in Bussum), killing 6 and injuring 15.²⁸² An investigation revealed that though the pilot (who escaped with the ejection seat) had crashed three planes in the last 14 months, technical malfunctions were to blame (accidents with the Super Sabre were very common).²⁸³ However, it is important to highlight that the 32nd TFS was amongst the best trained and most well equipped units in the USAF, winning the Outstanding Unit Award in 1958 despite the string of accidents.²⁸⁴ Therefore, as the USAF aircraft became more reliable the number of accidents decreased dramatically: 11 in the 1950s, 6 in the 1960s (though in one of these was a fully armed Delta Dagger caught fire in the Zulu Hanger sparking serious unrest), 3 in the 1970s, 0 in the 1980s, and 1 in the 1990s.²⁸⁵ In addition to this good record, the quality of the 32nd TFS personnel and equipment is evident in their attainment of the Hughes Achievement Award, the highest USAF award, three times (1966, 1979, 1980).²⁸⁶

Though their flight-record was impressive, the 32nd TFS' list of car accidents was not. Drunk driving was a significant problem at the base and resulted in many of the automobile accidents. To combat this problem, the base organized AA meetings, showed movies about the 'alcoholism and drug abuse', offered help, and stressed the dangers of drunk driving,

²⁸⁰ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.185.

²⁸¹ Ibid, p.185.

²⁸² Ibid, p.185.

²⁸³ Ibid, p.185.

²⁸⁴ Ibid, p.184.

²⁸⁵ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.188; P. van Oest, J. van Oest-Rhodes and J. Plaisier, *32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron Operations*. (Doorn: Military Publications International, 1981), p.4.

²⁸⁶ van Oest, van Oest-Rhodes and Plaisier, *32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron Operations*, p.24.

“Spot ‘em, avoid ‘em: beware of impaired drivers”.²⁸⁷ Moreover, in the *Soesterberg Interceptor* readers were constantly reminded to use seatbelts, giving examples of the lives they saved. In December 1984, icy roads caused eight accidents in 45 minutes, but fortunately there were no casualties because ‘seat belts were worn, and they worked’.²⁸⁸ Nonetheless, the reckless drunk driving of USAF personnel was common knowledge amongst the local population, and undoubtedly a source of frustration.²⁸⁹

Over the course of the American presence, ideological protesters also began to emerge at the base. Protests kicked off in the 1960s when the Vietnam War (and the Dutch government’s support for it) dominated Dutch politics.²⁹⁰ However, it was the US announcement that it would station Tomahawk and Pershing II missiles and the ‘launch on warning protocol’ that caused the protests to grow significantly in the 1980s.²⁹¹ Perhaps the most memorable protests occurred on the 24th of May 1982, when a few hundred women established a ‘women’s peace camp’ outside of the base to protest the placement of the new US missile systems and the continued expansion of the US (and NATO) military industrial complex.²⁹² Petra Hunsche, a local who participated in the women’s peace camp, explained how the protestors hoped their actions would start a broad social discussion over disarmament.²⁹³ However, the military and political importance of Soesterberg Air Base seemed to be more important for the Dutch government, which did little to address the

²⁸⁷ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, January 10, 1975.; *Soesterberg Interceptor*, May 17, 1985.

²⁸⁸ *Soesterberg Interceptor*, December 21, 1984.

²⁸⁹ Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.81.

²⁹⁰ *Ibid*, p.63.

²⁹¹ Macleish, *The Bases of Empire: The Global Struggle Against U.S. Military Posts*, p.53.; Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.63.

²⁹² Stuurman, *De Verhalen Achter Vliegbasis Soesterberg 1954-1994: De Invloed van Veertig Jaar Amerikaanse Aanwezigheid Op de Omgeving*, p.70.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, p.70.

protestors' concerns and forcibly cleared the camp on the 14th of October 1982.

Nonetheless, the women's peace camp attracted national and international attention to the base and the Americans stationed there. Moreover, a statue was placed in 1982 to commemorate the anti-missile demonstrations, firmly cementing the actions of the women's peace camp into the history of Soesterberg. Throughout the 1980s protest actions continued, reaching crowds of up to 12,000 people. On the 12th of May 1984, a peace demonstration was held at the base nuclear where protestors made a human chain around the base. Again, though the protest gained national attention it had little direct impact on Dutch and American military cooperation.²⁹⁴ The protest movements that occurred around Soesterberg Air Base in the 1970s and 1980s are firmly embedded in the regions collective memory, and have been memorialized by Siemen Bolhuis' sculpture 'Doorbraak' which is located on the Amersfoortweg (the main road leading to the base, and connecting Utrecht and Amersfoort).

6.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, the Americans had a sizeable social impact on the region. Though the range of facilities and clubs offered at Camp New Amsterdam worked to isolate the Americans from the local population, people were aware of their presence and its consequences. The construction of the Apollo and Mercury neighbourhoods is a good example of how the Americans isolated themselves, but still left a lasting impression on the region. Moreover, the Americans and their dependents actively tried to adjust to Dutch

²⁹⁴ Note: though the protests had little direct impact they certainly contributed to the larger protest movements throughout Europe in the 1980s, which caused the US and USSR to sign the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty on December 8, 1987, which banned short and medium range nuclear and conventional missiles.

culture to limit the social disruption caused by the base. Despite the increased complaints from locals concerning sound pollution, this was fairly successful. Nevertheless, the social clubs and culture the US personnel brought over, introduced the region to aspects of American culture that remain to this day. Furthermore, the many romances between US personnel and Dutch locals left a lasting impression on many locals (despite most relationships not lasting very long). Finally, the protests that manifested at the base during the 1980s belong to an important and well-known period in Dutch history. Overall, the Americans at CNA had a significant social impact on the region.

Chapter 7: Comparing CNA's socioeconomic impact to that of American bases in West Germany

Comparing the socioeconomic impact of the 32nd TFS on the region with that of American bases in West Germany helps place the 32nd TFS' influence in a larger perspective. As this thesis is primarily focused on Soesterberg Air Base the comparison will be brief compared to the extensive literature that exists on American military bases in West Germany. Nonetheless, two major factors contributed to the different experiences Dutch and West Germans had with the stationed American troops. Firstly, the American presence in West Germany was far greater than in the Netherlands. Secondly, where the American presence in Soesterberg (and the Netherlands as a whole) was viewed as a cooperative military effort, the American military presence in West Germany was more akin to an occupying force, especially until 1955 when West Germany joined NATO.

During the Cold War, over eighty percent of the US troops in Europe were stationed in bases throughout West Germany.²⁹⁵ In 1989, 511,008 American individuals, of which about 227,000 were civilian family members, lived and/or worked on approximately 800 US military bases in West Germany.²⁹⁶ Forty of these military bases had over 2,500 personnel and eleven had over 10,000 personnel, making the American presence at Camp New Amsterdam (which at its peak totalled 3,500 Americans of which 2,100 dependents) seem small in comparison.²⁹⁷ The immense scale of the US military presence in West Germany naturally caused a larger social and economic impact.

²⁹⁵ Andreas Klemmer and Keith Cunningham, "Restructuring the US Military Bases in Germany: Scope, Impacts, and Opportunities" (Bonn: Bonn International Center for Conversion, 1995), p.4

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p.10,30,31

²⁹⁷ Volk, *The Sun Never Sets ...: Confronting the Network of Foreign U.S. Military Bases*, p.233.

7.1 Economic impact of American bases in West Germany

At the end of the Cold War, approximately 62,000 West Germans were employed at US Army bases, 5,800 at USAF bases, and about 5,000 were employed by the German government at the US military base in Berlin.²⁹⁸ US bases located in rural areas were often ‘the principle employers for the local workforce’.²⁹⁹ Moreover, the US bases paid the German employees ‘on scales in line with those prevailing in German industry’, making them ‘a competitive, desirable employer’.³⁰⁰ This is a stark different to the Soesterberg case, where the Soesterberg Technical Agreement ensured the RNLAf was ‘responsible for the employment and administration of Netherlands civilian personnel utilized by the USAF’.³⁰¹ Therefore, the US bases in West Germany played a far more prominent role in the regions’ economy compared to Soesterberg, as they directly employed a sizable German workforce.

Additionally, the private consumption and expenditures of the Americans residing at the large US bases also brought economic opportunities for the local populations.³⁰² Again, the size of the bases in West Germany caused this to have a greater impact than US bases in the Netherlands, like CNA. Much like in Soesterberg, the housing shortage in West Germany made, renting to US military personnel very profitable. ‘Americans were able to pay higher rents than the Germans, and so exorbitant rents were charged’, reflecting a similar mentality of Dutch renters around Soesterberg.³⁰³ However, unlike Soesterberg, German

²⁹⁸ Klemmer and Cunningham, “Restructuring the US Military Bases in Germany: Scope, Impacts, and Opportunities”, p.28

²⁹⁹ Ibid, p.30

³⁰⁰ Ibid, p.67-68

³⁰¹ Technical Agreement Soesterberg (1954), Inventaris van het archief van de Chef van de Luchtmachtstaf (CLS) van het Ministerie van Defensie 1951–1986, 2.13.113, Box 2209, Nationaal Archief, The Hague, Netherlands

³⁰² Klemmer and Cunningham, “Restructuring the US Military Bases in Germany: Scope, Impacts, and Opportunities”, p.31

³⁰³ Arthur Browder, “The Impact of the American Presence on Germans and German-American Grass Roots Relations in Germany, 1950-1960.” (Louisiana State University and Agricultural & Mechanical College, 1987), p.78

landlords tried to justify their high prices with the 'specious argument that the Americans should pay to rebuild the houses they had destroyed in the war'.³⁰⁴ Nonetheless, the Dutch and West Germans active in the private housing sector both made huge profits from the Americans looking for housing outside their bases.

Finally, a major difference between the economic impact of the US military bases in West Germany and Soesterberg was the scale of the black markets that emerged. The black market that emerged around Camp New Amsterdam was miniscule and amateur compared to the large organized black market around US military bases in West Germany (and Austria). The scarcity of products, an unstable currency, high taxes, and the possibility for American personnel to purchase goods tax-free at the base Commissaries (albeit in rationed amounts) made the black market lucrative for both the American soldiers and the West Germans.³⁰⁵ Similar to the black market that emerged around Soesterberg cigarettes, coffee, tea, sugar, alcohol, and gasoline were favoured items on the black market. However, in West Germany 'entire smuggling rings operated in the vicinity of military bases and even crossed over international boundaries'.³⁰⁶ In one case German smugglers operating around the US base in Zweibruecken, used an American car (with the US soldiers consent) to avoid inspection when transporting their black market products into France.³⁰⁷ The thriving black market in West Germany severely strained German-American relations, and was a major reason Dutch policy-makers included preventative measures in the Soesterberg Technical Agreement to limit its emergence at Camp New Amsterdam.³⁰⁸

³⁰⁴ Browder, "The Impact of the American Presence on Germans and German-American Grass Roots Relations in Germany, 1950-1960", p.78

³⁰⁵ Ibid., p.212

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p.212

³⁰⁷ Ibid., p.212

³⁰⁸ de Winter, *Een Eeuw Militaire Luchtvaart in Nederland 1913-2013; Bakermat Soesterberg*, p.175.

7.2 Social impact of American bases in West Germany

Compared to the Soesterberg case, the social impact of the Americans in West Germany was immense. The fact that the Americans arrived as an occupying force played a large role in their impact on German culture. Following the war, the US military government established the Information Control Division to influence what the population 'saw, heard, and read'.³⁰⁹ Information Programs and Cultural Policies were implemented by the US military government, and influenced German 'literature, theatre, films, music, styles, city planning, traffic management, architecture, production management, marketing methods, and even election campaigning'.³¹⁰ By the 1960s 'the widely recognized markers of post-war popular American culture in Europe, found general acceptance into West German culture', demonstrating the successes of the American attempts to influence West German culture.³¹¹ Similar to Soesterberg, where the first McDrive in the Netherlands opened in 1987 and several restaurants adopted American cuisine, the American presence in West Germany ensured that by the 1980s fast food had become a 'permanent fixture in West Germany'.³¹²

The West German case adheres to two of Calder's theories described in chapter 2. Firstly, though the US presence in West Germany began as an occupation, usually a source of resentment, it was able to provide security, reducing the public resentment that often accompanies military occupations. Furthermore, the American's displaced a totalitarian

³⁰⁹ Browder, "The Impact of the American Presence on Germans and German-American Grass Roots Relations in Germany, 1950-1960", p.171

³¹⁰ Ibid, p.195

³¹¹ John Lemza, *American Military Communities in West Germany: Life in the Cold War Badlands, 1945–1990* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2016), p.122.

³¹² Ibid, p.126.

regime, eventually introducing a stable democracy and framing themselves as protectors of these new freedoms (especially compared to the Soviet rule in East Germany). In this regard the West German case adheres to Calder's 'occupation hypothesis'. Secondly, Calder's 'contact hypothesis', outlined in chapter 2, examined the West German case and found that more social interaction between the two groups generally led to more conflict. In contrast to Soesterberg (which was in a relatively densely populated area but still a bit outside the larger cities), many of the US bases in West Germany were located in or close to large urban centres, resulting in a high amount of social interaction between military personnel and the locals. Moreover, the arrival of large numbers of black American soldiers had a far greater impact on German society than the few that were stationed at Soesterberg. Before the civil rights movements in the US, black US soldiers often enjoyed more freedoms than in the Netherlands and Germany, as they still suffered from segregation back home. However, the memories/stories of black French soldiers from the First World War and the widespread racist propaganda propagated during the Third Reich, resulted in suspicion towards them from the German population and a US military command that discouraged inter-racial marriages.³¹³ Such racial tensions were less apparent in Soesterberg, though they likely also existed.

7.3 Conclusion

In summary, compared to Camp New Amsterdam, the American presence in West Germany had a greater socioeconomic impact on the region for two reasons. Firstly, there

³¹³ Browder, "The Impact of the American Presence on Germans and German-American Grass Roots Relations in Germany, 1950-1960", p.212

were far more US bases spread throughout the country, and these were much larger than CNA. Hereby. Therefore, though there was a similar indirect influence of the Americans (private consumption/purchases, housing) the effects were far greater in West Germany. Secondly, where the US presence in CNA was a form of military cooperation between the Dutch and American Air Forces, the US military presence in West Germany began (and until 1955 was) as a military occupation. Therefore, the Americans were more involved in bringing changes to the country's culture, economy, and military. In contrast, through the Soesterberg Technical Agreement, the Dutch government retained control over CNA, the US employment of Dutch workers, and US military activities. Overall, the socioeconomic impact of the Americans is comparable, though bigger and more intentional in the West German case.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

In conclusion, the 40 year long American presence at Soesterberg has added yet another chapter to the regions long history with military aviation and has become a prominent part of the regions identity despite the relatively limited economic and social interaction the Americans had with the local population when compared to the American socioeconomic impact in West Germany. This thesis has analysed the American presence in an attempt to answer the research question: 'What social and economic effects did the US presence at Soesterberg Air Base have on the region?' In summary, the thesis found that even though the economic impact was limited (especially when compared to the American presence in West Germany), the Wolfhounds' social impact was significant, despite their isolation from the local population.

Using the theories of base politics and soft power, this thesis has sought to answer the sub questions and explain the reasons the 32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron was stationed at Camp New Amsterdam. Dutch security concerns played an important role in the initial invitation to the Americans. Dutch fears of German and Soviet aggression, and the possibility of extensive American assistance in the rebuilding the Dutch Armed Forces (particularly the Royal Dutch Air Force (KLu)) were crucial motivators. Furthermore, the new Atlanticist orientation the Dutch government adopted after the Second World War made strong political and military ties to the US necessary. In contrast, Soesterberg offered the Americans a large well-equipped military base that filled an important position in the defence of Northern Europe. Moreover, the base was well situated within the extensive global American base network, granted the US favourable conditions through the Soesterberg Technical Agreement, and ensured the Netherlands was firmly within the

American sphere of influence. As both parties had clear military incentives for their military cooperation, it reflects a 'marriage of convenience rather than love'.³¹⁴

The economic impact of the American presence in Soesterberg can best be described as limited and sporadic. The base was designed to be largely self-sufficient, providing its personnel with all the necessary facilities, and supplying these through transport within the existing base network in West Germany. Moreover, the large variety of recreational facilities and convenient tax exemptions at base stores further deterred American personnel from frequenting local alternatives. Though some individuals may have seen economic benefits from the American presence, overall, it remained limited for the region.

Similarly, the large size of the base and wide range of facilities it contained further isolated the personnel and restricted contact with locals. Moreover, the USAF's active attempts to integrate/adjust to Dutch society, to reduce the social pressure caused by the base, worked to limit American social influence. Nonetheless, the Wolfhounds had a significant impact on the region, introducing new clubs, music styles, and creating the iconic Apollo and Mercury neighbourhoods. Future research could compare the extensive US base network that existed (and partly remains) in Europe to the new US bases that have emerged throughout the Middle East since 2003.

Despite the multiple factors working to isolate the base and the limited scope of its economic and social impact, the American presence at Camp New Amsterdam has remained an iconic aspect of the regions military history. In 2014, the importance of Soesterberg Air Base and the 32nd TFS was reaffirmed with the opening of the Park Vliegveld Soesterberg. The park houses the National Military Museum (which prominently displays some of the

³¹⁴ Loeber, *Dutch-American Relations 1945-1965: A Partnership Illusions and Facts*, p.104.

gear and a Delta Dagger used by the 32nd TFS) and has opened the non-active parts of the base to the public, bringing this part of Dutch and American history back into the spotlight, and granting the base the rightful prestige it deserves as the cradle of Dutch military aviation and (second) home of the American 32nd Tactical Fighter Squadron.

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