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## **The Impact of the Occupation on the Dutch Police**

*Cyrille Fijnaut, Guus Meershoek,  
Jos Smeets and Ronald van der Wal*

### **IV.1. Introduction**

Over the past few decades, historical research on the police in the Netherlands has mainly concentrated on its history during World War II. Other areas of interest include the history of specific forces before 1940. So it is safe to say that historians have paid little or no attention to the development of the Dutch police after World War II, and in fact there has never been any systematic study of the impact the war has had on their development. As far as that is concerned, therefore, a wide unexplored field of research remains open. Given the ever-growing volume of police literature, this conclusion seems almost ridiculous. But anyone who is familiar with this literature knows that it largely passes over what happened in police circles during and after World War II. On the one hand, we have mainly legal literature about the post-war organisation and powers of the police; on the other, technical literature about the actual task of policing. In both cases there is little or no concern for the historical dimension in the organisation and operation of the police.

This paper should therefore be regarded as an initial survey of that unexplored territory. The comments that one of the leading post-war police chiefs, F. Perrick, made in 1968 about the effects of World War II, and particularly of the Occupation, on the organisation and operation of the Dutch police form the starting point. His remarks appeared in a pamphlet in which he argued in favour of a new police system in the Netherlands. Curiously, he went into quite some detail about the situation as it stood before and after the war, but barely touched on events during the war years. And what he did say on that subject still sounds rather cryptic even now. On the one hand, he claimed that making the Dutch police subservient to the interests of the Occupation had caused incalculable damage to their standing and had seriously compromised efforts to achieve more unity within the police. On the other hand, so he claimed, the Occupation had been a turning point for the police:

“the failure of the pre-war system had become an embarrassment, but at the same time it became clear that relinquishing all they had achieved so far would be detrimental”.<sup>1</sup>

Part of the aim of this paper is to shed more light on the negative and the positive consequences of the Occupation for the Dutch police to which Perrick alluded. It is useful to point out here that his evaluation came from an unimpeachable source – as a police inspector he had been involved in the Resistance movement in Nijmegen during the war and had therefore had to go into hiding towards the end of the war. He hid from the German police in the Belgian city of Leuven, where he passed the time by translating a book by the renowned criminologist Etienne De Greeff.<sup>2</sup> After the war he first held the post of Chief Inspector in Heerlen, before being appointed Chief Constable in Nijmegen.

Following on from Perrick’s comments, this paper will study the impact of World War II from three angles. First, we shall examine what consequences the Occupation had for the organisation of the police. Secondly, we shall look at the achievements that the Dutch police could ascribe to the Occupation. In doing so we shall consider the impact of the Occupation on the logistical facilities of the police and also its impact on the organisation of police officers’ careers. Finally, we shall assess the impact that the Occupation had on the standing of the police within Dutch society.

The order in which these topics will be addressed is not arbitrary, however. To make it clear what happened as regards facilities for the police and the careers of individual police officers, we first need to know something about the organisational history of the police system. The same is true for a good understanding of the changes in the public standing of police officers. These three topics will, however, be dealt with in the same way. We shall start by describing the situation before the war, then what happened during the war and finally what remained after the war. However, not all of the topics will be discussed in the same detail. This is mainly due to the fact that a lot has been written about the first topic – the reorganisation of the police – and relatively little about the others. But of course that is no reason for not discussing them in greater depth here.

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<sup>1</sup> F. Perrick, *Naar een nieuw politiebestedel; een pleitnota*, Arnhem, Gouda Quint, 1968, pp. 55-57.

<sup>2</sup> See particularly E. De Greeff, *Liefde en liefdesdelicten*, Heerlen, Winants (n.d.).

## **IV.2. The Consequences of the Occupation for the Organisation of the Police**

### **IV.2.1. The Situation before the War**

In his pamphlet, Perrick was very critical about the general organisation of the police system before World War II. He particularly denounced the disunity of the system and the constant battle between administrative, judicial and military authorities to gain control over this system, or at least “their” part of it. And he criticised this disunity and power struggle all the more because the authorities in question generally cared little or nothing about the way in which the police carried out their duties. In his view, the authorities had no time for quality. It was mainly individual police officers and the police trade unions that did their utmost to professionalise the police.

This brief outline of the state of the general organisation of the police before World War II is certainly not inaccurate. What was the situation actually like at that time?

On the one hand, under the *Gemeentewet* (Municipalities Act), each municipality had its own police force or at least one or more *gemeenteveldwachters* (local police constables). That the local authorities themselves were responsible for managing their own police force fitted in with the highly decentralised organisation of national government. It virtually goes without saying that this meant that the municipal police forces were very different from one another, not just in terms of manpower strength but also in many other respects, such as the recruitment and training of police officers, their salary, equipment and weapons, accommodation and material resources, and the way in which they carried out police duties. The upshot of this inequality between the various forces was that from the end of the 19th century – depending on the perception and interests of the municipal authorities – there was an upsurge of police forces whose professionalism matched that of leading metropolitan forces in neighbouring countries. However, there were also a great many police forces that were not, and could not, be part of this trend and remained stuck in their primitive 19th-century habits.<sup>3</sup> One of the consequences of this was that, even though so-called municipal autonomy in politics was frequently

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<sup>3</sup> See, for example, N. Manneke, *Uit oogpunt van politie; zorg en repressie in Rotterdam tussen 1870 en 1914*, Arnhem, Gouda Quint, 1993.

and fiercely adulated, many local authorities had to call out the army at the slightest excuse to maintain local law and order. They simply lacked the human and material resources to deal with it properly themselves.<sup>4</sup>

On the other hand, since the “French period” (when France ruled the Netherlands) the Netherlands has also had its version of the French *gendarmerie*: the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* (Royal Marechaussee). This military police force – which was under the administrative responsibility of the Ministry of War, but was actually managed by the Ministries of Justice and the Interior as far as its activities were concerned – was chiefly based in the southern provinces until the end of the 19th century. This was one of the reasons why a second national police force – this time a civilian one – was set up in 1856: the *Rijksveldwacht* (State Police). In the decades that followed, the co-existence of these two national police forces did not lead to any great difficulties in terms of policing. This changed at the end of the 19th century when the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* spread their field of operations to the northern provinces in order to deal with breaches of the peace by radical political movements. Insistent questions were raised as to whether it was really necessary to maintain both forces and whether a Police Act should be introduced to establish the relationship between the national and the municipal police forces and define their relations with the different public authorities. The government set up a committee in 1898 with the task of putting forward proposals in this area. In its report the committee expressed a certain preference for a single national police force modelled on the *Rijksveldwacht*. This recommendation was highly controversial, however, and was not implemented.<sup>5</sup>

The food riots that took place in various parts of the country at the end of World War I caused some unrest, but did not bring about a reform of the police system to enable the forces of law and order to cope better with breaches of the peace. The collapse of the German Empire and the subsequent threat of Socialist revolution in the Netherlands in November 1918 did eventually prompt this reform. It essentially involved two things. First, the *Korps Politietroepen* (Police Troops) were set up, ostensibly to operate mainly within the army – in reality, however, they were to act as the strongest arm of the Dutch police. Armed with carbines, hand grenades and machine guns, this new force was the answer to potentially violent revolutionary

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<sup>4</sup> R. van der Wal, *Of geweld zal worden gebruikt! Militaire bijstand bij de handhaving en het herstel van de openbare orde, 1840-1920*, Hilversum, Verloren, 2003.

<sup>5</sup> C. Fijnaut, *Voorproeve van een geschiedenis van de Nederlandse politie*, Tilburg, 2001, pp. 37-49, 69-89.

developments.<sup>6</sup> The second aspect of the reform was to set up a national political intelligence service. At the lowest level, this Central Intelligence Service comprised special sections and special detectives from the municipal and national police forces, at the highest, a separate sub-division of the army general staff. Although this service was incorporated into the army as a cover, it formally came under the responsibility of the Minister of the Interior. The Ministries of Justice and Finance also helped cover the costs of this intelligence service.<sup>7</sup>

The downturn in the economy in the early 1920s resurrected the question of whether savings could not be made at national police level by integrating some of the national forces. Serious disagreement on the question of which force(s) could be or might have to be disbanded meant that the situation remained unresolved. The (at times very acrid) public debate on the so-called police issue persisted, however, and flared up even more passionately when the economic recession made further public service cuts inevitable in 1930. The committee tasked with putting forward proposals for these cuts suggested amalgamating the *Rijksveldwacht* and the *gemeenteveldwacht* (local constabulary) to form a new regional police force, and maintaining the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* and the *Korps Politietroepen* alongside this new force. This proposal also met with a lot of opposition, mainly among the *Rijksveldwacht* of course. And the opposition was successful – the government brushed aside the proposal, arguing that it was not wise to tinker with the organisation of the police in times of uncertainty.<sup>8</sup>

At the same time the organisation of the municipal police was taken in hand. The 1920s can be characterised as a kind of springtime for the municipal police, marked by their professional flourishing in the cities. On the one hand, this chiefly manifested itself in an increasing degree of specialisation of these forces. Evidence of this was that their regional crime squads were expanded, separate traffic departments were set up and special departments were created for the juvenile police and the vice squad. On the other hand, better trained people were recruited, a “model specialist police school” was established in Hilversum in 1919, more specialist literature was available, and an independent *Tijdschrift voor de Politie*

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<sup>6</sup> J. Smeets, *Het Korps Politietroepen, 1919-1940*, Soest, Klomp, 1997.

<sup>7</sup> D. Engelen, *Geschiedenis van de Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst*, The Hague, Sdu Uitgevers, 1995, pp. 33-55.

<sup>8</sup> J. Smeets, *De geschiedenis van het rijkspolitiebestel in de twintigste eeuw; de periode 1848-1940*, Tilburg, pp. 179-215 (not published).

(Police Journal) was started in 1928, complementing the existing *Algemeen Nederlands Politie Weekblad* (General Dutch Police Weekly), which dated from 1916.<sup>9</sup>

One of the unintended results of this development was the terrible state that the municipal police and the *gemeenteveldwacht* in many small municipalities were in became even more evident. The debate about this in the context of the amendment of the Municipalities Act led to the insertion of Section 225 into the Act in 1931, under which municipalities with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants could ask central government to have one or more of the national police forces police their territory in return for payment of a certain fee to the State. It is not known how much small municipalities made use of this arrangement, which introduced the principle of a territorial division between municipalities with municipal police and those with national police. In other words, this arrangement breached the “classic” principle that every municipality should itself bear full responsibility for policing. So it is not surprising that one commentator on the amendment of the Municipalities Act argued that, although this measure might make it possible to organise the police in rural areas more effectively, it did mean that the municipality had “lost its autonomy for good”<sup>10</sup> in this important area. Another fact that should not be overlooked in this context is that the new Section 223 of the Municipalities Act also encroached on this autonomy through the municipal bye-laws concerning the manpower strength and composition of the municipalities’ police forces and the obligation to submit the eligibility requirements and remuneration of their police personnel to the approval of the Minister of the Interior. With this kind of control not only could blatant excesses in the management of the local police be prevented to some extent, in principle it was also possible to achieve some form of uniformity in the legal status of municipal police personnel. It is not known to what extent this actually happened.<sup>11</sup>

In July 1934 the “Jordaan uprising” took place in the Jordaan district of Amsterdam, springing from massive popular opposition to the government’s spending cuts and, in particular, to cuts in already low social security benefits. The mayor of Amsterdam asked the Ministry of War to provide military back-up to help the

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<sup>9</sup> G. Meershoek, *De geschiedenis van de lokale politiezorg in de twintigste eeuw; de periode 1848-1940*, Tilburg, pp. 164-183 (not published).

<sup>10</sup> J. Oppenheim, *Het Nederlandsch gemeenterecht*, Haarlem, De Ervan F. Bohn, 1932, pp. 204-205.

<sup>11</sup> *Verslag van de commissie ter bestudering van het politievraagstuk*, The Hague, Staatsdrukkerij, 1950, pp. 32-35.

municipal police restore order. Detachments from the *Koninklijke Marechaussee*, the *Korps Politietroepen* and the Grenadier and Jager Guards were promptly dispatched to the Dutch capital. They went in hard. Order was restored, but at a price – 5 dead, dozens of wounded, some seriously, and over a hundred arrests.<sup>12</sup> The consequences of this uprising and its suppression on the organisation of the police were significant. First of all, the conflict prompted the municipal police forces in the cities to set up “carbine brigades” so that in the event of further trouble they would be better equipped to suppress violent rioting. Secondly, the Ministry of Justice – which, like the *Rijksveldwacht*, had not been asked by Amsterdam authorities to get involved in tackling the uprising – swung into action to safeguard its role within the police.

Referring to the amendment of the Municipalities Act in 1931, the Ministry of Justice published a second Police Decree in 1935, which gave the procurators general – who had already been dubbed “acting directors of police” by virtue of the first Police Decree of 1851 – more responsibility for maintaining public order in the country, particularly in the case of disturbances that could not be handled on municipal level. The Minister of Justice then put together a committee to examine possible collaboration between the *Rijksveldwacht* and the *Koninklijke Marechaussee*, with a view to eventually amalgamating these two forces into a single *Korps Rijkspolitie* (National Police Force). The Ministry of Justice also began to get more explicitly involved in the organisation of criminal investigations. It devised a plan to create criminal investigation units in the metropolitan police forces to support investigations, particularly in the case of serious crimes committed within a certain radius of the city. Complementing these regional criminal investigation units, a National Criminal Investigation Agency would also be set up, which would incorporate the existing national criminal investigation units – such as those for combating trafficking in women and children, counterfeiting and drug trafficking, which until then had been part of the metropolitan police forces – into the National Criminal Investigation Service, and would also include a National Aliens Department and a National Identification Service. Finally, the Ministry was intent on gaining a stronger hold on the organisation and operation of the Central Intelligence Service. In the light of the Ministry’s overall policy of continuing to play a prominent part in the police system, this was not such a curious thing – intelligence, of a political or other nature, is often essential both for main-

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<sup>12</sup> W. Kielich, *Jordaners op de barricaden; het oproer van 1934*, Zutphen, De Walburg Pers, 1984, pp. 146-147.



taining public order and for conducting criminal investigations. In order to realise all these ambitions, an attempt was made to expand the fifth department of the Ministry – the police department – but there was a lack of resources to finance this. The work had to be done by just four people.<sup>13</sup>

Although the aforementioned plans may have been quite understandable from the point of view of the Ministry of Justice, both the Ministry of the Interior, along with the provincial and municipal authorities, and the Ministry of Defence, along with the *Koninklijke Marechaussee*, were unhappy about the Ministry of Justice's offensive and began to oppose it more and more. This conflict not only led to the creation of yet another committee behind the scenes with a remit to consider the overall organisation of the police system, it also resulted in a huge public scandal – the so-called Oss affair.<sup>14</sup> Briefly, the scandal amounted to this: the Oss division of the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* had been very successful in combating gangster activities in this area in 1935, but when in 1938 they began to investigate matters that involved the higher echelons of society in this little town, the Ministry of Justice, together with the Public Prosecution Department, deprived them of their investigative power and had their officers transferred to other divisions. The *Koninklijke Marechaussee* interpreted this drastic action as an attempt to discredit the force and put it in a disadvantaged position in relation to the *Rijksveldwacht* in the debate on the organisation of the police. The result was a huge uproar, exacerbated when a parliamentary committee concluded in 1939 that the Minister's actions had not been appropriate.

Attempts to find a solution to the police issue had come to nothing by 1940. In fact, the impasse that had now been reached was bigger than ever as a result of the Oss affair. The reorganisation of criminal investigation activities did not really get off the ground either, partly because critical comments were made in parliament about the idea of setting up a Central Criminal Investigation Agency. Some people thought that this kind of agency was more suited to a police state. In 1939-1940, therefore, the decision was made simply to set up a National Aliens Department and a National Identification Service and to appoint a few national police commissioners to the Ministry of Justice to implement this decision – the integration of the criminal investigation units into a National Criminal Investigation Service did not

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<sup>13</sup> M. Verburg, *Geschiedenis van het ministerie van Justitie*, The Hague, Sdu Uitgevers, 2001, pp. 297-298, 481-482.

<sup>14</sup> J. Smeets, *De affaire-Oss; van lokaal conflict tot nationale rel*, Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 2001.

get off the ground at all.<sup>15</sup> And towards the end of the 1930s who dared to really interfere in the already delicate position of the Central Intelligence Service within the police system? Amidst all the other conflicts, the Ministry of Justice was obviously not keen to join battle with other ministries over this issue. This did not mean, however, that it completely avoided a conflict. In 1938 the Ministry set up a bureau under its auspices that was specially entrusted with the task of actively combating espionage. It was staffed by detectives from the *Rijksveldwacht* who had been assigned to the procurators general. The Ministry of Justice thus entered into indirect combat with the Ministry of the Interior regarding control over the gathering of political intelligence.<sup>16</sup>

#### **IV.2.2. The Reorganisation during the Occupation**

The organisation of the Dutch police underwent a real metamorphosis during the Occupation. In just a few steps – three to be exact – the German occupying forces put an end to the impasse in which the debate had been languishing before the war. The steps that were taken were to some extent in line with the solutions to the police issue that had been put forward in the debate; at the same time, they were of course completely consistent with the image of the police system that the SS had been developing in Germany since 1933.

The first phase comprised the unification of the national police, which began in 1940 with the integration of the *Korps Politietroepen* into the *Koninklijke Marechaussee*. This integration was a consequence of the abolition of the Dutch army, of which the *Korps Politietroepen* had been an integral part. The next development was less obvious – the definitive integration of the *Rijksveldwacht* into the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* as of 1 March 1941.<sup>17</sup> However, this move fitted in with both the pre-war ambition to achieve unification of the national police and the aim of the SS to unify and militarise the police. As a result of the abolition of the Ministry of Defence, ministerial control over the new *Marechaussee* was transferred to the Ministry of Justice, thereby securing the position within the police

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<sup>15</sup> The National Identification Service was formally established by Decree of 16 December 1939. See H. Regenboog, "De rijksidentificatiedienst", *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 96, 1947, p. 436.

<sup>16</sup> D. Engelen, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>17</sup> W. van den Hoek, *De geschiedenis van het wapen der Koninklijke Marechaussee*, The Hague, Stichting Ons Wapen, 1963, pp. 414-417.

system that it had so desired before the war. Of course this also had repercussions on the organisation of the Ministry. At the end of September 1940 a Directorate-General of Police was set up within the Ministry of Justice. This was followed by the appointment of a Director-General and an Inspector-General of the Dutch police. A few months later – on 21 December 1940 – a decision was made to set up a Central Criminal Investigation Agency within the Directorate-General. This would also include a National Criminal Investigation Service, which had been one of the ideas raised before the war.<sup>18</sup>

The second phase of the reorganisation of the police followed the general strike of February 1941 in Amsterdam. Much to the regret of the SS leadership – in the person of the *Höhere SS- und Polizeiführer* (Higher SS and Police Chief) Hanns-Albin Rauter – the Amsterdam police had taken a passive line during the strike. This prompted him to increase the speed and scale of the reorganisation of the Dutch police. In July 1941 he appointed an authorised representative within the Directorate-General of Police to oversee the reorganisation of the police. He also issued instructions to reorganise the police in the cities along German lines. This meant that their internal organisation was to be split into three – the constabulary (uniformed police), the judicial police and the administrative police. It also meant that police companies were to be formed within these forces.<sup>19</sup> In line with these changes, the *gemeenteveldwacht* was disbanded by Decree of 28 November 1942. As of 1 December 1942 local constables either joined the municipal police (if the municipality had such a force) or else were transferred to the *Marechaussee*. In the latter case the municipalities concerned had to contribute to funding this force.<sup>20</sup> This represented one more step towards unification of the Dutch police organisation.

The third and decisive phase was heralded by the bye-law of 14 December 1942, which came into effect on 1 March 1943: the *Verordening Organisatie Politie* (Police Organisation Bye-Law).<sup>21</sup> Under this bye-law the police would henceforth be simply another “State instrument”. Supreme power in the police system would lie with a competent Secretary-General, for the time being that of the Ministry of Justice, and the Director-General of Police would be directly and personally under

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<sup>18</sup> C. Fijnaut, *Voorproeve van een geschiedenis van de Nederlandse politie*, pp. 139-145.

<sup>19</sup> For an account of the formation of these companies, see the article in *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 1, 1944, no. 4, p. 111.

<sup>20</sup> *Verordeningenblad voor het bezette Nederlandsche gebied*, 1942, pp. 574-576.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 628-637.

his authority. Reporting directly to him would be the police presidents, who had taken over command of the police from the mayor in the eight largest cities. At the same time the municipal police forces in those cities were transformed into State police forces. The police presidents of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Groningen, Arnhem and Eindhoven were also referred to as regional police presidents. In this way they not only took over the rather informal position of “acting director of police”, which had been part of the office of procurator general since 1851, but also gained control in two or more provinces over both the police and the mayors, in so far as the latter were in charge of the police. This was possible because under the new system the mayors were relegated to “persons in authority with regard to the police”. Although, in principle, the *Marechaussee* came solely under the authority of the regional police presidents, special rules allowed the mayors to have access to them. In municipalities without State police, however, the mayors had to make use of the municipal “constabulary” (uniformed police) and the “municipal detective force”. The municipalities involved were actually determined indirectly. A decision of the Secretaries-General of Justice and the Interior dated 12 January 1943 designated 129 municipalities that would retain municipal police. In the other municipalities there was either a State police force (in the cities) or State police in the form of the *Marechaussee* (in small municipalities). The centralisation of authority over the municipal police therefore went hand-in-hand with a territorial division between the municipal police and the State police – henceforth just one single police force was deployed in each municipality.

Within this new police system criminal investigation was organised separately. The Central Criminal Investigation Agency now formally came under the Secretary-General. This agency not only had to supervise the detective forces within the State police and the municipal police, but also remained responsible for dealing with serious offences. A National Criminal Investigation Service was therefore set up within the Central Criminal Investigation Agency. The relevant bye-law subsequently stipulated that “main criminal investigation departments” would be created within the five State police forces, headed by a regional police president, and ordinary criminal investigation departments within the remaining three State police forces. The main criminal investigation departments were allocated the same tasks as the Central Criminal Investigation Agency had for the whole country. The organisation of this State investigation service was fully described in a circular from the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Justice dated 1 June 1943.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Verzameling voorschriften betreffende de organisatie en bevoegdheden van de politie*, The Hague, VNG, 1943, 1st supp., pp. 32-43.

If we look at how the Dutch police system was organised at that time in the light of pre-war relationships, several major differences are all too apparent. First and foremost, of course, the large degree of autonomy of the police, which is usually typical of the organisation of the police in police states. In particular, the predominant position of the regional police presidents and, linked with this, the subordinate position of the mayors speak volumes in this respect.<sup>23</sup> Secondly, the fact that the national police were now unified cannot be ignored. Fifty years of hopeless debate on the subject was resolved within a few years by amalgamating the three existing forces into one *Marechaussee* and by partially integrating the *gemeenteveldwacht* into the *Marechaussee*. Thirdly, it is remarkable that a sharp territorial division was introduced between the *Marechaussee* and the municipal police and that some of the municipal police, particularly those involved in criminal investigation, were absorbed into the State police. The changes that the amendment of the Municipalities Act in 1931 had made possible in the relationship between the municipal police and the national police thereby vanished into nothingness: the vast majority of municipalities no longer had a police force of their own after 1943. The fourth and final difference was that the Ministry of Justice was pitchforked into the role of “police ministry” (Rauter would have preferred an independent Ministry of Police), with the result that the Ministry of the Interior rather faded into the background as regards police matters. And the Ministry of Justice did not become simply a “police ministry”, but a police ministry that had direct control over the day-to-day operations of the Dutch police through the Directorate-General of Police and the Central Criminal Investigation Agency.

#### **IV.2.3. The Compromise after the War**

When the war came to an end opinions were sharply divided as to how to reorganise the police system. There was broad agreement about one thing: restoring the system to how it had been before the war or maintaining the system that had been built up during the Occupation was out of the question. Dissension naturally focused on what should be put in its place. This question had already given the government in exile in London a few problems, but these were solved to some extent in that Article 1 of the Extraordinary Police Decree of 27 September 1944 – “pending further steps to regulate the organisation of the police” – assigned the

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<sup>23</sup> For a general account of such developments in Europe, see C. Fijnaut, *Opdat de macht een toevlucht zij?*, Antwerp, Kluwer Rechtswetenschappen, 1979, 2 vols.

Minister of Justice a pivotal role in the police system and placed the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* explicitly under his authority.<sup>24</sup>

Other opinions prevailed in occupied Holland. On the one hand, the Resistance took the view that – in order to combat Communist uprisings – a powerful national police should be created under the Ministry of the Interior. If necessary, this force should be able to call on the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* for assistance. On the other hand, there were calls to set up not only a national police force but also municipal police forces and to place both under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of the Interior. Here, too, the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* would mainly serve as military back-up for the civilian police.

The battle over the police system, which was sparked off by this dissension when the government finally returned to The Hague, resulted in the *Politiebesluit* (Police Decree) of 8 November 1945.<sup>25</sup> Putting forward the argument that a well-organised and properly managed police force was a prerequisite for keeping a tight rein on domestic matters under any circumstances, the government enacted this legislation just before the official Opening of Parliament. Clearly it was afraid of indefinitely prolonging the pre-war battle that had ensured that any far-reaching reforms of the police system could only be made at times of great political crisis, such as the impending threat of revolution in 1918 and the Jordaan uprising in 1934.

The police system outlined in the Decree was clearly a compromise between the various prevailing opinions. This is most evident from the fact that the task of policing was, in principle, entrusted to both a *Korps Rijkspolitie* and several municipal police forces – in 127 municipalities to be precise. Although the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* was restored, it was not actually mentioned in the 1945 Police Decree. This was very telling of course – there was no longer a key place for this force in the police system. The *Koninklijke Marechaussee* was in fact mainly supposed to provide the civilian police forces with “concrete assistance”; otherwise its tasks were confined to border patrol and policing the army.<sup>26</sup> Mayors regained

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<sup>24</sup> This Decree is included in the *Verzameling van koninklijke besluiten ten dienste der politie*, Eindhoven, Van Griensven, 1945, no. 18.

<sup>25</sup> P. van Reenen, “Politiebestel en Politiebesluit 1945”, in *Redenen van wetenschap*, Arnhem, Gouda Quint, 1985, pp. 181-220. This Decree was published in the Bulletin of Acts and Decrees (*Staatsblad*), 1945, no. F250.

<sup>26</sup> See the relevant Ministerial Order of 30 July 1945 in the *Politieblad voor Nederland*, 1945, no. 10, p. 155.

authority not only over the municipal police but also over the two national police forces whenever the latter intervened in the municipality to maintain public order, although Article 6 stated that “where necessary” the Queen’s Commissioners were also responsible in this area. The Minister of Justice – and in his wake the procurators general at the Courts of Appeal – gained authority over the police whenever action was taken as part of an investigation of an offence. The Decree did not confer any role in the police system on the public prosecutors at the district courts. Management of the municipal police force was partly entrusted to the mayor in each municipality, but the Minister of the Interior also had great direct and indirect influence in this area. Management of the *Korps Rijkspolitie* was in the hands of the Minister of Justice. In dividing responsibility for the management of the police forces at ministerial level in this way, the principle was applied that both ministers would have to work closely together in many areas, for example where manpower strength, equipment and accommodation were concerned, or personnel recruitment and training.

One aspect that is often ignored in discussing this Decree is what it does *not* contain. One specific example is the creation of a political intelligence service in 1945, the Central Security Service, which was renamed the National Security Service (BVD) in 1949, which it does not mention. Like the Central Intelligence Service before the war, this service was also given the task of working closely with the intelligence departments of the *Korps Rijkspolitie* and the municipal police forces to gather information about anything that might constitute a threat to internal law and order and security. One important difference compared with the situation before the war was that this security service was now an independent entity, not part of the army. The fact that it was based within the Ministry of the Interior was in line with the situation that existed before the war, when the Central Intelligence Service also came largely under the responsibility of this ministry. Nevertheless, even this could only be decided after a fierce battle with the Ministry of Justice and other government departments.<sup>27</sup>

Be that as it may, the police system that was organised after the war was by no means a complete change from the system that had been developed during the Occupation. True, the police no longer enjoyed administrative and political autonomy. Moreover, both the mayor and the procurator general were largely restored to honour, with much of their authority in police matters returned to them. This also put an end to efforts to partially incorporate the municipal police forces

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<sup>27</sup> D. Engelen, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-105.

into the national police. One thing that was preserved on the whole was the unification of the national police ... with one important “but”. Instead of the *Marechaussee* that was formed during the war, only one single police force made a reappearance, albeit one that was very similar to the *Marechaussee* in terms of organisation: the *Korps Rijkspolitie*. Nevertheless, behind the scenes the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* was in fact resurrected. On the other hand, the Ministry of Justice completely lost the monopoly in police matters it had enjoyed during the Occupation. Under the new system, the Ministry of the Interior now also had a significant say about the police system. In another important area, however, the “German” system was not completely relegated to the past after the war – the far-reaching territorial division between the national and the municipal police forces. Apart from a couple of municipalities, this was left virtually intact. However, for the *gemeenteveldwachters* and the *Korps Politietroepen*, there was no room in the new system.

Right from the start there was almost continuous parliamentary opposition to both the reorganisation of the police system and the way in which it had come about. On the latter point opponents were agreed – the reorganisation should have taken place after thorough deliberation in parliament and should have been enshrined in an Act of Parliament. As regards the former point, on the other hand, opinions were very much divided. Many critics believed that the new system, especially with the more important role of the Ministry of the Interior and the Queen’s Commissioners, was at odds with the idea of decentralisation as laid down in the Municipalities Act. They felt that the position of the municipalities and particularly that of the mayors had already been undermined too much by the 1945 Police Decree. Moreover, in their view, the idea of decentralisation was actually violated because the vast majority of the municipalities were deprived of their own police force, or at any rate their own police officers in the form of police constables (*veldwachters*). Others took the view that although some degree of centralisation of the police system may have been inevitable, the legal security and safety of citizens did not benefit from the Ministry of the Interior having such an important role in that system. They therefore felt that it was the Ministry of Justice that should play a leading part, as this offered the best safeguard against injustice and arbitrariness. They also warned of the possibility of an all-out struggle for power between the two Ministries and of social problems between the *Korps Rijkspolitie* and the municipal police forces.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Dutch House of Representatives, National Budget for the Financial Year 1946, Appendix A, 2.IV.7, pp. 25-26.



The government first tried to placate the critics by pointing out that, strictly speaking, it was not necessary to regulate the organisation of the police system by law. It was also stressed that the dual task of the police – maintenance of public order and investigation – also made some form of duality at ministry level almost inevitable. In the government's view, cooperation between the police forces could be encouraged by training police officers at the same schools. And so on and so forth. Important parliamentary figures did not let these arguments sway them, however. They stuck to their guns, so much so that the government quickly promised that it would work on a Police Bill and that the intention was that the legislation should stipulate that policing would be carried out by a municipal police force in more municipalities than prescribed in the 1945 Police Decree.<sup>29</sup> But this was easier said than done. By the end of 1947 the ministers involved had not yet come up with anything, while there were increasingly persistent calls both within and outside parliament for a Police Act in which the municipalities and particularly the mayor would be guaranteed a stronger position. Once again the discussion about the police threatened to end in deadlock. Right in the middle of the Cold War this was something that the government wanted to avoid at all costs, however. That was the time, in its view, when it was essential to have consensus on the need for a decisive police force that could adequately protect Dutch society – with the help of an active intelligence service and, if necessary, the support of the army – against extremism, i.e. Communism. To bring about that consensus, the government decided in 1948 to set up a committee to review the whole issue of the police. However, that committee did not deliver the goods either. This was evident from the fact that, besides a majority opinion, a number of minority points of view had to be published in 1950.<sup>30</sup>

It took another four years before a Police Bill could be brought before parliament, which was nevertheless similar in content to the 1945 Police Decree. Concessions had, however, been made to critics of the 1945 Police Decree on a couple of important points. For instance, it was now clearly stated that the mayors were generally in charge of the municipal police forces and responsible for their management. It was also specified in which municipalities there would always be a municipal police presence – namely, in municipalities with more than 25,000 inhabitants. The public prosecutors were also given some recognition, having to

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix A, 2.IV.8, pp. 46-48, and 2.V.7, pp. 32-33.

<sup>30</sup> See the aforementioned *Verlag van de commissie ter bestudering van het politievraagstuk*.

consult with the mayors in cases where their policy might have repercussions for the maintenance of public order.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, the debate on the bill in both houses of parliament was heated and protracted. One striking feature of the debate was not so much that once again much was said in favour of a stronger position for the municipalities in the police system, but that there were calls from some quarters to strengthen the position of the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* in this system. Some MPs felt that this military police force should be dealt with on an equal footing in the Police Act as the *Korps Rijkspolitie*. This would not only do justice to the history of the Dutch police, but would also be consistent with the aim of the legislation – to regulate the organisation of the whole police system. Why give one police force a clear position in this system and not the other? Its military status did not impede inclusion of the *Koninklijke Marechaussee*. The force had always had good results, precisely because of this status. The government, however, was not prepared to accept this or any other argument. By a majority vote, the bill submitted in 1954 was by and large retained.

In 1957 the first Dutch Police Act became a fact.<sup>32</sup> For the purposes of this contribution, this means that the reorganisation of the police system during the Occupation was legalised in a number of important areas. It might also be said that a significant part of that reorganisation was officially incorporated through parliamentary channels into the history of the Dutch police. In any case the impact of the Occupation on the organisation of the Dutch police system thus acquired a more lasting character.<sup>33</sup>

In the mid-1960s, however, the compromise of the 1957 Police Act ran into problems as a result of the malaise that overtook those involved in maintaining public order in Amsterdam in the years 1965-1966. The Amsterdam police did not always appear to be capable of handling the series of protests and breaches of the peace that took place in the city during this time in a coherent and consistent way. This was particularly apparent during the wedding of Princess Beatrix and Prince Claus in March 1966 when their attempts to deal with protestors left much to be desired. A committee of inquiry was set up shortly thereafter and its reports clearly showed that the confusion evident in the police action was not only the result of

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<sup>31</sup> Dutch House of Representatives, 1953-1954 session, 3525, no. 2.

<sup>32</sup> The Act was published in the Bulletin of Acts and Decrees (*Staatsblad*), 1957, no. 244.

<sup>33</sup> See, for example, the *Voorlopig Verslag* (interim report) on the debate on the subject, Dutch House of Representatives, 1954-1955 session, 3525, no. 5.

the problems that the force had in formulating an effective operational response to the ways in which peaceful activists on the one hand and radical students and trade unionists on the other were organising actions. It also stemmed from the huge differences in opinion between the mayor and the public prosecutor – and, by extension, senior police officers – concerning the strategies that could and should be adopted to maintain public order.<sup>34</sup> The resulting malaise not only led to the resignation of the mayor of Amsterdam and the Chief Constable, but also prompted the government to set up a working group in 1967 with the task of drafting sweeping amendments to the 1957 Police Act. How this working group, made up of civil servants, would deal with the legacy of the past, including the legacy of the Occupation, falls outside the scope of this paper.

#### **IV.3. The Achievements of the Occupation for the Police as a Whole and for Individual Police Officers**

The consequences of the Occupation for the police are normally demonstrated by considering the consequences for their general organisation. This approach is understandable. The reorganisation that took place during that time was not insignificant and had an effect on many aspects of the police system. This is apparent from a study of the police journals of the time. So it is striking that the post-war literature does not usually explain exactly where these effects were felt and precisely what they were. Even Perrick had nothing to say on the subject in 1969, as if he, too, had difficulty acknowledging that there was more to the Occupation than just its negative aspects.

Using two examples we shall now try to demonstrate the effects of the reorganisation of the police during the Occupation. The first example concerns the logistical facilities of the police, the second the organisation of police officers' careers.

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<sup>34</sup> *Slotrapport van de commissie van onderzoek Amsterdam*, The Hague, Staatsuitgeverij, 1967.

### **IV.3.1. The Development of Central Logistical Facilities**

#### *IV.3.1.1. The Lack of Facilities before the War*

Anyone who studies the pre-war history of the Dutch police in any depth will conclude that they did not actually have any central logistical facilities. This was not particularly remarkable of course. It was a logical corollary of the disunity of the police system. This meant that each force had to provide its own facilities and that these facilities could not be used by other forces. Facilities that were jointly developed and maintained simply did not exist.

For instance, the *Koninklijke Marechaussee* had its own vehicle maintenance service, as did the *Rijksveldwacht*, the *Korps Politietroepen* and the metropolitan police forces. While there might be something to be said for this form of independence from the point of “readiness for battle”, the fact that the various forces could organise their fingerprints system as they saw fit was less self-explanatory, since a centralised system would have facilitated national comparison of fingerprints in the case of criminals operating regionally, nationally or internationally. Furthermore, in view of the increasing use of cars and trains and the exponential growth of telephone technology, it was very strange that there was no special telephone and telex network for all police forces before the war. Here, too, each force continued to provide for itself as best it could. It was not until the late 1930s that the procurators general were connected by telex to all the police forces within their jurisdiction. And what was also surprising was that when it came to the scientific investigation of clues, the only people who could be called on were pharmacists and other scientists who had specialised in this kind of work for the sheer pleasure of it. As far as setting up a central police laboratory was concerned, there was nothing in the pipeline.

It looks very much as if the Ministry of Justice began to regard this lack of joint or central facilities as more and more of a problem in the course of the 1930s. In any case the plans it made to set up a Central Criminal Investigation Agency represented its determination to do everything necessary to rectify this problem in the area of criminal investigation. Establishing a National Identification Service and a National Investigation Service would have automatically harmonised criminal investigation information systems to some extent, and perhaps would also have resulted in the development of a communication network to enable this kind of data to be exchanged quickly and on a larger scale with and between the various police forces in the country.

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It has already been mentioned, however, that the Central Criminal Investigation Agency did not really get off the ground before the war. The development of central facilities in some form or other also came to nothing.

*IV.3.1.2. The Development of Central Facilities during the Occupation*

The unification and centralisation of the police system in the years 1942-1943 meant that the facilities that existed within any one force virtually “automatically” became facilities for the whole of the police. Precisely because there were few facilities before the war and successive reorganisations had turned the Dutch police into one huge coherent organisation, it is not so very strange that central facilities for the police were developed during the Occupation, something that would actually have been inconceivable before the war. How would the “new” police system have been able to function otherwise?

In order to get an idea of the facilities specifically involved at that time, the first important thing to consider is the organisation chart of the Directorate-General of Police and that of the Central Criminal Investigation Agency. The war of course made it impossible to actually implement all the plans that existed. The next important step is therefore to examine the journals to verify to what extent the plans were in fact implemented. Future research in the records should show what these plans really meant in practice across the board.

As mentioned earlier, the Directorate-General of Police was part of the Ministry of Justice. Compared with the police department that existed within this Ministry before the war, this was a massive institution. Day-to-day management was in the hands of a Chief of Staff, whose responsibilities included a translation office and a press and propaganda department. There were also five main departments. The most important of these in this context was the “executive service” department, which was not only responsible for the organisation and duties of the police but was also in command of any police action. Nothing shows more clearly than this the extent to which the Dutch police was regarded since its reorganisation in 1942-1943 as an operational system managed from the top down.

To realise this ambition, the obvious move was to make this same department responsible for the central logistics of the Dutch police – anyone who wants to manage must have the resources to do so. Technically speaking this involved three units, the Logistic Support Unit, the Police Vehicle Unit and the Technical Communication Unit.<sup>35</sup> It is difficult to ascertain from the journals how these units

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<sup>35</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 1, 1943, no. 10. pp. 3-4.

operated. On the one hand, miscellaneous communications give the impression that they were gradually beginning to function efficiently. On the other hand, it can be inferred from all sorts of reports that the growing lack of resources meant that there was no chance for everything to operate smoothly. And it is likely that as the end of the war drew closer, the worse things went with the units in question.

This emerges, for example, from reports from the Logistic Support Unit in the spring of 1944. These state not only that “quite a lot” of police officers were still walking round in pre-war uniforms, but also that personnel in the National Criminal Investigation Service were also being urgently asked to hand in parts of their uniform.<sup>36</sup> Around the same time it was reported that the central weapons store no longer had many items of equipment used to maintain firearms, and had no more “*klewangs*” (Javanese scimitars) and “officers’ walking swords”.<sup>37</sup>

The Technical Communication Unit functioned, it seems, a bit more effectively, perhaps because operationally it was much more important than the Logistic Support Unit. This can be deduced from the detailed regulations concerning the operation of the “national message and alarm system”. There are also accounts of this unit that indicate it functioned adequately.<sup>38</sup>

The Police Vehicle Unit also seems to have operated pretty well throughout 1944. One account of the workshop where motorbikes and other vehicles were repaired would seem to suggest this at any rate.<sup>39</sup>

As far as the central facilities within the Central Criminal Investigation Agency are concerned, a glance at its organisation chart is enough to show that here, too, ambitions were not modest. The intended organisation of the state investigation service was disclosed in detail in a circular dated 1 June 1943.<sup>40</sup> The Central Criminal Investigation Agency was to form the heart of criminal investigation activities and comprised three directorates:

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<sup>36</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 2, 1944, no. 12, pp. 375-376.

<sup>37</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 2, 1944, no. 14, p. 451.

<sup>38</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 1, 1943, no. 23, pp. 22-25; vol. 2, 1944, no. 4, pp. 506-509.

<sup>39</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 2, 1944, no. 4, pp. 103-105.

<sup>40</sup> *Verzameling voorschriften betreffende de organisatie en de bevoegdheden van de politie*, pp. 32-43. See also G. Meershoek, *Dienaren van het gezag; de Amsterdamse politie tijdens de bezetting*, Amsterdam, Van Gennep, 1999, pp. 294-298.

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- Directorate I, which dealt with personnel and domestic affairs, alien affairs and international police cooperation;
- Directorate II, which comprised the investigation service and all relevant units tasked with combating serious crime, trafficking in drugs, car theft, and so on;
- Directorate III, which comprised the identification service, the wanted persons' department, the list of wanted persons and a detective journal.

Separate from these three directorates there would also be photo archives, collections of fingerprints, card indexes of wanted persons and aliases, a card index of homosexuals, and so on.

This outline alone shows that the organisation of the Central Criminal Investigation Agency amply corresponded to the plans that the Ministry of Justice had worked out before the war: the creation of a support services centre for the Dutch detective force, to couch it in contemporary language. In that sense, therefore, there was certainly continuity in policy. On the other hand, however, in the wartime version of the plans the criminal investigation units were also to carry out criminal investigations independently. Furthermore, according to the blueprint some additional facilities that had not even figured in the pre-war plans were to be created within the individual directorates. One example is the detective journal already mentioned – called *Crimen* – but just as important were the plans to set up a scientific police laboratory, to put together a criminology library and to establish a detective school.

It is beyond doubt that the Central Criminal Investigation Agency was phased in during the war – i.e. even before 1943. Exactly what stage it had reached by the end of the war has never been investigated. The fact is that – not without a few problems – several criminal investigation units were set up, the list of wanted persons got off the ground, several issues of the journal *Crimen* were published, and so on.<sup>41</sup> With some effort, the detective school was also founded in Overveen (Bloemendaal), in a huge villa called Duinlust. The first classes were given there in March 1944. In August 1944 it was officially announced that the next series of classes would start early in 1945 “at the detective school in Overveen and/or at a sister organisation”. Obviously doubts had begun to set in even in Overveen

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<sup>41</sup> With regard to the list of wanted persons, see *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 1, 1943, no. 8, pp. 23-24.

about the “good” progress being made. The school also had an extensive technical library.<sup>42</sup>

Plans for a police laboratory never really got beyond the drawing board, however. If there was a need for technical investigation work, it was contracted out to the public sector, which was thought to have the necessary know-how.<sup>43</sup>

#### *IV.3.1.3. Preserving these Facilities after the War*

If the way in which the upper levels of the Dutch police were organised or reorganised in the areas just discussed are studied, one thing that stands out is that the Police Department of the Ministry of Justice largely took over the tasks that had been entrusted to the Directorate-General of Police during the Occupation. The huge impact of World War II on the operational organisation of the Dutch police can hardly be demonstrated more succinctly. In that sense it is by no means odd that the head of that department held the rank of Director-General of Police. One important difference compared to the situation during the Occupation was that the new-style Directorate-General could not intervene independently or in an executive capacity in the actual investigation of offences. The 1945 Police Decree did not offer any scope for that.<sup>44</sup> Following on from this, a second importance difference should be pointed out. The Ministerial Order of 30 July 1945, in which the organisation of the police department was laid down, did not mention the name of the Central Criminal Investigation Agency. That designation had obviously already become too tainted during the war.<sup>45</sup>

Around 1950 the police department comprised several bureaus. Two are important for our purposes.

First, the Management Bureau, which at that time included the Logistic Support Unit, the Police Vehicles and Equipment Service, and the Technical Communica-

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<sup>42</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 2, 1944, no. 10, pp. 289-290; no. 15, p. 494.

<sup>43</sup> W. Froentjes, *Hoofdstukken uit de criminalistiek*, Arnhem, Gouda Quint, 1985, p. 40, note 40.

<sup>44</sup> The organisation of the Ministry of Justice in relation to police matters is extensively discussed in the *Verslag van de commissie ter bestudering van het politievraagstuk*, pp. 56-62.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. the text of this Ministerial Order in *Politieblad voor Nederland*, no. 8, pp. 121-122. See also the Ministerial Order of 4 November 1948 concerning the position of the forensic science laboratory within the organisation of the Ministry of Justice. *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 97, 1948, p. 477.



tion Unit. The epithet “*der rijkspolitie*” (of the national police) was now added to the names of these three units, but this did nothing to mask their “war past”. These three units were the direct successors to the units that were set up during the Occupation (and had virtually the same names). And although the suffix “*der rijkspolitie*” might suggest that they worked exclusively for the *Korps Rijkspolitie*, it was evident from various sources that they served the whole of the Dutch police. Neither the descriptions of these units in the police journals nor the ministerial orders in which their organisation and operation were formalised leave any doubt about this.<sup>46</sup> In connection with this it should be mentioned that the Management Bureau was also responsible for the National Identification Service, the National Alien Service and the forensic science laboratory that by then had got off the ground.<sup>47</sup>

Secondly, the Criminal Information Bureau was the immediate successor to the National Investigation Service, which had been set up during the Occupation within the Central Criminal Investigation Agency. It now simply had a less operational name, a less offensive name too. However, it still largely comprised the same units as had made up that service during the Occupation – a unit for dealing with international criminals, one for combating drug trafficking, one for tackling serious, life-threatening criminal offences, one for motor vehicle crime, and so on. The criminology library of the detective school was also the responsibility of this bureau.<sup>48</sup> The school as such was in fact immediately abolished after the war, but not for good. After several years’ discussion in the specialist journals about the need for proper training for detectives, a new detective school was established in 1963, this time in Wolfheze.<sup>49</sup> In 1973 this school was moved to Zutphen. It was

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<sup>46</sup> See, for example, S. Langendam, “De technische verbindingdienst”, *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 96, 1947, pp. 415-420; R. van der Poel, “De telexdienst der Nederlandse politie”, *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 97, 1948, pp. 24-26. See also the Ministerial Order of 18 October 1952 concerning the organisation and tasks of the Police Vehicles and Equipment Service, *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 101, 1952, p. 437.

<sup>47</sup> See, for example, H. Regenboog, *op. cit.*

<sup>48</sup> See Bureau Criminele Voorlichting (Criminal Information Bureau), *Geschiedenis en organisatie*, The Hague, Ministry of Justice, 1949, pp. 7-40. Although the title of this work mentions the word “*geschiedenis*” (history), remarkably the history of the Central Criminal Investigation Agency during the Occupation is almost completely passed over.

<sup>49</sup> See, for example, the discussion on this subject in the *Algemeen Politieblad* in 1950, initiated by G. Eissens (“Verdiend de vorming van het recherchepersoneel verbetering? Hoe wordt dit personeel gevormd?”), *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 99, 1950, pp. 291-292).

not until the 1990s, however, that a detective journal once again rolled off the presses, initially called *Modus*, and now *Recherchemagazine*.

These last two examples show that not everything that had been built up during the Occupation survived intact after the war. As the example of the Directorate-General of Police and that of the Central Criminal Investigation Agency demonstrate, even things that were taken up directly were adapted in essential areas to the new era that was dawning. All in all, what this means is that at this juncture in the history of the Dutch police continuity and change went hand-in-hand. For a proper reconstruction of this history it is therefore very important to analyse developments carefully, while keeping a sharp eye on both of these aspects.

### **IV.3.2. The Organisation of Police Officers' Careers**

#### *IV.3.2.1. The Pitiful Situation before the War*

As little has been published about the organisation of police officers' careers before the war as about the extent and level of professional technical facilities. Nevertheless, based on the existing literature and the ongoing research by Van der Wal on the history of the police trade unions, a few things can be said about issues relating to the careers of police officers.<sup>50</sup>

As in the case of technical facilities here, too, the disunity of the police system meant that no national standards were developed for important elements of the legal status of police officers or, in broader terms, for significant aspects of their working conditions. The competent authorities had the right and the duty to determine for each police force what conditions prospective police officers had to fulfil, whether and how they should be trained, when they were ready to be promoted to higher ranks, what the system of disciplinary sanctions was, whether or not police officers should help pay for their equipment, whether specific medical care could be provided in the event of an accident in service, and so on. The upshot of this situation was that working conditions for members of the national police forces not only varied from one force to another, but also differed in numerous ways from those for members of the municipal police forces and for local police constables. But if only it were as "simple" as that. The decentralisation of the Dutch administrative structure meant that, as a result of local autonomy in police matters, large

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<sup>50</sup> R. van der Wal, *De geschiedenis van de politiebonden en het politieonderwijs in de twintigste eeuw; periode 1848-1940*, Tilburg, 2003, pp. 6-138 (not published).

differences existed between the municipalities as regards the organisation of police officers' careers.<sup>51</sup>

Yet it is not just the differences in career development that stand out during this particular period, but also the abominable standard of working conditions. Many police officers and their families lived in proud poverty before the war. Average salaries were low, the work was often hard and the hours long, the forces' accommodation was usually of a poor standard, the bonuses were few and far between, and medical care and pension provision were minimal. Police officers were of course not the only public servants who were badly off, and perhaps in some ways they were even slightly better off than casual workers in agriculture or industry, but their lot was certainly not an enviable one. These conditions were to some extent a reflection of the generally low level of requirements that police officers had to meet in the main. Certainly there were hardly any requirements for lower ranks in terms of prior training. Often there was no chance of further training either. And the opportunity to keep up physical skills was minimal or even non-existent.<sup>52</sup>

In all fairness it has to be said that over the years the situation did improve in some respects, at least for the municipal police. Reference has already been made to the amendment of the Municipalities Act in 1931, which enabled the Ministry of the Interior to combat the worst excesses in the areas of recruitment and salaries, at least in the small municipalities. To some extent this change reflected the modest overall improvement in the working conditions of police officers – also in the areas of accommodation and equipment – which local and national police trade unions were gradually able to push through in the early 1920s in many municipal police forces. At the same time efforts were being made, particularly in some of the larger municipal police forces, to raise the intellectual level of police officers. This was achieved partly by recruiting police officers with a higher standard of prior training on an increasingly larger scale and partly by training these police officers better. On this point it should be emphasised that before the war it was mainly the police trade unions that bothered about the training of police officers – though perhaps out of self-interest, with a view to recruiting and keeping members. They did this by organising correspondence courses and introducing

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<sup>51</sup> Besides the research by Van der Wal, see also D. van der Veen and M. Zandbergen, *Honderd jaar politievakorganisatie in Nederland, 1887-1987*, Utrecht, Histosearch, 1987, pp. 12-20.

<sup>52</sup> See also B. Breeder and D. Rook, "*Crescendo*", Hoorn, Bond van christelijk Politieambtenaren in Nederland (Protestant Police Officers' Union), 1955, pp. 42-62.

national exams leading to a police diploma. Central government showed little or no interest in the intellectual level of the police. When the model specialist police school was established in 1919 (referred to earlier), the Minister of Justice did put in an appearance, but even this first real police training college in the Netherlands was founded by one of the large police trade unions with the assistance of a few prominent Chief Constables. Due to a lack of support from the government and the police forces, during the inter-war years this school was unable to develop into a real police academy for all police officers in the Netherlands, irrespective of the force to which they belonged. All in all, it remained a remarkable but small-scale initiative.<sup>53</sup>

The national police forces fared little better than the municipal police forces. There is even justification for assuming their situation was actually worse. At any rate as far as training was concerned, no progress was made in the 1920s and 1930s. For example, they did not support initiatives like the model specialist police school, but held on to the limited in-house training of newcomers. Consequently, the intellectual level of police officers was low and remained that way. And the conditions in which they had to work were often just as awful as those in which their colleagues in the municipal police forces were supposed to scrape a living. And in their case it was not just the low salary and the defective equipment, but also the often dreadful accommodation and the exhausting duty rosters.<sup>54</sup>

Finally, we should not ignore the fact that the pitiful conditions in which police officers generally had to work were partly the result of the persistent disunity between the police trade unions. This disunity made it difficult for police officers to take a hard line with the government and force better working conditions across the board. Partly as a result of the divided police system, numerous police trade unions were set up at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. With one exception, however, these were organised along police force lines and, to some extent, by category of police personnel. Just as several of these local and/or category-based unions amalgamated to form two large national police unions, World War I broke out. This made it difficult for the unions to make exacting demands, let alone get the authorities to comply with them. After the war this limited form of unification of the trade unions was largely reversed with the emergence of police

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<sup>53</sup> Cf. G. Meershoek, *De geschiedenis van de lokale politiezorg in de twintigste eeuw; de periode 1848-1940*, pp. 139-183 (not published).

<sup>54</sup> Cf. J. Smeets, *De geschiedenis van het rijkspolitiebestel in de twintigste eeuw; de periode 1848-1940*, pp. 111-125, 187-202 (not published).

trade unions that were organised along religious or political lines. Once again disunity reigned and the authorities had a lot of scope not to comply unquestioningly – and certainly not fully – with the demands of individual police trade unions. Another factor is that in both the 1920s and 1930s the economic situation in the country offered them little opportunity to respond to such demands, even if they had wished to do so.<sup>55</sup>

#### *IV.3.2.2. The Structure of a Career in the Police during the Occupation*

The abolition of the existing police trade unions during the Occupation and the formation of a “Comradeship Union” of which all police officers were *ex officio* members is a chapter in Dutch police history that can be skipped over here. The formation of this union was just one of the many institutional measures taken to bring the Dutch police under the control of Rauter and the SS and certainly did not represent one of the achievements to which Perrick alluded after the war.<sup>56</sup> To convey an impression of these, it would be better to describe what was done during the Occupation as regards the organisation of police officers’ careers which was not completely or partially reversed after the war by the new Dutch administrators of the police.

Like the logistics of the Dutch police, the organisation of a career in the police underwent a complete metamorphosis during the Occupation. So here, too, the unification and centralisation of the police had enormous repercussions. These were particularly evident in two areas – legal status and salaries, and education and training.

In the first place, for the very first time in history, measures were taken for the police as a whole that made it possible to regulate the legal status of police officers in a coherent manner. It is not difficult to illustrate this important development. One obvious example is that one and the same salary and bonus system was established for all police officers, coupled with the introduction of a uniform ranking system, more specifically for the state investigation service.<sup>57</sup> General regulations

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<sup>55</sup> D. van der Veen and M. Zandbergen, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-36.

<sup>56</sup> See, for example, B. Reeder and D. Rook, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-118; D. van der Veen and M. Zandbergen, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-57; B. Huizing and K. Aartsma, *De zwarte politie, 1940-1945*, Weesp, De Haan, 1986, pp. 36-38.

<sup>57</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 1, 1943, no. 8, pp. 25-28; vol. 2, 1944, no. 11, p. 343. See also the *Verzameling voorschriften betreffende de organisatie en de bevoegdheden van de politie*, pp. 85-88.

were also introduced relating to the appointment, training, dismissal, and so on. of police personnel.<sup>58</sup> Another very important initiative was the creation of the *Nederlandsch Politie Ziekenfonds* (Dutch police health insurance fund) in 1942.<sup>59</sup> This was most certainly a response to one of the main complaints regularly voiced by the police trade unions before the war – the need to improve the medical and dental care given to police officers and their families. Incidentally, it was compulsory for every police officer to join this health insurance fund.

Secondly, permanent training colleges for the Dutch police were founded during the Occupation. We have already mentioned the creation of a detective school in 1943-1944. Two other schools were more important, however. In 1942 a school for junior police personnel was set up at a barracks in Schalkhaar (near Deventer).<sup>60</sup> The prospective police officers who were trained here were part of the “Police Training Battalion”. The name of this outfit betrays the military bias of the training. The syllabus left no room for misunderstanding as to the real goal – to inculcate police officers with Nazi ideas. Around 2,500 new police constables were trained at Schalkhaar. Rauter would have liked older police personnel to have been retrained at Schalkhaar as well, but massive opposition scuppered this plan. The majority of the people trained at Schalkhaar ended up in the militarised police companies in the cities. Besides this school for junior police personnel, a national training college for police officers was set up in 1942 in Apeldoorn at a barracks of the *Marechaussee*. About 250 officers were trained there, mainly newcomers to the police, but also people from the lower ranks. Besides legal subjects the syllabus included military exercises and practical police subjects. Maintenance of public order also featured conspicuously in the training programme. It was no coincidence, of course, that part of the exam for the third intake in February 1944 was devoted to suppressing a Communist uprising in a small town.<sup>61</sup> This again betrays the Nazi spirit of the school. Resistance and protest were nipped in the bud, however. When newcomers refused to give the Nazi salute they were

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<sup>58</sup> See the record in the third supplement of the aforementioned *Verzameling voorschriften betreffende de organisatie en bevoegdheden van de politie*.

<sup>59</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 2, 1944, no. 16, pp. 522-524; no. 17, pp. 545-546

<sup>60</sup> J. Kelder, *De Schalkhaarders; Nederlandse politiemannen naar nationaal-socialistische snit*, Utrecht, Veen, 1990.

<sup>61</sup> *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 2, 1944, no. 7, pp. 199-202.

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collectively locked up. Some were in fact transferred in police vans to concentration camps.<sup>62</sup>

The foregoing suggests that with the establishment of these two schools the training of police officers became purely a matter for the State. Other institutions were no longer allowed to get involved. This of course represented a radical break with the past, when it was the police trade unions that organised the training of most police officers to a large extent.<sup>63</sup> And the break with the past was no less drastic in the area of legal status and salaries. Diversity made way for uniformity. In many respects, however, this was already one of the priorities of the trade unions before the war. To what extent police officers were actually better off during the Occupation is a question that has not yet been addressed, but deserves to be studied, not least to find out to what extent this shift was prompted by Rauter's ambition to win over the Dutch policeman to the Nazi cause. After the war he reportedly said to a policeman that he had him (Rauter) to thank for his salary.<sup>64</sup>

*IV.3.2.3. The Continuation of the Measures Taken .*

The 1945 Police Decree and the 1957 Police Act that followed in its wake are clear evidence that a central organisation of police officers' careers in the Dutch police was retained after the war. Both the Decree and the Act stated that the Ministers of Justice and the Interior would, by mutual agreement, make joint or similar arrangements for the Dutch police as a whole, or for the *Korps Rijkspolitie* and the municipal police forces separately, as regards various aspects to do with their career – such as recruitment, selection and training, legal status and ranking, disciplinary regulations, clothes and weapons, and accommodation and equipment. And over the years that followed they did in fact do this. Progress was clearly not easy, but by around 1950 the national entry requirements for prospective police officers had been officially established, the ranking system had been redefined, general rules governing the pay of police officers had been announced, and so on.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> B. Huizing and K. Aartsma, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-98.

<sup>63</sup> See the article in *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 1, 1943, no. 26, p. 27.

<sup>64</sup> Statement by J. Smeets dated 11 August 2003. The policeman in question was his father.

<sup>65</sup> For a summary of the arrangements, see the *Verslag van de commissie ter bestudering van het politievraagstuk*, p. 73. The text of some of these can be found in *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 98, 1949, pp. 504-509.

Naturally, all these arrangements differed in more than one respect from those made during the Occupation, but they shared the same underlying principle, namely that the legal status and working conditions of police officers should no longer differ depending on the police force in which they worked. In other words, after the war, legislation reflected the view that a well-functioning police system demands a uniform approach to these important issues. And the “German” example was there to indicate which way to go. In the light of this it is easy to understand why the police health insurance fund that had been set up in 1942 simply continued after the war under a slightly different name.<sup>66</sup>

Specifically, as regards the training of police officers, the principle applied during the Occupation, that this was a matter for the State, was not adopted wholesale after the war. Until the 1950s the police trade unions – admittedly with government support – continued to organise training and exams for junior and more senior police personnel.<sup>67</sup> But in view of the stipulation in the 1945 Police Decree that the Ministers of Justice and the Interior were jointly responsible for police training, it was clear from the outset that this would eventually lead to police schools organised by central government.

It was possible to conclude this last point directly from the fact that the *Korps Rijkspolitie* set up a school almost immediately after the war. At first only junior police officers were trained there, but later the school was also opened up to the middle ranks.<sup>68</sup> Around 1950 municipal police forces in some parts of the country also began setting up their own training schools for the lower ranks.<sup>69</sup> In terms of organisation and syllabus these schools were very different from the school that was set up in Schalkhaar in 1942, but they were in fact based on the same principle, namely that the training of the police is a matter for the State.

The new-style detective school referred to earlier was not the first school where – unlike the schools just mentioned – members of the *Korps Rijkspolitie* and the municipal police forces were trained together. The first example of a joint venture of this kind was the training offered to senior officers of the Dutch police. In 1949

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<sup>66</sup> *Politieblad voor het Bevrijde Nederlandse Gebied*, 1945, no. 5, pp. 62-63.

<sup>67</sup> See, for example, the report on the national exams for police officers in *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 102, 1953, pp. 206-207.

<sup>68</sup> J. de Jonge, *Korps Rijkspolitie, 1945-1994*, Apeldoorn, Nederlands Politie Museum, 1993, pp. 33-38.

<sup>69</sup> T. Scholten and N. Waterschoot, *Een herinnering aan het politieonderwijs in Zuid-Nederland, 1954-2002*, Heerlen, LSOP, 2002.



the “National Institute for the Training of More Senior-Ranking Officers for the *Korps Rijkspolitie* and the Municipal Police” was established by Royal Decree, in Hilversum, the municipality where the model specialist police school had been based a few decades earlier.<sup>70</sup> The last principal of the previous school – which was of course abolished during the Occupation – was also the first principal of the new institute. It took some effort to really get this venture off the ground, but in 1950 the first trainees arrived in Hilversum.<sup>71</sup> In 1967 this institute was transferred under another name – the Dutch Police Academy – to Apeldoorn, the municipality where the first school for senior-ranking officers of the Dutch police had been established in 1942. Talk about continuity!<sup>72</sup>

One initiative that was a real change from the education system that had been built up during the Occupation was the Study Centre for Senior Police Officers, which was set up in 1962. This study centre was intended to train senior-ranking officers both for the *Korps Rijkspolitie* and for the municipal police forces. Moreover, until the 1970s it functioned as a kind of think-tank for the top brass in the Dutch police. Under the auspices of this centre numerous working groups were set up at the time to study new issues in a wide range of areas and make recommendations on the best approach to adopt. Reports were written, for instance, on the mobility of crime, traffic control, women in the police and the suppression of disturbances of the peace. The way this centre operated in its early years was a sign of a new spirit within the Dutch police, as if the revival that the municipal police had undergone in the 1920s were going to be repeated in another guise.

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<sup>70</sup> For the text of this Royal Decree, see *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 99, 1950, pp. 503-504.

<sup>71</sup> H. de Blouw, F. Coppini and P. van Lochem, *Professie, macht en dienstbaarheid; 40 jaar politieleiding aan het woord*, Arnhem, Gouda Quint, 1990, pp. 5-7.

<sup>72</sup> See P. Cleveringa, “De ontwikkeling van de opleiding van de Nederlandse politie”, *Jubileumuitgave Korpsblad Rijkspolitie*, 1970, pp. 80-94.

#### **IV.4. The Impact of the Occupation on the Public Standing of the Police**

##### **IV.4.1. The Prestige of the Police before the War**

In July 1935 a remarkable pamphlet was published: *Het prestige van de politie* (The Prestige of the Police). It was written by the Maastricht subdistrict judge H. Jaspar.<sup>73</sup> In this pamphlet he argued that the situation as regards the prestige of the police in the Netherlands was by and large not too good. The general public did not look up to the police, but instead saw them as a hateful institution and mocked them in all sorts of ways. He knew this, on the one hand, from the lack of discipline among the police and, on the other – albeit connected – hand, from the improper behaviour of police officers towards the public. He put both of these down to the recruitment of unskilled people to the police and the absence of good training. His remedy for the existing situation was therefore obvious – to get a high-quality police force, it was necessary to recruit better skilled people and to train them well. Moreover, only competent police officers that could set a good example to their men should be put in a position of responsibility.

It is no longer possible to determine the extent to which Jaspar's views were widely accepted in influential circles in the Netherlands, but in any case they reflected the time-honoured aim of the police trade unions and progressive police officers to improve the status of the police and thereby increase social recognition of police officers and of the police as a profession. And since the end of the 19th century they had certainly had some measure of success. Gradually the requirements for prospective police officers were increased, various initiatives were introduced to train them better, and Chief Constables were appointed who were not blind to the interests that these efforts served – not only the interests of individual police officers in terms of better pay and more acceptable working conditions, but also the public interest in terms of safe cities in which to live.<sup>74</sup> But to what extent

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<sup>73</sup> This pamphlet was published by De Nederlandsche R.K. Politiebond St. Michael (Catholic police trade union).

<sup>74</sup> R. van der Wal, *De geschiedenis van de politiebonden en het politieonderwijs in de twintigste eeuw; periode 1848-1940*, pp. 98-107, 133-138 (not published); G. Meershoek, *De geschiedenis van de lokale politiezorg in de twintigste eeuw; periode 1848-1940*, pp. 96-138 (not published).

had such measures already enhanced the prestige of the police? It should be noted here that the prestige of the municipal police and also of the *Rijksveldwacht* was, almost by definition, much lower than that of the *Koninklijke Marechaussee*. This is because the latter was a prestigious arm of the Dutch army that was commanded to a large extent by soldiers who had studied at the Royal Military Academy in Breda and came from prominent Dutch families.

Another factor that should not be ruled out – though this is speculation – is that the development of the municipal police in the 1920s also helped boost the prestige of the police. The creation of special departments within the police forces in areas that were regarded as increasingly important – traffic control, combating crime, rendering assistance – indicated that policing was a specialised job and was no longer something that could be done by just any institution. And the increase in real experts in these areas in the force at the very least confirmed this image of growing professionalism. To what extent combating the riots that took place in the late 1920s and mid-1930s had a negative impact on this development is a question that cannot be answered. The fact that the people who had first-hand experience of the behaviour of the police during strikes and other actions were not very favourably disposed towards the police goes without saying. Jaspar did not refer to these people in his pamphlet anyway.

All in all it is probably safe to say that the prestige of the police on the eve of World War II was not very high.

#### **IV.4.2. The Behaviour of the Police during the Occupation**

In the early days of the war many people, both police officers and civilians, were not completely ill-disposed toward the general transformation of the police system. And this is quite understandable. The reorganisation of police structures as well as the creation of central facilities and the reorganisation of careers in the police force responded to some extent to the wishes and ambitions that had been expressed in various quarters before the war. If only because of this, the fact that these far-reaching changes were pushed through by the German occupying forces did not carry as much weight for everyone as might have been expected. Another reason, however, may be that efforts to professionalise the Dutch police in the 1920s were chiefly inspired by the developments taking place among the German police under the Weimar Republic, and their transformation at the start of the Occupation seemed, as it were, to complete that professionalisation process. It should be clear, however, that anyone who looked at things in this way completely lost sight of the fact that ever since Hitler had come to power in 1933 the German

police had gradually been turned into an SS police apparatus wholly dedicated to implementing the political programme of the Nazis.

In the course of 1941-1942 more and more police officers began to see the transformation of the Dutch police in this light and turned their back on this development.<sup>75</sup> They recognised that the transformation ultimately merely served the same political goal as the expansion of the SS police apparatus by and large. It looks very much as if this U-turn was brought about by the organisation of razzias against Jews and Communists, but the appointment of fervent Nazis to key posts within the police and the Nazi set-up of the police schools were quite unequivocal as well. In several places the worst had already happened, however – the systematic deportation of the Jews with the complete or partial active or passive co-operation of the police.<sup>76</sup> And it should not be forgotten that Dutch police officers, for whatever reason, subsequently took part in activities that were completely reprehensible. Not only helping to arrest Jews, but also providing help in taking measures against gypsies, rounding up Dutch people for deportation and forced labour in Germany, and fighting the Resistance.<sup>77</sup>

This assistance was of course largely provided by police officers who were part of special police units (intelligence sections and militarised police companies), which were actually set up specifically for this task. However, police officers who did not belong to these units also occasionally assisted – wittingly or unwittingly – in enforcing the Nazi repression during the latter part of the Occupation. How many? And who exactly was involved? These are just some of the questions that are still important in this context. And particularly the second question – whether the police officers involved were among those not recruited until after 1941-1942 or were already in police service before the war. One of the few possibilities to answer this question lies in an analysis of the purge of the police after the war.<sup>78</sup>

To date the only figures available have concerned the number of police officers who were purged after the war or punished in some other way for their behaviour

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<sup>75</sup> What follows is based mainly on C. Fijnaut, *Voorproeve van een geschiedenis van de Nederlandse politie*, pp. 134-165.

<sup>76</sup> See particularly the aforementioned study by G. Meershoek about the Amsterdam police during the Occupation (note 40, *supra*).

<sup>77</sup> B. Huizing and K. Aartsma, *op. cit.*, pp. 148-152.

<sup>78</sup> For an account of the purge of the police in general, see A. Belinfante, *In plaats van bijltjesdag*, Assen, Van Gorcum, 1978, pp. 373-387.

or attitude during the Occupation, irrespective of the date they joined the police. In November 1946 the Minister of Justice informed parliament that there had been a total of 5,600 police purge files: 2,087 were closed without action, 1,087 involved disciplinary measures and 1,384 resulted in dismissal from the police force. Just over 1,000 cases were still being processed.<sup>79</sup> So at that time there were close on 2,500 police officers (out of a total of around 20,000, i.e. about 12.5%) who had obviously overstepped the mark to a greater or lesser degree. Exactly what kind of police officers were involved is still not known, however.<sup>80</sup>

It goes without saying that there were also police officers who were active in the Resistance. The exact number is still unclear. After the war some claimed that thousands were involved, while others thought that cases of police resistance were the exception rather than the rule. Since no further research has been done we simply do not know who was right. What we do know is that around the end of 1943 and the beginning of 1944 Rauter purged the Dutch police of about 1,600 men and during that same period he also tried to keep a tight rein on other Dutch police officers, using both rewards and strict sanctions. For instance, when several police officers wanted to resign in 1943 he put them in a concentration camp. To prevent others going into hiding, he threatened to lock up their whole family in one of these camps. And in some cases he did more than just make threats. In August 1943, however, he told Himmler that he could no longer rely on the Dutch police. If he were to deploy them for his own purposes "*läuft uns die ganze Exekutive weg*" ("the whole executive would desert us").

Since Rauter and, by extension, the whole German government were less and less able to count on the Dutch police, they decided in 1942 to set up a voluntary auxiliary police unit that in theory was under the command of the Dutch police chiefs, but in practice was controlled by the *Ordnungspolizei* ("Order Police"). This auxiliary police unit was fully manned with collaborators. The same was true of the *Landwacht*, a paramilitary territorial defence unit that was specially formed at the end of 1943 to put an end to the raids and attacks carried out by the

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<sup>79</sup> Dutch House of Representatives, Official Report, 15th meeting, 20 November 1946, p. 348.

<sup>80</sup> B. Huizing and K. Aartsma state in their book (*op. cit.*, pp. 244-245) that 2,478 out of a total of 18,059 police officers were dismissed in 1949 because of their conduct during the Occupation. Unfortunately the authors did not give their sources for these figures. Belinfante (p. 386) reports that a total of 1,150 police officers were dismissed, i.e. 6% of the entire police force. These completely contradictory figures give an indication of the confusion that reigns in this area.

Resistance.<sup>81</sup> It is especially important to draw attention to the formation of these “police services” because their – often violent – behaviour may also have swayed public opinion about the Dutch police (in the narrow sense). Exactly how the Dutch police were judged during the Occupation is of course another pertinent question, but it may be assumed that it was generally not positively and that, in the case of the special units, it must certainly have been very negatively. They were, after all, an extension of the German SS police apparatus on Dutch soil.<sup>82</sup> Add to that the fact that it was not always easy, particularly for ordinary citizens, to distinguish between the militia and regular police units, and that militia men were occasionally involved in joint action with ordinary police officers. That cannot have failed to affect people’s judgement of the Dutch police, both during the Occupation and of course afterwards. Hardly surprising therefore that many people took a frankly negative view of them.

The modest prestige that the Dutch police generally enjoyed before the war must, in short, have been severely damaged by what happened during the Occupation. This was unavoidable. This negative consequence contrasts sharply, in a certain sense, with another, more positive consequence – a police system that in some respects was organised more coherently than before the war and that also had various facilities and arrangements that many were calling for at the time. And what makes this contradiction stand out even more is that after the war many organisational and functional elements of that system were preserved because they were considered vital to efforts to build up a police force that could make an important contribution to the post-war political and economic reconstruction of the Netherlands.

#### **IV.4.3. The Prestige of the Police after the War**

After the liberation, policy-makers were of course aware of the problem that the prestige of the police had plummeted during the Occupation. Not for nothing did they point out in their initial reports that those who had shown “real character” during the war would form the backbone of the future Dutch police. These officers would be depended on to restore public confidence in the police, which had been

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<sup>81</sup> See the articles about the *Landwacht* in *De Nederlandsche Politie*, vol. 2, 1944, no. 8, pp. 223-224; no. 15, p. 481.

<sup>82</sup> J. Kelder, *op. cit.*, pp. 47-51.

at such a high level before the war. They were to create a police force that would once again meet the highest standards of “strictness, integrity, justice, an assertive and altruistic spirit”. In short, all those values and standards that had been repressed during the Occupation. But the authorities also realised that it would not be easy to restore public confidence. They were careful not to give specific reasons as to why this was so difficult, however. They did indicate that a purge of “all unreliable and weak elements” was necessary to achieve the goal. Who those police officers were and what they had done wrong was not disclosed.<sup>83</sup>

And it was not only the competent ministers and their senior officials who failed to express themselves clearly on this subject in the early years after the war. Both parliament and the police journals maintained a discreet silence or simply did not comment on the part that the Dutch police, or at any rate individual Dutch police officers, had played in implementing the policy of the Nazis during the Occupation.<sup>84</sup> Even more remarkable, therefore, were the otherwise rare items that trumpeted the role of the Dutch police in the Resistance movement against the German Occupation. One of the most notable contributions in this context was an article that appeared in the *Tijdschrift voor de Politie* (Police Journal) in 1947 about the many ways in which numerous Amsterdam police officers had stood shoulder to shoulder with members of the Resistance. The part the Amsterdam police had played in the deportation of the Jews was not touched upon ...<sup>85</sup>

In 1960 the same journal devoted a special issue to the subject of the police during the Occupation. Although it was pointed out that the German occupying forces had faced Dutch police officers with almost diabolical dilemmas, successive articles were mainly about the many, often heroic, incidences of resistance offered in police ranks to the German policy.<sup>86</sup> The fact that little or no attention

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<sup>83</sup> See the forewords in successive issues of the *Politieblad voor Nederland*, 1945, no. 1, p. 1; no. 2, p. 1; no. 3, pp. 1-3.

<sup>84</sup> One striking example of this is the article entitled “De dienende taak der politie” by S. Kloosterman in *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 96, 1947, no. 28, pp. 271-272. Another example is T. Baumann, “Politieoptreden...en nog iets”, *Algemeen Politieblad*, vol. 97, 1948, no. 17, pp. 323-325.

<sup>85</sup> This unsigned article is entitled “De Amsterdamsche politie en haar rol in de verzetsbeweging”, *Tijdschrift voor de Politie*, vol. 9, 1947, no. 11, pp. 105-106.

<sup>86</sup> Concerning this complex issue, see in particular the thesis of D. de Jaeger, *De houding van de Nederlandse politie tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog in de grote steden van Noord-Brabant*, Tilburg, Drukkerij H. Gianotten, 1999.

was devoted to collaboration with the occupying forces was clearly intended to demonstrate that, all in all, the Dutch police had withstood the Occupation bravely and that courage could be drawn from this for the future. Why the Dutch police had not offered more resistance, and especially collective resistance, which could have spared many Dutch people a great deal of suffering, is something that the editor-in-chief – Perrick – blamed not so much on the police or on individual police officers, but on those who had knowingly created “an organisationally and functionally divided police organisation managed by officials with unclear relationships of authority” before the war. It was this fragmentation in particular that had hindered “greater intellectual unity and cohesion among Dutch police officers” during the Occupation. Nevertheless, Perrick and other police officers who were involved in the Resistance had entertained the hope at the time that the sacrifices they were making would lead to “renewed appreciation of the police” and “worthier social status for police personnel”. Perrick did not comment on whether these objectives had been achieved, but in the pamphlet that forms the starting point of this paper he did not really conceal his disappointment on this point.<sup>87</sup>

So what was the appreciation rating of the police in the 1950s and 1960s? Once again, little information is available. According to sociographic research conducted in 1958, the social status of police officers was still as low as ever. In terms of occupational social prestige police officers came 38th in a list of 57, i.e. above skilled workers and small shopkeepers but below army sergeants, town hall clerks, butchers and blacksmiths.<sup>88</sup> Not exactly the position to which police officers could lay claim in Dutch society in Perrick’s view! This may also explain the special issue of the *Tijdschrift voor de Politie* just discussed.

Whether this relatively low rating of the police also had something to do with their role during the Occupation is possible but not very likely. In any case what is striking is that during the disturbances of the peace in Amsterdam in the 1950s and 1960s and the growing protests against the not always appropriate conduct of the police to quell the unrest – and that is an understatement to say the least – there was little or no mention of the role of the police, and particularly the Amsterdam police, during the Occupation. This is apparent both from documents dating from this turbulent period and from studies about this period that were published

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<sup>87</sup> F. Prick, “Na 15 jaar”, *Tijdschrift voor de Politie*, vol. 22, 1960, no. 5, pp. 82-86.

<sup>88</sup> N. Groeneweg and A. Hallema, *Van nachtwacht tot computermacht*, Zaltbommel, Europese Bibliotheek, 1976, p. 243.



subsequently.<sup>89</sup> Moreover, the war past of the Amsterdam police was not considered by the committee that in 1967 began an investigation into the problem of maintaining public order in Amsterdam.

However, this does not mean that various protest groups did not still feel some lurking uneasiness about the role of the police during the Occupation. Trainee police officers who were guarding Amsterdam's City Hall during the wedding ceremony of Beatrix and Claus in 1966 were taunted by demonstrators hissing "SS, SS, SS ...".<sup>90</sup>

#### **IV.5. General Conclusion**

This discussion can best be rounded off by returning to the starting point – Perrick's rather cryptic and ambivalent evaluation of the significance of the Occupation for the Dutch police in 1968.

It should now be clear what he meant by the "achievements" of the Occupation for the Dutch police. It is beyond doubt that what he particularly had in mind were all those facilities for the Dutch police and all those arrangements for Dutch police officers that had been brought about during the war. In his view – leaving aside the specific details, which he certainly did not always agree with – these revealed the extent to which the government had failed to build up a professional police force before the war. He felt that the government had made far too little effort to modernise the existing force as a whole in organisational, functional and technical terms; nor had it made enough effort to bring the legal status and working conditions of police officers up to a decent standard. So the fact that a great

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<sup>89</sup> With regard to the first category of publications, see, for example, F. Bergman et al, *Slaags met de politie; een documentaire*, Amsterdam, De Bezige Bij, 1964, and W. Kielich, *Anatomie van de gummiknuppel*, Leiden, Sijthoff, 1973. Important examples of the second category of works include H. Righart, *De eindeloze jaren zestig; geschiedenis van een generatieconflict*, Amsterdam, De Arbeiderspers, 1995; N. Pas, *Imaazje; de verbeelding van provo, 1965-1967*, Amsterdam, Wereldbibliotheek, 2003; M. de Koning and F. Mijnlieff, *In de pers; politiek in Nederland; onlusten in Amsterdam, 1965-1967*, The Hague, Sdu Uitgevers, 1991. See also the study by G. Meershoek, *Dienaren van het gezag, op. cit.*, p. 366.

<sup>90</sup> Personal reminiscence of the first author who was part of the contingent of students in question at the Dutch Police Academy.

many important elements of the "German" police system were adopted after the war was obviously something that met with his approval.

One could even argue that, as far as he was concerned, many other aspects of the way that police system was organised could have been preserved. In his pamphlet Perrick argued in favour of greater unity within the Dutch police than had been achieved by means of the 1945 Police Decree and the 1957 Police Act. Was it not true that this greater unity had been accomplished during the Occupation? On this point, however, Perrick claimed that the reorganisation of the police during the Occupation had actually been an obstacle to greater unification of the Dutch police after the war. This is a debatable point of view. In response it can be argued that their unification during the Occupation was not as complete as Perrick suggested; a more important argument, however, is that both before and after the war many people within and outside parliament rejected the idea of greater unity within the Dutch police with a stubborn passion. It may be that the reorganisation during the war reinforced their aversion to more unity, but this aversion was certainly not based on that reorganisation. Opponents had long been cursed with this feeling and after the war they did not in actual fact rely on the situation during the war to justify their point of view. Instead they invoked arguments that were derived from the historical principles of the Dutch constitution.<sup>91</sup>

Finally, with regard to the standing of the Dutch police after the war, there is reason to assume that Perrick, like other police chiefs who had been in the Resistance, realised more than anybody else all that Dutch police officers had done wrong. And obviously they were fearful of the consequences of this for the Dutch police in the longer term. Why else would anyone embark on an initiative like the one in 1960 to make so much of the Resistance that Dutch police officers had offered the German occupying forces during the war? This initiative was not just taken to highlight the police's own heroism. But whether it was really necessary to take such a step at all is debatable. By all appearances the conduct of the Dutch police during the war was not held against them, certainly not by those people who around 1960 cheerfully or hard-handedly turned against the established authority, and hence against the police. It may be, however, that such initiatives actually prevented this from happening.

Perhaps, however, this remarkable fact has to be placed in a broader context to be able to understand it. The context that has deliberately been left out of

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<sup>91</sup> In this context see also the views of J. van Angeren, "De positie van de politie in de rechtsstaat", *Bestuurswetenschappen*, vol. 3, 1949, no. 5, pp. 261-282.

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consideration in this paper – that of the reconstruction in the Netherlands during the Cold War. In this context there may possibly have been no need for a public debate about what the Dutch police, or individual Dutch police officers, had done “wrong” or “right” during World War II. Once the purge of the Dutch police was completed in 1949 the debate on the matter was closed.