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ENGLAND'S ROLE IN NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO THE
TWELVE YEARS TRUCE, 1607-1609

By

Richard S. Christen

B.S., Minot State College, 1975

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
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Approved by:


Chairman, Board of Examiners


Dean, Graduate School


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On February 25, 1607, Friar Jan Neyen, commissary-general of the Franciscans in the Spanish Netherlands, secretly arrived at the Dutch town of Ryswick. Late the same day a carriage transported Neyen, disguised as a traveling salesman, to The Hague where he met with representatives of the Dutch States-General. Neyen's visit initiated two months of clandestine negotiations to halt the fighting between the United Provinces and the Spanish Netherlands.¹ The bargaining reached fruition in April with the announcement of an eight-month armistice, temporarily checking the war that had raged in the Low Countries since the 1560s.² For the next two years efforts to conclude a more permanent peace dominated the European diplomatic scene. These negotiations directly involved France, England, and Spain, as well as the Low Countries, while the rest of the continent watched in anticipation.

¹Some explanation of my use of geographic terms is necessary. "Netherlands" and "Low Countries" refer to all seventeen provinces under Hapsburg rule before the revolt. "Spanish Netherlands" and "Flanders" apply to the ten southern provinces that remained loyal to Spain while "United Provinces," "States," and "Dutch" designated the rebellious North. The dates used in this essay are Old Style, except that the year is taken to begin January 1. For letters originally dated New Style, both dates are given.

²For a more complete narrative of these negotiations, see John Lothrop Motley, History of the United Netherlands from the Death of William the Silent to the Twelve Years Truce, 1609 (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1900), VI, pp. 60-81; and Jan den Tex, Oldenbarneveldt, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), II, pp. 363-72.

The Netherlands, ruled by the Hapsburgs since the marriage of Mary of Burgundy to Maximilian of Austria, united with Spain upon the election of the Spanish king, Charles I, as Holy Roman Emperor in 1519. Charles respected the rights and traditions of the Low Countries, but his son Philip, who succeeded as king in 1556, imposed political, economic, and religious restrictions that led to open rebellion in the seventeen provinces. These states were never a homogenous unit, however, and as the fighting progressed, a division developed along the Rhine River. In the 1580s Spanish troops led by the Duke of Parma regained control of the southern provinces. This action along with expanding religious, cultural, and economic differences resulted in a split between the North and South. Despite this division, the revolt continued as the seven northern states persisted in their battle against Spanish armies stationed in the reconciled South.³

England and France, Spain's two major rivals, aided the Dutch in their struggle for independence. For France,

³The split in the Netherlands remains a source of much historical debate. For two interpretations see Peter Geyl, The Revolt of the Netherlands, 1555-1609 (London: Williams and Forgate, Ltd., 1932); and Charles Wilson, Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt of the Netherlands (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), pp. 1-20.

the revolt represented another episode in its long-standing rivalry with the Hapsburgs. Although domestic problems and an eagerness to maintain the peace negotiated at Cateau-Cambrésis (1559) kept the French from a public commitment, their desire to undermine Spanish interests in the Netherlands prompted some support for the Dutch.⁴ French involvement in the affairs of the Low Countries increased with the accession of Henry IV to the throne in 1589. Philip II, who had allied with French Catholics in the violent, internecine religious wars that nearly destroyed France, refused to acknowledge the Protestant Henry as king and employed the Duke of Parma to prevent him from occupying Paris. This ploy failed, however, and in 1595 Henry declared war against Philip and allied himself with the Dutch.

Despite Elizabeth of England's lack of sympathy for rebels, a growing fear of Spanish power and a desire for trade in the Netherlands eventually generated English support for the Dutch cause. When the conquests by Parma and the loss of Dutch leadership after the assassination of William the Silent threatened to end the revolt, Elizabeth dispatched the Earl of Leicester and a sizeable army to the Low Countries. The Spanish responded to

⁴Irene Mahoney, Royal Cousin, the Life of Henry IV of France (New York: Doubleday, 1970), p. 103.

England's increased support of the rebels by declaring war and, in 1588, launching the ill-fated Armada. This series of events strengthened England's ties to the United Provinces. They were now formally allied with the Dutch and despite Elizabeth's reluctance to pursue actively the war with Spain, England shouldered a large portion of the Dutch war costs.⁵

The fighting in the Low Countries persisted into the early 17th century as Maurice of Nassau, commander of the Dutch armies after the death of his father, William the Silent, and Ambrogio Spinola, leader of the Spanish troops, exchanged a series of successes and failures. By 1604 the fighting had reached a stalemate. Understandably supporters of peace emerged in both the United Provinces and the Spanish Netherlands.

Peace treaties signed by France and Spain at Vervins in 1598 and by England and Spain at London in 1604 crippled Dutch chances for a military victory and further stimulated their desire to end the fighting. Johann Van Oldenbarneveltdt, advocate of Holland and the most influential political figure in the North, led the movement for peace. Aware that his war-weary and financially drained nation could

⁵For an excellent interpretative work on Elizabeth's policy toward the Dutch, see Wilson, Queen Elizabeth and the Revolt in the Netherlands.

not wage an effective war without substantial outside aid, Oldenbarneveldt espoused peace on the condition that Dutch independence be recognized.⁶

Archduke Albert, named sovereign of the Spanish Netherlands by Philip II in 1598, also longed for peace. The presence of a Spanish army for over forty years and the Dutch blockade of Antwerp had ravaged the land and economy of Flanders. With no end to the destruction in sight, Albert seized the initiative for peace. Early in 1607 he dispatched Friar Neyen to The Hague, which resulted in the eight-month armistice and an agreement to negotiate a permanent peace based on Dutch independence.

Peace negotiations did not commence immediately, however, as the Dutch refused to enter formal talks without Spain's ratification of the cease-fire and acknowledgment of their autonomy. Despite the recognition of the Spanish Netherlands as a sovereign state by his father, the new Spanish king, Philip III, exercised considerable control over their affairs. Negotiations with the Archduke, no matter how fruitful, would be meaningless without Spanish approval.⁷

⁶In early 1607 it was reported that Dutch expenditures exceeded their revenues by 20,000 pounds per month.

⁷For more complete information on the roles of Archduke Albert and Philip III in governing the Spanish Netherlands, see Charles Howard Carter, The Secret Diplomacy of the Hapsburgs, 1598-1625 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 77-87.

While the advocates of peace awaited news from Spain, the French and English involved themselves in discussions with the Dutch. Both Henry IV and Elizabeth's successor, James I, were aware that a reconciliation would affect them and were determined to protect their nation's interests. Initially Henry disapproved of the armistice. Spanish involvement in the Dutch war had freed him to concentrate on domestic affairs and to prepare for the eventual renewal of his struggle with the Hapsburgs. Even before the cease-fire, Henry suggested to James that an alliance be formed with the States to prevent peace. However, when the English rejected this proposal, the French monarch was hesitant to intervene alone. In an effort to persuade the Dutch to continue the war without French aid, he dispatched a delegation headed by Pierre Jeannin to The Hague. One of the shrewdest politicians in France, Jeannin brought to his post a wealth of diplomatic experience gained as Henry's opponent in the French civil wars. He soon found Henry's goals to be unrealistic; without aid, the Dutch would lose the war. Faced with the prospect of a united Hapsburg state to his north, Henry accepted Jeannin's advice and began to advocate a peace that guaranteed Dutch independence.⁸

⁸Maurice Lee, Jr., James I and Henry IV; an Essay in English Foreign Policy, 1603-10 (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1970), pp. 79-83.

The sudden armistice forced James, like Henry, to choose between financing a war or promoting a peace. Although realizing that a prolongation of the conflict favored English interests, James was unwilling and unable to finance the Dutch. Moreover, he considered himself a man of peace and was indignant when he was not asked to serve as a mediator.⁹ James's eagerness to convince the Dutch of his friendship without endangering his rapprochement with Spain increased the difficulty of his decision. Faced with these dilemmas, James and his Secretary of State, Robert Cecil, attempted to formulate a foreign policy that would enable England to play a major role in the outcome of the negotiations at The Hague. This essay deals with the complicated and confusing story of these efforts.

Although the first few months of 1607 presented James and Cecil with several opportunities to stymie Dutch and Flemish peace efforts, they showed little inclination to do so. In January Ralph Winwood, the English ambassador

⁹Cecil to Winwood, 2 April 1607; Cecil to Cornwallis, 12 April 1607, E. Sawyer, ed., Memorials of the Affairs of State in the Reigns of Q. Elizabeth and K. James I. Collected chiefly from the original papers of Sir . . . Ralph Winwood, vol. II (London, 1725), pp. 288-9 and 302-3. Hereafter cited as Winwood.

in the Netherlands, reported to Cecil, Henry's desire to prolong the fighting through the formation of a tripartite alliance.¹⁰ The response to this overture was cool. William Browne, assistant-governor at the Dutch cautionary town of Flushing, believed the French had proposed the league only to make the States feel that James's backwardness was forcing them to peace.¹¹ Cecil questioned the wisdom of risking a war that would not guarantee "some access to power to this Kingdom [England] to countervail the hazard and expense, which it would be forced to undergo."¹² The English reaction disappointed those who had looked to James for financial support to protract the war. Winwood lamented that the failure of England and France to cooperate would cause hardship for the Dutch, while Prince Maurice vented his anger against James who

¹⁰Winwood to Cecil, 14 January 1607, M. S. Giuseppi and D. McN. Lockie, eds., Report on the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Salisbury, vols. XIX-XX, Historical Manuscripts Commission publication (London, 1930-65), XIX, pp. 7-8. Hereafter cited as Salisbury.

¹¹Browne to Lisle, 9 February 1607, W. A. Shaw and G. D. Owen, eds., Report on the Manuscripts of Lord De L'Isle and Dudley, vols. III-IV, Historical Manuscripts Commission publication (London, 1936-40), III, p. 349. Hereafter cited as De L'Isle. During the Elizabethan period, the Dutch allowed England to establish garrisons in several key coastal cities. Browne was an English official at one of these "cautionary town" garrisons.

¹²Cecil to Winwood, 21 February 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 50-1.

in his opinion had weakened the war effort through hesitation. Maurice considered England the key to continuation of the war; France would break its peace with Spain only after James promised to subsidize the States.¹³

Aid was not forthcoming, however. Even the announcement of the cease-fire in April did not prod the English to pledge assistance. To the contrary, James complained that the Dutch had not invited him to mediate in the armistice negotiations.¹⁴ In response to this affront the king refused to dispatch an advisory council to The Hague. He demanded instead that the States send a delegation to England to explain their actions and to suggest a course of action that he might follow.¹⁵ This decision greatly limited English contact with the Dutch during the months immediately following the cessation of hostilities. Although Ralph Winwood was stationed at The Hague, he received no specific instructions and took little initiative in negotiating with Dutch officials. Meanwhile, Pierre Jeannin was meeting with leaders in the States, familiarizing himself and Henry with their position. As a result

¹³Brown to Lisle, 24 January, 7 March 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 345, 354-7.

¹⁴Cecil to Winwood, 30 April 1607, Winwood, pp. 305-6.

¹⁵Cecil to Winwood, 6 June 1607, ibid., pp. 313-5.

the English relied heavily upon France for information concerning the States. When in May, Cecil recalled Winwood for a briefing on the Dutch situation, he instructed him to consult first with Jeannin who had "better information of the condition of affairs."¹⁶

The English populace responded negatively to the announcement of the armistice. Opinion in London was rabidly anti-Spanish and many merchants feared that peace would damage English trade by reviving Dutch competition.¹⁷ In spite of these pro-war sentiments, James maintained a public neutrality, refusing to reveal his reaction to the cease-fire before the arrival of the Dutch deputation. This policy angered Henry IV. He desired to cooperate with England and made several attempts through his ambassador to discern James's feelings on the Dutch situation. The English king assured Henry of his "reciprocal desire to concur with him" but reaffirmed his decision to suspend any policy commitments until his meeting with the Dutch.¹⁸

In July the Dutch delegates, Dr. Jehan Berkes and Sir James Maldaree, finally arrived in London. After justifying their nation's failure to contact England during the

¹⁶Cecil to Winwood, 8 May 1607, *ibid.*, pp. 309-10.

¹⁷Robert Savage to Cecil, 18 April, 16 July 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 98-9, 175.

¹⁸Cecil to Winwood, 20 April 1607, Winwood, pp. 305-6.

armistice negotiations, the two commissioners requested that James send a deputation to join with the French in advising the States. Satisfied that the Dutch had made amends for their diplomatic improprieties, James quickly acquiesced, promising the deputies that, like Elizabeth, he would support the Dutch in their drive for freedom. Yet he made no specific guarantees. He limited himself to general assurances of his care for the States, while stressing that they alone could decide what course of action would best achieve independence.¹⁹ Even after the envoys emphasized that without English aid Dutch financial woes would force them to make peace, James pledged nothing. As a result the commissioners left England convinced that they had found more support for peace than war.²⁰ The Venetian ambassador Giustinian developed the same opinion. "The king," he reported, "as yet shows little inclination to upset the peace negotiations." A week later it appeared clear to him that James would not oppose an agreement that guaranteed sovereignty, since the monarch's real goal was to keep the States out of French or Spanish hands.²¹

¹⁹Cecil to Cornwallis, 15 July 1607, *ibid.*, pp. 325-7; Cecil to the Secretary of Scotland, August 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 236-8.

²⁰Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 15/25 July 1607, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers . . . Venice, vol. XI (London, 1900), pp. 16-17. Hereafter cited as Venetian.

²¹Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 22 July/1 August, 29 July/8 August 1607, *ibid.*, pp. 18-19, 21-22.

In late July, while the Dutch delegation was still in England, the long-awaited Spanish ratification of the armistice arrived at The Hague. The agreement was incomplete, however. Philip III had recognized the Archduke's right to negotiate a treaty in his name but failed to acknowledge Dutch independence. Also, he had signed the ratification "I, the King," a form used to address subjects, rather than "Philip, King," which the Dutch had requested. These defects led the United Provinces to return the agreement to Spain, demanding amendments within six weeks.²² Hesitant to act in opposition to Philip, James decided to defer his newly-appointed commissioners to The Hague until he received news of Spain's response to the Dutch demands.²³ Although Cecil reckoned this answer would be slow in coming due to the Spanish tendency to "proceed in all things by degrees, taking that to be greatness," the delay was a short one.²⁴ James, pressured by Henry and aware that further procrastination would harm relations with the Dutch, decided

²²Piero Prulli to Doge and Senate, 10/20 August 1607, *ibid.*, p. 24; Browne to Lisle, 30 July, 19 August 1607, *De L'Isle*, III, pp. 389-90, 393-4.

²³Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 12/22 August, 19/29 August 1607, *Venetian*, pp. 256, 257.

²⁴Cecil to the Secretary of Scotland, August 1607, *Salisbury*, XIX, pp. 236-8.

in late August to dispatch the deputation without news from Spain.²⁵

On September 1 the English commissioners, Ralph Winwood and Richard Spencer, landed at Flushing and proceeded quickly to The Hague. With them they carried general instructions, which included nothing to indicate the English would take any initiative in pressing for peace. Winwood's and Spencer's primary task was to discover the attitudes of other involved parties toward a treaty. James refused to set policy without first consulting the Dutch and French, and, accordingly, the delegation was to commit itself to nothing before providing him and Cecil with knowledge of how things stood on all sides. French advice and Dutch desires would dictate English moves; Winwood and Spencer were to collaborate closely with Jeannin and to rely upon his counsel, while the Dutch were to determine their own course of action. The instructions urged the commissioners to point out the possible dangers of a treaty but cautioned them against opposing peace if the Dutch wanted it. If the States desired war they were to encourage them without promising increased support.²⁶

²⁵Browne to Lisle, 9 August 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 393-4; Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 12/22 August 1607, Venetian, pp. 25-6.

²⁶Instructions to Winwood and Spencer, August 1607, Winwood, pp. 329-35.

Soon after their arrival Winwood and Spencer appeared before the Dutch States-General pledging a continuation of the long-standing amity between their nations.²⁷ Desiring a more definitive statement of their allies' position, Dutch officials asked the French and English deputies either to promise aid to maintain the war or to support peace by advising them in negotiations. After conferring, the commissioners reaffirmed their willingness to follow a course that would most benefit the States. They refused to promise military aid, however, leaving the Dutch no alternative but peace.²⁸

Several English agents in the United Provinces roundly criticized their nation's policies. William Browne saw English caution as pushing the Dutch into a peace that would be difficult to stop. Upset that "we [England] counsel them neither way," Browne feared the Dutch would choose "that folly, which they will . . . repent." He attacked Winwood and Spencer for trying only to avoid annoying the Dutch rather than taking strong actions to prevent peace.²⁹ The perception that England wanted only to please the States was not new. After the departure of

²⁷Browne to Lisle, 1 September 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 399-400.

²⁸Browne to Lisle, 13 September 1607; Throckmorton to Lisle, 13 September 1607, *ibid.*, pp. 404-5, 405-6.

²⁹Browne to Lisle, 26 September, 1 October 1607, *ibid.*, pp. 406-8, 413.

Winwood and Spencer from England, Giustinian commented that he did not expect the mission to hinder peace because it had been sent "chiefly to please the Dutch and . . . to preserve that reputation, which the English desire to possess in Holland."³⁰ John Throckmorton, an aide to Browne, saw a strong division in the United Provinces over the issue of peace and suggested that James ally himself with war advocates, a move that would prevent peace negotiations and, in his opinion, benefit England.³¹ These recommendations fell on deaf ears as the English maintained their noncommittal attitude throughout September and early October. James refused to prevent peace, yet was indisposed to support it forcefully. When Winwood, frustrated with his nebulous position at The Hague, requested further instructions in late September, Assistant Secretary of State Levinus Munke informed him that the uncertainty of the situation made this impossible.³² Affirming this position, James wrote Cecil that until he could better perceive the course favored by other nations it would be of no benefit to commit himself further.³³

³⁰Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 26 August/5 September 1607, Venetian, p. 29.

³¹Throckmorton to Lisle, 23 September 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 410-1.

³²Levinus Munke to Winwood, 17 October 1607, Winwood, p. 350.

³³James to Cecil, 19 October 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 285-6.

This policy ended in mid-October with the arrival of the second Spanish agreement. The new ratification included a specific offer of sovereignty but remained incomplete in several areas. Philip again signed it "I, the King" and called for nullification of Dutch independence if agreement was not reached on other issues such as trade and religion.³⁴ Despite these limitations Winwood and Spencer considered the Spanish offer satisfactory. In a letter to the States-General the commissioners urged them to accept the agreement and begin negotiations for peace. If the States spurned the Spanish terms, Winwood and Spencer warned that they could not expect aid for a war that the English would consider "unjustified so as it is unnecessary."³⁵ These remarks won praise from James and Cecil, who agreed that although the ratification was defective in some ways, it corresponded so closely with what the Dutch had demanded that a rejection would be dishonorable.³⁶

Several factors led the English to this sudden and dramatic shift in policy. James's financial position, always precarious, took a turn for the worse at this time. Twice during October he pleaded with his Privy Council for

³⁴Cornwallis to Cecil, 14 October 1607, Winwood, pp. 348-9; Browne to Lisle, 20 October 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 418-21.

³⁵Winwood and Spencer to the States-General, 20 October 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 467-8.

³⁶Cecil to Cornwallis, 18 November 1607, Winwood, pp. 357-9.

loans to alleviate his "eating canker of want."³⁷ England's inability to finance a war was coupled with an increasing awareness of Dutch and French preferences for peace. Oldenbarneveldt and other Dutch leaders who had resolved to negotiate were gaining ascendancy at The Hague, and even Zeeland, long the most warlike of the Dutch provinces, appeared drifting toward pacifism. Before the arrival of the agreement William Browne reported peace feelings to be so strong in the United Provinces that he had been warned not to speak in favor of war for fear of assault.³⁸ Henry IV, unwilling to risk another war with Spain, also favored negotiations. This sentiment soon assumed dominance as Winwood and Spencer collaborated closely with Jeannin during the weeks preceding the arrival of Philip's ratification. Both the English and French trusted that their cooperation would erase any dangers a peace might produce.³⁹ Finally, a desire for good relations with Spain predetermined the English conduct. In September Cecil instructed Charles Cornwallis, his ambassador in Spain, to remind Philip of James's tendency toward peace. This, Cecil argued, was a

³⁷James to Cecil, 19 October 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 285-6.

³⁸Browne to Lisle, 18 September, 6 October, 14 October 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 401-2, 414-5, 415-7.

³⁹Browne to Lisle, 29 August, 16 September 1607, ibid., pp. 396-9, 406-8.

true sign of cordiality since nations traditionally seek to keep their enemies occupied in war.⁴⁰ Browne suspected that Winwood and Spencer designed their actions to show Spain that England would do nothing to hinder peace.⁴¹ Cecil confirmed this suspicion suggesting to Cornwallis that he use England's acceptance of the agreement as a sign of James's sincerity to the Spanish.⁴²

England's energetic advocacy of Philip's ratification did not last for long, however, as the unexpected flight of Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone, elicited doubts concerning the benefits of peace. During the 1590s Tyrone had led an abortive rebellion to free Ireland from Elizabeth's rule, and despite a pardon from James, suspicions of his loyalty lingered. When the Irish Earl began to dispute English land policies in his homeland, James summoned him to London, precipitating his flight from Ireland in September of 1607. Archduke Albert granted Tyrone refuge in the Spanish Netherlands, but the English feared he was on his way to Spain where Philip, who had encouraged and succored his past revolt, would aid in

⁴⁰Cecil to Cornwallis, 27 September 1607, Winwood, pp. 340-4.

⁴¹Browne to Lisle, 20 October 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 418-21.

⁴²Cecil to Cornwallis, 18 November 1607, Winwood, pp. 357-9.

fomenting another. When James demanded that Philip and Albert state their intentions, evasive replies strained relations to a breaking point.⁴³ The precarious situation roused James to order military preparations, reviving hopes among war advocates. The affair also aggravated France and England's synergetic ties. After his flight from Ireland, Tyrone first landed in France, and James immediately asked Henry to detain him. Although he acquiesced at first, Henry soon released Tyrone allowing his safe passage to Flanders. The French king maintained that James's petition had been unclear and that O'Neill was a religious rather than a political fugitive, but the Venetian ambassador in France suggested the motivation was actually Henry's strong dislike for James.⁴⁴ Whatever the reason, the French action incensed the English monarch and undermined the Anglo-French cooperation that heretofore had made James so confident in peace.

Reports that the Dutch were balking at the Spanish agreement heightened English vacillation. A strong war party led by Maurice of Nassua had always thrived in the States, and Philip's limited offer prompted many peace

⁴³Thomas Lake to Cecil, 14 October 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 278-9; Piero Prulli to Doge and Senate, 10/20 October, 18/28 October 1607, Venetian, pp. 48-51.

⁴⁴Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 21/31 October 1607, Venetian, pp. 52-3.

supporters to alter their views.⁴⁵ By November Winwood and Spencer were reporting that the Dutch would continue fighting if means could be found.⁴⁶ This news brought Cecil to question his commissioner's push for peace negotiations. In a November 18 letter to Thomas Edmondes, English ambassador to Flanders, the Secretary indicated the safest course would be to reserve advocacy of peace lest "the success prove contrary to the States' expectations."⁴⁷ Winwood, aware of the changing opinion in England, intimated to his friend John Chamberlain that although his and Spencer's reputations might be blemished, they had made the correct decision since His Majesty had no intention of going to war.⁴⁸ Indeed, James remained unwilling to subsidize the Dutch war effort. Talk of an Anglo-Spanish marriage alliance, Philip's propositions that James should mediate peace negotiations, and the English monarch's aversion to fighting soothed tense relations with

⁴⁵Browne to Lisle, 9 November, 14 November 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 429-31, 432-3.

⁴⁶Browne to Lisle, 22 November 1607, ibid., pp. 435-7.

⁴⁷Cecil to Edmondes, 18 November 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 327-9.

⁴⁸Winwood to Chamberlain, 8 December 1607, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers Relating to Holland, 1603-10, vol. 66, ff. 75v-76v. Hereafter cited as PRO Holland.

Spain; and when Tyrone's threat dissipated in November, the possibility of English involvement in a war ended.⁴⁹

Uncertain what stand would best serve their interests, the English adopted a policy of caution; they resolved to evade all further commitments while allowing France to lead in advising the Dutch. Cecil, commenting on Winwood and Spencer's November 22 request for additional direction, suggested to James that the commissioners could best serve English concerns by steering a middle course between the extremes of supporting war and leading a peace movement.⁵⁰ The king heeded this counsel, and on December 5 his secretary, Thomas Lake, informed Cecil of a revised policy concerning the Spanish agreement. Winwood and Spencer were to avoid further advice to the United Provinces, as any stance would incur either Dutch or Spanish wrath. The States, James reasoned, should decide for themselves in this matter, or, if necessary, they could rely on French guidance.⁵¹ A later dispatch from the Privy Council enjoined

⁴⁹Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 18/28 November, 28 November/5 December, 31 December/10 January 1607, Venetian, pp. 65-6, 70-1, 81-2. Tyrone never did go to Spain. In February 1608 he left Flanders for Rome, where he had been offered a pension by Paul V. He remained in the Eternal City until his death in 1616.

⁵⁰Observations on . . . the Low Countries, 1607, PRO Holland, ff. 85v-88.

⁵¹Thomas Lake to Cecil, 5 December 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 358-60.

the commissioners not to be "leaders but followers." They were not to refuse advice to the Dutch, perpetuating the appearance of James's concern for their security, but should carefully avoid any commitments.⁵²

In no area was this disavowal of initiative more evident than in England's dealings apropos a defensive alliance. Even though the Dutch considered a league with James and Henry necessary for peace, the English were chary of the idea. Fearing that involvement in an alliance would threaten their peace with Spain while benefiting only the States, James and Cecil directed Winwood and Spencer to postpone any decision on an alliance as long as possible.⁵³

Despite England's disinterested attitude, the Dutch continued to press for an agreement. In early November they proffered a tripartite league providing for Anglo-French aid to the Dutch after a truce or treaty and mutual aid if war resumed with Spain.⁵⁴ The English saw the Dutch demands as exorbitant and soundly rejected their proposal.

⁵²Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 11 December 1607, Thomas Birch, An Historical View of the Negotiations between the Courts of England, France, Brussels from the year 1592-1667. Extracted chiefly from the State papers of Sir Thomas Edmondes . . . and of Anthony Bacon, 1749, pp. 274-5.

⁵³Instructions to Winwood and Spencer, August 1607, Winwood, pp. 329-35.

⁵⁴Browne to Lisle, 9 November 1607, De L'Isle, III, pp. 429-31.

After reading an abstract of the suggested league sent him by Cecil, James complained that the States intended "to take all the advantages . . . to themselves" while offering little in return. The notion of aiding the United Provinces during peacetime particularly enraged the monarch; he intimated that if the Dutch could not support themselves, they were not worthy of independence and should be divided between England and France. Contending that Philip would like nothing better than to see England waste its limited resources, James proclaimed he would rather see the States fall into Spanish hands than "starve myself or mine by putting the meat in their [the Dutch] mouth." He insisted, instead, that money flow the other way, since peace would revive the Dutch economy.⁵⁵

Despite these grievances, French support of a league and previous English commitments to Dutch welfare impelled James and Cecil to acknowledge the necessity of an alliance. They advocated a much more limited agreement than the States, however. Concerned that the Spanish might see a league as an attempt to reopen the fighting, the English desired a treaty contingent upon peace. They also favored replacing the proposed triple alliance with a series of

⁵⁵James to Cecil, 1 December 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 351-3.

bilateral pacts involving no English ties to France.⁵⁶ A tripartite league, James argued, would primarily benefit Henry, who "because of his own age and the youth of his children, their legitimation, the strength of competitors and universal hatred borne unto him . . . seek[s] all means of security for preventing all dangers."⁵⁷ In late November Winwood and Spencer received further instructions from England. They were to bargain for a separate alliance, stating all promises of assistance in general terms. If, however, a more specific engagement was required, aid was not to exceed 6,000 men, 20 ships, and 30,000 crowns per year. Also, any agreement required provisions for yearly support of English cautionary towns in the Netherlands.⁵⁸ The Dutch considered these conditions unreasonable and negotiations stalled. As Winwood and Spencer looked for authorization to support an alliance more suitable to the States, Jeannin initiated negotiations for a separate agreement. The French promised the United Provinces 10,000

⁵⁶ Cecil to Cornwallis, 18 November 1607, Winwood, pp. 357-9; Cecil to Edmondes, 18 November 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 328-9.

⁵⁷ James to Cecil, 1 December 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 351-3.

⁵⁸ Memoranda made by Cecil relative to the Treaties with the States-General, November 1607, ibid., pp. 483-4. The States' debt to England can be traced back to aid provided by Elizabeth in the late 16th century. In 1598 this debt was set at 800,000 pounds with the agreement that the Dutch would make yearly payments and pay for the

foot soldiers if hostilities resumed and demanded one-half of this amount from the Dutch in case Henry and Philip went to war. The Dutch accepted these terms, and in January 1608 the two nations signed a defensive pact.⁵⁹

This coup was a notable propaganda victory for Henry IV. His decisive action increased French prestige in the United Provinces while magnifying skepticism of James's sincerity. English officials were becoming painfully aware that in the eight months since the cease-fire, their cautious policies had failed to place England in a position of influence at The Hague. As early as December 4 William Browne expressed fears that English ambivalence would allow France to dominate as they had during the Venetian Crisis of 1606.⁶⁰ By January Winwood and Spencer were complaining

maintenance of the cautionary towns. The towns were never financed, and after two years the Dutch discontinued payments on their debt, a situation England hoped to rectify in the defensive alliance. For more specific figures on the debt, see *The State of Debt of the United Provinces by Way of Estimation*, 14 December 1607, PRO Holland, ff. 77v.

⁵⁹Browne to Lisle, 11 January 1607, De L'Isle, IV, p. 3.

⁶⁰Browne to Cecil, 4 December 1607, Salisbury, XIX, pp. 338-9. In 1606 a squabble developed when two priests violated Venetian law and were brought to trial by the State. Claiming jurisdiction over all cases involving clergymen, Pope Paul V demanded that the priests be turned over to him. When Venice refused, he placed them under interdict. The nations of Europe took sides and a war appeared possible. Although James offered to mediate, he procrastinated, and it was Henry IV, aided by his personal emissary Cardinal Joyeuse, who negotiated a solution to the crisis.

that as a result of the Franco-Dutch alliance, the States consulted Jeannin more frequently on important matters.⁶¹ Desiring to satisfy both the United Provinces and Spain, the English had pleased neither. These nations, bothered by James's equivocation, began to doubt his interest in their welfare and turned elsewhere for counsel. By eschewing all initiative, the English made French domination of the negotiations possible and relegated themselves to spectators--concerned bystanders certainly, but ones with less and less control over the direction of events.

In mid-December the Dutch, influenced by French urgings, accepted Philip's agreement and invited the Spanish Netherlands to send delegates for formal peace talks.⁶² This decision pleased the Archduke. He promptly dispatched his negotiators and asked both England and France to aid in the discussions. In response to this request, Cecil assured the Flemish that despite hostile acts such as Albert's harboring of Tyrone the English would work for peace.⁶³ When negotiations convened in January 1608, Dutch independence was the first issue discussed.

⁶¹Thomas Ogle to Cecil, 4 January 1608, *ibid.*, XX, pp. 2-4.

⁶²Ogle to Cecil, 13 December 1607, *ibid.*, pp. 376-7; Browne to Lisle, 19 December 1607, *De L'Isle*, III, pp. 445-6.

⁶³Cecil to Edmondes, 14 January 1608, *Salisbury*, XX, pp. 19-20.

The States demanded a more specific recognition of sovereignty before proceeding to other matters, a stand many believed would prove unacceptable to the Archduke. Fearful that others might blame James if the negotiations stalled, the Privy Council directed Winwood and Spencer to warn the United Provinces not to press their demands too strongly. England's anxiety was needless, however, for Albert quickly conceded the Dutch request.⁶⁴ Although many were optimistic that this would soon bring peace, the question of Dutch trade in the Indies emerged as a new impediment. The States demanded free trade rights in the Spanish colonial world; Spain, on the other hand, insisted upon immediate Dutch withdrawal from these areas. Despite this conflict the English expected the parties to reach a quick compromise. Neither side was eager to adjust their demands, however, and by early February the talks had reached an impasse.⁶⁵

Meanwhile, the English, realizing further hesitation would destroy their credibility in the United Provinces and guarantee Henry's eminence, resumed efforts to conclude a defensive alliance. Even with the French stimulus, negotiations proceeded slowly. The Dutch continued to press for

⁶⁴Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 21/31 January 1608, Venetian, pp. 89-90; Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, Winwood, 3 February 1608, pp. 369-74.

⁶⁵Ogle to Cecil, 7 February 1608; Noel Caron to Cecil, February 1608, Salisbury, XX, pp. 57-8, 91 2.

peacetime aid and wanted their commitment set at one-half the English promise. Moreover, they asked James to postpone debt payments for several years after the peace. Although the English added 400 horses to their offer of aid and agreed to cut the first two debt increments to 30,000 pounds they repudiated peacetime support and a Dutch commitment less than two-thirds. James also rejected a suggestion that any French aid to the States be credited against Henry's debt to England. This would have enlarged the Dutch treasury, increasing their ability to repay England, but James held firm, claiming it was merely another French attempt to gain Dutch favor at his expense.⁶⁶

Winwood and Spencer were ambiguous in their meetings with the Dutch, gaining praise from James for their refusals "to engage him too far by giving the States certain hopes, or to discourage them by the contrary."⁶⁷ Negative reactions emanating from Madrid and Brussels concerning the proposed league may have prompted this caution. James and his ambassadors, concerned that the negotiations might rupture their peace with Spain, reminded Philip and Albert that the alliance's only purpose was to encourage peace, but as the talks dragged on, opposition intensified.

⁶⁶Browne to Lisle, 11 January 1608, De L'Isle, IV, p. 33.

⁶⁷Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 20 March 1608, Winwood, pp. 376-8.

Philip and the Archduke attacked England for allying with rebels and putting unwarranted restrictions on the Treaty of London.⁶⁸ This criticism angered Cecil, who considered the league an attempt to further peace and therefore beneficial to Spain. He insisted the claims were unfounded; since the alliance went into effect only if Spain violated their proposed peace with the States, it posed no threat to the Spaniards as long as Philip honored his promises. To relieve further suspicions, Cecil tendered a similar defensive pact to Philip and Albert while Winwood and Spencer urged the Dutch to inform the Archduke's delegates that without a defensive alliance peace was out of the question.⁶⁹

Difficulties existed but the completion of an agreement was never in doubt. The Dutch saw a league as imperative for a stable peace, and despite fears of Spanish reprisals, James was reluctant to drive the States into further dependence on France.⁷⁰ In the end, both parties were willing to compromise, and in June an Anglo-Dutch alliance

⁶⁸Guistinian to Doge and Senate, 17/27 March 1608, Venetian, pp. 109-10.

⁶⁹Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 21 May 1608, Winwood, pp. 403-5; Cecil to Edmondes, 4 May, 31 May 1608, Salisbury, XX, pp. 152-3, 175-6; also see Cecil's May letters to Cornwallis in Winwood.

⁷⁰Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 20 March 1608, Winwood, pp. 376-8.

was concluded. The English would provide 10,000 soldiers, 400 horses, and 20 ships if Spain violated the peace; the Dutch were to provide two-thirds of this amount. The agreement also included an English refusal to subsidize the United Provinces during peacetime and a Dutch promise to repay their debt in yearly increments of 60,000 pounds beginning two years after the peace.⁷¹

While the English and Dutch haggled over a league to guarantee peace, problems concerning the Indies trade increased the likelihood of war. The States continued to insist on full trade rights in the Indies, threatening a resumption of fighting if their demands were not met.⁷²

Noel Caron, the Dutch agent in England, considered yielding on this issue too dear a price to pay especially since, in his view, the United Provinces had proved themselves stronger than Spain on the battlefield.⁷³ Likewise, the Spanish remained firm in their request for Dutch withdrawal, claiming that the States' presence in the Indies would

⁷¹Principal heads of the league to be concluded betwixt His Majesty and the States, 31 May 1608, *ibid.*, p. 409; Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 10/17 April 1608, *Venetian*, pp. 123-4.

⁷²Ogle to Cecil, 21 February, 1 March 1608, *PRO Holland*, ff. 96v-98, ff. 98v-100.

⁷³Caron to Cecil, 25 February 1608, *Salisbury*, XX, p. 83.

oblige them to sail fully armed.⁷⁴ Philip's demands for religious freedom in the Netherlands made peace appear even more unattainable. The States argued that their sovereignty prevented any outside regulation of domestic matters and unequivocally refused.⁷⁵ By April Dutch and Spanish immoderation had brought the negotiations to a standstill. To break this deadlock, Archduke Albert, who had shown a willingness to accommodate the States, dispatched Friar Neyen to sound out Philip's attitude toward compromise.⁷⁶

The dwindling possibility of peace increased English confusion as to what policy would best serve their interests. Although Winwood and Spencer continued to support a treaty and were consoled in knowing that the Spanish and Dutch also desired peace, many Englishmen began expressing doubts that they had allowed negotiations to proceed too far. Cecil chastised his commissioners for supporting a peace likely "to add but trouble and care unto us in these parts." He hesitated to suggest subversion of the talks, however; concern for relations with Spain and the States necessitated

⁷⁴Girolamo Sorzano to Doge and Senate, 19 February, 1 March 1608, Venetian, p. 101.

⁷⁵Cornwallis to Privy Council, 2 April 1608, Winwood, pp. 384-5.

⁷⁶Caron to Cecil, 25 February 1608, Salisbury, XX, p. 83.

caution.⁷⁷ Giustinian believed by late March that the English no longer wanted peace if it meant free trade for the Dutch. The Treaty of London had denied England this concession, and they did not relish seeing such an advantage pass into the hands of a rising commercial power.⁷⁸ A few weeks later Cornwallis exhorted Cecil to oppose peace. "The considerations which heretofore had moved us to affect the peace," he wrote, "are . . . changed into more forcible reasons to determine a continuance of war." According to Cornwallis, a treaty might bring some benefits, but it would leave the Spanish "without a seat of war" and mean gains for Catholicism.⁷⁹

In early June English attention shifted dramatically to events in France. News arrived in London that a Spanish mission, headed by Don Pedro de Toledo, had arrived in Paris to arrange a Franco-Spanish marriage alliance. In an attempt to gain French support for a peace without Dutch independence, Don Pedro suggested a match between the Spanish Infanta and a French prince, with the Netherland's

⁷⁷Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 20 March 1608, Winwood, pp. 378-9; Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 20/30 April, 4/14 May 1608, Venetian, pp. 126-7, 132-5.

⁷⁸Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 17/27 March 1608, Venetian, pp. 110-1.

⁷⁹Cornwallis to Cecil, 2 April 1608, Winwood, pp. 384-5.

as a dowry upon the death of the childless Archduke and his wife Isabella.⁸⁰ This proposal engendered great consternation in England. The uncomfoting thoughts of an alliance between the two Catholic nations and hostile control of the Low Countries redoubled cries for the resumption of war aid to the Dutch. Winwood's contact in London, John More, underscored the need to "strike close hands with the States" to prevent consummation of the marriage alliance from causing a Dutch defeat. A league with the States, More maintained, would also assure the Dutch of English friendship at a time when they doubted French sincerity.

More held little hope that James would act, however. Because the king inclined toward peace and could not afford to finance a war, he believed his suggestions "but wind."⁸¹ Henry Neville, another of Winwood's associates, also predicted inaction. James, he charged, was "afraid of every shadow" least it should anger Spain and would make no effort to resuscitate the Dutch war effort.⁸² As anticipated, the English leaders sustained their position. James had always had qualms about aid to the States, and when a small Irish

⁸⁰Cornwallis to Privy Council, 4 June 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 409-10; William Resould to Cecil, 25 May 1608, Salisbury, XX, pp. 172-3.

⁸¹Thomas More to Winwood, 25 June 1608, Winwood, pp. 412-3.

⁸²Henry Neville to Winwood, 21 June 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 411 2.

uprising occurred in early June, fears that Philip might aid the rebellion made him "more determined than ever to avoid mixing in anything that would cause annoyance to Spain."⁸³ Although Cecil was becoming convinced that a continuation of hostilities would be more beneficial than peace, he too saw it as unwise to begin advocating war while both Spain and the States supported peace. Both men sensed Don Pedro's proposals would come to nothing, making action unnecessary. It was unlikely that Henry, noted for his pragmatism, would sacrifice friendship and influence with the Dutch for Spanish promises of future benefits.⁸⁴ The mission did, in fact, prove to be a fiasco. Not an insignificant factor in its failure was Don Pedro's handling of the negotiations. In his first formal meeting with Henry he berated the French for their support of the States; later the marriage alliance was offered on the condition that France encourage the United Provinces to accept peace without independence. These intimidating tactics alienated Henry and doomed the prospects of a Franco-Spanish alliance.⁸⁵

⁸³Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 15/25 June 1608, Venetian, pp. 142-3.

⁸⁴Cecil to Antoine Boderie, 13 July 1608, Salisbury, XX, pp. 215-6; Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 26 July 1608, Winwood, pp. 421-3.

⁸⁵Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 7 August 1608, Winwood, pp. 427-9.

Don Pedro muddled his assignment, but his mere presence in Paris strained relations between Henry and James. That France even considered the Spanish proposals intensified distrust of Henry and fanned religious prejudices in England. To many, France was unreliable as long as its king remained "a good son to the mother of Rome."⁸⁶ Even the rejection of Don Pedro's scheme continued to arouse suspicion. Henry, it was thought, dismissed the offer to ingratiate himself with the Dutch.⁸⁷ This animosity soon faded, and for a time it appeared as if the Spanish mission might actually bring about a formal Anglo-French alliance. Despite his personal distaste for James, Henry had always deemed England a more logical ally than Spain and espoused a tripartite league to tie England, France, and the Dutch in a mutual defensive pact. After Don Pedro's arrival, Antoine Boderie, the French ambassador to England, revived the idea in hopes that dread of a hostile alliance would make James more amenable to a union.⁸⁸ Cecil reacted favorably to this proposal, and informal talks were initiated. Difficulties

⁸⁶Cornwallis to Cecil, 30 July 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 420-1.

⁸⁷Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 26 July 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 421-3.

⁸⁸Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 7 August 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 427-9.

quickly arose, however, as the English opposed a French suggestion to encompass the United Provinces in the league. When the failure of Don Pedro's efforts became apparent, James and Cecil lost all interest in the project and Boderie ceased expounding it.⁸⁹

In August attention again focused on The Hague as Friar Neyen arrived from Spain with instructions. Philip remained firm in his demands; Dutch autonomy would be withheld unless the States granted freedom of religion and relinquished claims to the Indies trade.⁹⁰ The United Provinces rejected these demands, and the collapse of the negotiations appeared imminent. Cecil, certain of peace in a late July dispatch to Winwood and Spencer, now predicted the disruption of talks.⁹¹ The Archduke's negotiators, led by Ambrogio Spinola, refused to allow peace to slip away so easily. However rigid in his requirements for a treaty, Philip had left open the possibility of a long truce, and Spinola seized this opportunity to save the negotiations.⁹² France and England quickly supported

⁸⁹Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 11/21 August, 17/27 August 1608, Venetian, pp. 160, 163.

⁹⁰Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 7 August 1608, Winwood, pp. 427-9.

⁹¹Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 26 July 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 421-3; Cecil to Edmondes, 14 September 1608, Salisbury. XX, p. 24.

⁹²Browne to Lisle, 30 June 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 31-2; Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 31 August/10 September 1608 Venetian n 17.

his attempts to arrange a truce now that permanent peace seemed unattainable. Henry had always preferred war if a treaty could not be contracted, but in mid-1608, Jeannin convinced him that unless he intended to actively enter the war a truce was the only way to prevent Hapsburg control in the Low Countries.⁹³ Despite its growing doubts respecting peace, England also endorsed a long truce. James, aware that he could not finance the Dutch, perceived that a resumption of fighting would result in either Spanish or French control over the United Provinces. If the States remained unaided, war posed much more of a threat to his interests than peace under any conditions.⁹⁴ The English, to a large extent, were simply reacting to the French lead. Realizing Don Pedro's presence in Paris and Jeannin's influence in the States gave France special access to Spanish and Dutch attitudes, James considered Henry's change of heart a reflection of the two nations' opinions of the truce. By opposing France's decision, the monarch believed England would be resisting Spanish and Dutch desires, something he had been avoiding throughout the negotiations. Accordingly, the Privy Council enjoined Winwood and Spencer to concur with Jeannin in pressing for acceptance of a long

⁹³Lee, James I and Henry IV, p. 86.

⁹⁴Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 7 August, 8 October 1608, Winwood, pp. 427-9, 433-5.

truce. The commissioners were to use their own discretion on specific provisions, but James, convinced the French would do nothing to harm their relations with Spain or the States, expected no differences of opinion. To handle Dutch opposition of a truce, Winwood and Spencer were to remind them that they were in no position to refuse; failure to negotiate would force them into a disastrous war without English or French aid. These arguments, along with a previous pledge to apply the defensive alliance to a truce, temporized much of the Dutch resistance.⁹⁵

Although the English and French envoys collaborated closely over the next several months, all parties recognized France as the leading advocate of peace. Winwood and Spencer took a back seat as the Dutch, Spanish, and Flemish deputies turned to Jeannin for direction.⁹⁶ England's subordinate position became a public embarrassment to James as the result of an oversight by Jean Richardot, head of the Flemish deputation at The Hague. In early October the Archduke ordered Richardot to return to Brussels, and when vacating his room, the minister inadvertently left secret instructions from Albert in the drawer of his writing table. These directions, which were passed to the Dutch

⁹⁵ Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 2 September 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 429-31.

⁹⁶ Browne to Lisle, 7 October 1608, *De L'Isle*, IV, pp. 51-2; Edmondes to Cecil, 26 October 1608, *Salisbury*, XX, pp. 260-1.

States-General and eventually printed, charged Richardot to place more confidence in the French than in the English.⁹⁷ In response to this affront, James lashed out against others. He attacked the French for using the negotiations to increase their glory and accused the Archduke and Philip of ignoring English efforts to secure peace. The monarch commanded Winwood and Spencer to inform Richardot that Albert's preference for French counsel gave England little reason to continue supporting his quest for a truce.⁹⁸

Actually, James's dissatisfaction had the opposite affect. The English soon intensified their defense of the truce in an effort to convince Oldenbarneveldt, Philip, and Albert of their industry for peace. In late October Winwood delivered a remonstrance to the States-General informing them in absolute terms that no aid would be forthcoming if a truce was not accepted. James, he emphasized, was "too just, too religious and too peaceful to foment a war, which however just to begin with would show as unjust from the refusal of peace."⁹⁹ The English exhortations became so

⁹⁷Browne to Lisle, 7 October 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 51-2; Marc Antonio Correr to Doge and Senate, 2/12 October 1608, Venetian, p. 179.

⁹⁸Privy Council to Winwood and Spencer, 8 October 1608, Winwood, pp. 433-5.

⁹⁹Winwood's Remonstrance to the States, 10 October 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 61-2.

numerous and forceful over the next few weeks that Jeannin found it necessary to restrain Winwood and Spencer in their sudden exuberance for peace.¹⁰⁰ England's firm stand even impressed William Browne. In a letter to his superior, Viscount Lisle, he apologized for his previous opposition to peace, contending that he "had never till now known our king's mind."¹⁰¹

The English pleadings did not shake the conviction among many in the United Provinces that James would not allow the States to fall into inimical hands. Led by Maurice of Nassau, these war advocates resisted a truce. Opposition was particularly strong in Zeeland where they refused to discuss a settlement unless Spain recognized Dutch independence for the duration of the peace.¹⁰² Albert had conceded this point in September and claimed to speak for Spain as well, but Philip's acknowledgment was slow in coming. To soften Dutch reluctance, the English and French deputies appeared before the States-General and repeated their threat to withdraw all aid if the Dutch failed to

¹⁰⁰Lee, James I and Henry IV, p. 126.

¹⁰¹Browne to Lisle, 23 October 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 64-5.

¹⁰²Browne to Lisle, 7 November 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 70-1.

accept a truce.¹⁰³ By mid-November Maurice and the Zeelanders had yielded to this pressure. They embraced truce negotiations on the condition that no final agreement could be reached without Spanish approval.¹⁰⁴

England's sudden and tenacious resolve for peace had revived its sagging credibility at The Hague, but two incidents soon caused a renewed questioning of James's reliability. In November Archduke Albert, on orders from Madrid, dispatched Ferdinando de Giron to thank James for his staunch peace advocacy. The Dutch and French suspected, however, that de Giron's real objective was to press for a moderation of Dutch sovereignty demands.¹⁰⁵ These misgivings multiplied when on November 29 Richardot wrote a letter identifying James as responsible for the Spanish delay in recognizing an independent United Provinces. Philip, Richardot noted, had been willing to accept Dutch sovereignty until James offered to secure a twenty-year truce without mention of independence.¹⁰⁶ The English

¹⁰³Browne to Lisle, 5 September 1608; Proclamation from the States, 20 October 1608, *ibid.*, pp. 41-4, 54-5; Antonio Foscarini to Doge and Senate, 10/20 November 1608, Venetian, pp. 190-1.

¹⁰⁴Extract from the Register of the Resolutions of the Council of State, 13 November 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 74-5.

¹⁰⁵Edmondes to Cecil, 16 November, 23 November 1608, Salisbury, XX, pp. 268, 270.

¹⁰⁶Foscarini to Doge and Senate, 12/22 December 1608, Venetian, p. 203; Edmondes to Cecil, 30 November 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 318-20.

vehemently denied these charges. Claiming this had never been "so much as imagined by His Majesty, much less intimated by any of his ministers," Cecil attacked Richardot for spreading deliberate falsehoods to encourage distrust of James. Thomas Edmondes maintained that the Flemish had contrived the entire episode to disgrace James rather than the Archduke in case Philip refused to recognize the States' independence.¹⁰⁷

In truth, there is little evidence to uphold Richardot's allegations. In mid-November Jeannin and Winwood, weary of Philip's hesitancy, had sent Charles de l'Aubespine, abbé de Préaux, one of Jeannin's aides, to Brussels to ask Albert what the Spanish intentions were. The Archduke told the envoy that Don Pedro de Toledo, not James, was responsible for suggesting to Philip that a truce might be possible without the distasteful concession of autonomy. Later, the Flemish altered the story and implicated Charles Cornwallis. Préaux cautioned Albert against espousing this type of agreement, emphasizing that neither France nor England would advocate a truce that did not recognize a Dutch state.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, Giron met with little success when

¹⁰⁷ Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 23 December 1608, Winwood, pp. 466-7; Edmondes to Cecil, 21 December 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 321-3.

¹⁰⁸ Edmondes to Cecil, 30 November, 7 December 1608, De L'Isle, IV, pp. 318-20, 320-1; Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 23 December 1608, Winwood, pp. 466-7.

he asked the English monarch to procure more favorable conditions for the Spanish. James berated the legate, declaring he would take no part in such a plan. According to the English king, nothing would bring peace more quickly than Philip's endorsement of the Archduke's stand.¹⁰⁹

True or not, Richardot's accusation temporarily distressed the cooperative relationship between France and England that had so effectively expounded the truce. Henry viewed James's alleged offer as a further example of English duplicity. England's desire to please Spain, he believed, had caused them to deceive their allies and chance the breakdown of negotiations. The English distrusted French intentions as well. Henry's quickness to blame James for the slowness in the truce talks induced Edmondes to remark that "the French king plays not all his balls above the line," while Cecil wondered why Préaux had agreed with Richardot's charges.¹¹⁰ Eventually Anglo-French relations stabilized. The increased skepticism of England's sincerity moved James to commit himself even more closely to the French course of action. Anxious to reestablish his reputation as a peace advocate, James assured Henry in early

¹⁰⁹Cecil to Edmondes, 28 December 1608, Salisbury, XX, p. 285; Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 31 December 1608, Winwood, pp. 469-71.

¹¹⁰Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 23 December 1608, Winwood, pp. 466-7; Edmondes to Cecil, 7 January 1609, De L'Isle, IV, p. 324.

January that he would "never sever himself from His Most Christian Majesty's [Henry's] prudent views."¹¹¹

Despite the commotion over James's actions, progress toward a truce continued. In December, while the tumult was at its height, the Dutch extended the cease-fire for two months, hoping that a settlement could soon be reached.¹¹² Meanwhile, irritated by Spain's slowness to acknowledge sovereignty, Archduke Albert dispatched his confessor, Inigo Brizuela, to sway Philip on this issue. His efforts were not wasted, for on January 19 the Spanish monarch finally agreed to concede Dutch independence for the length of a truce. Though they desired more, the Dutch accepted this offer, leaving a trade agreement as the last obstacle to the long awaited peace.¹¹³

As a truce appeared more and more certain, James and Cecil inveighed against the perception that England had delayed negotiations. This attitude, Cecil feared, would deprive James of his credit due for advancing the truce,

¹¹¹Antonio Foscarini to Doge and Senate, 4/14 January, 31 January/10 February 1609, Venetian, pp. 217-8, 229-30.

¹¹²Edmondes to Cecil, 21 December 1608, Salisbury, XX, p. 284.

¹¹³Giustinian to Doge and Senate, 27 December 1608/6 January; Soranzo to Doge and Senate, 23 January/2 February 1609; Correr to Doge and Senate, 17/27 February 1609, Venetian, pp. 196, 226, 237-8.

and the secretary ordered his ministers to take all possible measures to demonstrate England's craving for peace. James denied emphatically that he had promised to secure a truce without sovereignty, arguing this was inconceivable considering Dutch demands.¹¹⁴ Concern for credibility led England to adhere even more closely to the French line. In a March 2 note that acknowledged Jeannin's preeminence, the Privy Council advised Winwood and Spencer to remain in close contact with the French minister, concurring with his decisions at all times.¹¹⁵

A settlement on the trade issue proved elusive to the negotiators, now gathered at Antwerp. Albert, following Philip's instructions, generally recognized Dutch trade rights in areas controlled by Spain but withheld specific mention of the Indies. This was unacceptable to the States and an impasse developed.¹¹⁶ The English and French commissioners attempted to break this stalemate by pledging to guarantee a Dutch presence in the Indies if the Archduke's deputies would give assurance that Albert interpreted the general trade provision to include the area. Richardot

¹¹⁴Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 4 February 1609; Cecil to Cornwallis, 12 February 1609, Winwood, pp. 476-7, 478-9.

¹¹⁵Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 2 March 1609, *ibid.*, pp. 481-3.

¹¹⁶Correr to Doge and Senate, 17/27 February 1609, Venetian, pp. 237-8.

offered an oral promise to this affect, making the trade article acceptable to all parties. Although James had originally demanded a written guarantee, French pressures and fears that any delays would be blamed on England forced him to warrant Dutch trade based on Richardot's oral promise.¹¹⁷ The settlement of the Indies trade cleared the way for peace. On March 29, 1609 the negotiators signed an agreement that stopped hostilities for twelve years. The Twelve Years Truce was a significant victory for the United Provinces. They received recognition of their sovereignty, forfeited no territory, secured trade rights in the Indies, and made no concessions to Catholicism. In short, the Dutch had won all they could realistically expect but permanent peace.¹¹⁸

Despite numerous claims to the contrary, England exerted little influence during the two years of negotiations leading to the Twelve Years Truce. Fearful that their national interests would be harmed if either the Dutch or the Spanish were antagonized, James and Cecil adopted a policy of equivocation, which allowed the French, consistent in support of peace, to direct the course of

¹¹⁷Winwood to Privy Council, 16 March 1609; Cecil to Winwood and Spencer, 20 March 1609, Winwood, pp. 491-2, 488-90.

¹¹⁸Birch, An Historical View of the Negotiations, p. 293; also see Lee, James I and Henry IV, pp. 133-4.

events. In early 1607 English refusals to maintain the States' war effort made negotiations a necessity, but, reluctant to anger anyone, James avoided a strong stand. Slow to send a deputation to The Hague and hesitant to commit them to action, the English enabled Jeannin to assume the dominant role as mediator. Their ardor to please the United Provinces and Spain generated an endorsement of peace negotiations after the first Spanish agreement arrived in October, but as events and attitudes altered, the English balked in their support. By the end of 1607 James's and Cecil's unwillingness to offend others led them to forsake all initiative in the negotiations. Hoping to avoid major errors, England chose to respond to rather than dictate events at The Hague. Throughout 1608 the English moved cautiously, committing themselves when French actions made it necessary. They concluded a defensive alliance with the States but only after the Dutch, frustrated by James's equivocation, had agreed to a pact with Henry. When the French threw their support behind a truce, England quickly followed, convinced that Henry's position mirrored Spanish and Dutch desires. Suspicions generated by the Giron mission and Richardot's actions drove James to intensify his support of the truce, and as the discussions moved inexorably to a conclusion, he adhered even more closely to Henry in expectation of a share in credit for peace.

It was the French, however, who determined the outcome of the negotiations. As he had in the Venetian Crisis of 1606, James rejected a leadership role while Henry, certain of what he wanted, served notice that he would direct the course of events in Europe. In the light of circumstances later in 1609, James's ambivalent policies assumed a greater significance. When a controversy developed over the Cleves-Jülich succession less than six months after the signing of the Twelve Years Truce, James again passively stood by as Henry brought the continent to the brink of war in his drive to dismember the House of Hapsburg.

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