

# Through Dutch Eyes: Anti-Americanism in the Cold War

## A Study of *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf*



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## Abstract

This thesis examines the emergence of an anti-American sentiment in the Netherlands as a result of political events during the Cold War. This anti-American sentiment is analyzed as it emerged in two Dutch newspapers, *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf*, which represent two segments of Dutch society. A conceptual framework, which focuses on the multidimensional nature of anti-Americanism and which is capable of determining the existence of anti-Americanism in the newspaper articles, is constructed. Three political events in the beginning, the middle and the end of the Cold War are selected and their coverage in the two newspapers is analyzed. Firstly, newspaper articles about the fight for Indonesian independence and the cessation of Marshall Aid are examined. Secondly, reports on the My Lai massacre are investigated. Lastly, the placement of cruise missiles in the Netherlands, or the double-track decision, and its coverage in the two newspapers is analyzed. Ultimately, it is concluded that the extent to which an anti-American sentiment arose in the Netherlands during the Cold War was not considerably large.

Keywords: anti-Americanism, Cold War, newspapers, *De Volkskrant*, *De Telegraaf*, Marshall Aid, Indonesian independence, My Lai Massacre, Double-Track Decision

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## Introduction

*“Zwijgt stil alsof ge bidt  
sluit uw lippen stevig,  
maar schreeuwt, zelfs in zwijgen  
zoals het dorp Song My  
.....  
In een wit avondtoilet  
met een corsage van bloemen  
struikelt gij, miss America, plotseling over een schedel.*

*.....  
De lange kaarsen hoog geheven moet gij, Amerika van het geweten  
de waarheid zeggen bij dit licht  
tot het ganse Amerika der leugens.*

*.....  
Verheft de kaarsen hoger, historie  
Met knisperend kaarsvet stralen zij het licht uit,  
de kaarsen van Beecher Stowe en de kaarsen van Lincoln.*

*En grijs van schaamte,  
houdt het Bevrijdingsbeeld  
zijn fakkel omhoog  
gelijk een grafkaars”*

This poem (B14), written by Russian poet Jefgeny Jeftoesjenko, was published in the Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* after the My Lai massacre, one of the atrocious acts committed by the American army in Vietnam. The poem’s denunciative and denigrative tone and its antipathy towards what America *is*, which includes America’s morals and values, make it a prime example of anti-Americanism.

Ivan Krastev and Alan McPherson argue in *The Anti-American Century* that “anti-Americanism is becoming a defining feature” (1) in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This anti-American poem

appeared, however, in 1969, more than 30 years before the 21<sup>st</sup> century, during the Cold War and in the middle of what was deemed “the American Century”. This phrase was coined by Henry Luce, publisher of the American magazine *Life*, in 1941. America was regarded as “the savior of the Western world” and its “democracy, technology and culture” were admired by many around the world (Krastev and McPherson 1). This idea became particularly prevalent after World War II, when America’s place and image became increasingly prominent in the world. The United States rose to world power and were considered the propagators of freedom and democracy. They developed a foreign policy vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, which divided the world into two blocs and created great tension between the two countries that would last until 1990.

Similarly, this period, the Cold War, also marked important moments for the relations between the United States and the Netherlands (Hellema 579). Post-war Dutch governments generally welcomed the new role of America and accepted the country’s global power. Overall, American hegemony over Western Europe was considered to be best for Europe’s interests as well as Dutch interests. This awarded the Netherlands the reputation of “one of the most strongly pro-American countries in Europe” since 1945 (Kennedy 931). The “American Century” and the Dutch government’s pro-American attitude were, however, contrasted by an anti-American sentiment that is assumed to have emerged in Europe, and thus in the Netherlands, during the Cold War (Kroes “Dutch Impressions” 951, Pells 156). Richard Pells states that US government officials even called “Western Europe a hotbed of anti-Americanism from the 1940s through the 1980s” (156). Similarly, Dutch loyalty towards the United States did not mean “Dutch interests [did not] sometimes collide with American concerns” (Hellema 580). During the Cold War, several events occurred which had a profound impact on the Dutch perception of America, and which supposedly caused an anti-American sentiment to emerge in Dutch media and society. The portrayal of the Netherlands as an intrinsically pro-American country, but simultaneously as showing anti-American elements, causes an apparent discrepancy which made Rob Kroes describe the Netherlands as “a case on its own” (“Dutch Impressions” 953) and led me to ask the following question: To what extent did an anti-American sentiment develop in the Netherlands during the Cold War as an effect of major political events in that period?

To come to an answer to this question, the existence of an anti-American sentiment in the Netherlands as a result of political events will be examined through articles and letters in Dutch newspapers. Not only do newspapers “express the opinion of the public” (Dwivedi et al. 83,

Splichal 115), but they will also supplement already-existing sources on anti-American sentiments in the Netherlands, such as opinion polls. Rob Kroes also notes that, although these polls can form accurate representations of the public opinion, “it is always good to combine these with [other] examples” (“anti-Amerikanisme” 282). This thesis will therefore focus on newspaper articles and letters to the editor which were published in response to specific political events. The use of articles written by the newspaper itself as well as letters written by readers will provide a more diverse and complete image. These articles have been published in two selected newspapers. Although I am aware of the fact that selecting two newspapers is not representative for the whole Dutch sentiment or attitude towards America, this selection is compelled to be made due to the limited scope of this thesis. The selection is, however, very carefully made and is considered to grant a voice to two segments of Dutch society.

The selected newspapers, *De Telegraaf* and *De Volkskrant*, are chosen for a number of reasons. First of all, both newspapers are among the largest in the Netherlands. *De Telegraaf*, established in 1893, grew exponentially from 1950, and reached its peak around the end of the century when it reached a total of 750.000 copies per day, making it the largest paper of the Netherlands (Wolf 421). Only recently has *De Telegraaf* been overhauled by another newspaper, but it is still listed as second largest newspaper in the Netherlands (Wolf 421). *De Volkskrant* was established in 1913 as a weekly newspaper and has been published daily since 1921. In the first few years after World War II, *De Volkskrant* developed into one of the most important papers in the country selling 109.000 copies per day. Around the turn of the century, *De Volkskrant* had expanded to around 350.000 copies per day (“De Geschiedenis”). Although its number of copies is considerably less than *De Telegraaf*'s, *De Volkskrant* remains one of the largest three newspapers in the country (Wolf 421). These data show us the prominent place these newspapers have obtained in Dutch society. Besides that, the two newspapers can also be seen to represent two different segments of Dutch society. *De Telegraaf* was originally established from a progressive point of view (Wolf 40), but shifted towards a liberal point of view after World War II (Wolf 350-1). *De Volkskrant* originated in the Catholic labor organization and focused mainly, but not only, on the working class. In the 1960s the newspaper abandoned its Catholic ethics and became more progressive (“De Geschiedenis”). These different ideologies and the political polarization that existed in Dutch society shaped *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf* into left- and right-wing newspapers respectively. This consequently led the newspapers to attract different

audiences, which could be said to roughly represent the political right and left of the Netherlands. This would last at least until the late 1980s when the audiences increasingly fragmented into different sections (Vermeulen par.3, Wolf 351). When *De Volkskrant* distanced itself from their Catholic ethics, it took a more critical and nuanced approach and focused more on an intellectual audience (“De Geschiedenis”). *De Telegraaf*, however, can be said to focus on a larger audience, on the mass. Mariëtte Wolf, who wrote an extensive work on the history of *De Telegraaf*, notes that 48% of its audience in the late 1960s belonged to the middle class (424). The newspaper’s main goal has been to provide a clear message and a strong opinion, especially since the 1960s (Wolf 424).

The newspaper articles used in this thesis were all selected through *Delpher*, an online database provided by the National Library of the Netherlands, which includes over sixty million newspapers, books and magazines from 1618 up until 1995. Databases like these are a tremendous asset to the digital humanities, and *Delpher* has been of profound importance for this thesis. Since over 110 newspaper articles have been examined in this work, a special citation format has been created in order to make the reading as pleasant as possible. For each of the three political events that this thesis will discuss, the articles will be marked with the letters A, B or C, followed by a number. With that combination, the reader can find the article in a separate works cited list for each specific event. All of the quotes from these newspaper articles have been translated from Dutch to English by myself. The newspaper articles are listed with an URL in the works cited list, so the original articles and quotes are easily accessible.

The first chapter of the work will start with a brief overview of Dutch-American relations. These relations have been subject of scholarly research for a long time. Rob Kroes is particularly influential in this field. In *Dutch Impressions of America*, he gives an overview of Dutch impressions of the US and Americans since World War II and in *Image and Impact: American Influences in the Netherlands Since 1945* he provides a more detailed account of these relations. Besides that, Kroes also expanded the Dutch view to a European view, in *If you’ve seen one, you’ve seen the mall: Europeans and American Mass Culture*. Goodfriend et al. provide a different, more American perspective on the relations between the two countries in *Going Dutch, The Dutch Presence in America 1609-2009* in which they focus on Dutch influences in America. All these works approach the relationship from different angles, some focus more on culture and others on politics. The most comprehensive and most recent work in the field is *Four Centuries*

*of Dutch American relations*, edited by Hans Krabbendam. In this book, an impressive number of essays on Dutch-American relations are collected, divided by time periods and topics of culture, politics and security, and economy and society. In most of the above-mentioned works, Americanization and anti-Americanism are reoccurring terms.

Anti-Americanism, the concept on which this thesis will be built, will form the topic of the second part of the first chapter. The concept has received much attention from different scholars over the years. One of the key theoreticians, Romanian scholar Andrei Markovits, defines anti-Americanism as “a European lingua franca” (29) and divides the concept into political and cultural spectrums corresponding to the political left or right. In his book *Uncouth Nation: Why Europe Dislikes America* he unravels European anti-Americanism. He examines the roots and causes of the phenomenon and defines it as a foundation for a collective European identity. Moisés Naim emphasizes the importance of recognizing that there is not one anti-Americanism, but rather different types of the phenomenon. Similarly, Brendon O’Connor, professor of American politics and editor of seven books on anti-Americanism, presents five different types of anti-Americanism. He attempts to tackle the term by providing several definitions. Todd Gitlin focuses on the emotional aspect of the phenomenon as opposed to more political or cultural explanations of the concept. Ultimately, Josef Joffe’s theory of anti-Americanism will occupy a central role in examining the existence of such sentiments in the newspaper articles in this thesis. Joffe presents anti-Americanism as a multifaceted phenomenon which consists of five main characteristics: stereotypization, denigration, omnipresence, conspiracy and obsession.

The United States’ increasingly prominent role in the world during the Cold War transformed them into the main actor in many political events that took place in that period. These events had, either directly or indirectly, a profound influence on the Dutch people and their view on America. Three of these events, which occurred in the beginning, middle and end of the Cold War, will serve as a guideline for this thesis. The first clash of interests occurred in the very beginning of the Cold War, when the Dutch colony of Indonesia started its struggle for independence. Although the U.S. did not seem to be concerned with the matter at first, they stopped their financial aid to the Netherlands for Indonesia in 1949 as a result of the Dutch unwillingness to end their colonial rule. This event, which supposedly caused the rise of anti-American feelings in the Netherlands, will form the basis of the second chapter. To what extent

did an anti-American sentiment develop in the newspapers as result of this? The Cold war came to its height in the Vietnam War. Unlike the previous event, the war was not directly linked to Dutch interests, but caused outrage nevertheless. Especially the My Lai massacre in 1968, the event after which the poem above was published, created a scandal both in the United States itself and internationally. The Dutch reaction to this event will be discussed in the third chapter, and the question asked here will be: did the My Lai massacre result into anti-American sentiments in *De Volkskrant* or *De Telegraaf*? During the last period of the Cold War, Dutch interests were, quite literally, invaded by the Americans. The NATO double-track decision foresaw the placement of American cruise missiles in the Netherlands. A period of six years in which fierce public debate arose in the Netherlands followed, after which the placement of missiles was finally approved by the Dutch government. This period during the end of the Cold War will form the basis for the fourth and last chapter. How was America portrayed in the selected newspapers over these years? Did an anti-American sentiment emerge in either of the newspapers as a result of the double-track decision and the approval of it?

Ultimately, by analyzing the sentiment in these newspaper articles, this thesis aims to come to an answer to the main question as listed above. This will not only be significant to the field of American studies, but also to transnational American studies more specifically. Insights into anti-American feelings in the Netherlands can provide information on America's image internationally and how this is affected, or not, by certain events. It can challenge dominant thoughts on the United States' image around the world.

## 1. A Brief Overview of Dutch-American Relations and an Exploration of Anti-Americanism

Anti-Americanism, although widely used in both popular and academic discussions, remains a complex and often misunderstood term. The multidimensional nature of the phenomenon creates an ambiguity which often leads to inherently ambivalent discussions. Since the concept is central to this thesis, it is vital to create a clear basic understanding of the term as well as a framework which will function sufficiently throughout this work. Before diving into this concept, let us briefly explore the history of Dutch-American relations. This overview does no justice to the long and rich relations between the two nations but does also not intend to create a deep understanding of them. Rather, it serves as an introduction to the topic, thereby creating an awareness of the origins of the relations. This awareness will prove to be useful in the discussion of the political events later on in this work.

### 1.1 Historical Overview

The arrival of the Dutch East Indian Company ship the *Halve Maen* somewhere between Manhattan and Staten Island on September 11, 1609, can be described as the starting point of Dutch-American relations. Although ideas of the New World already existed in the Low Countries, this was the first physical encounter with the continent (Krabbendam, “General”, 17-8). Less than twenty years after this encounter, the Dutch claimed territory corresponding to the present-day states of New York, New Jersey and parts of Delaware and Connecticut. Although this settlement lasted very briefly, as it was exchanged for Suriname with the English within forty years, the Dutch influence that resulted from these years has been widely acknowledged by scholars (Frijhoff and Jacobs 32, Goodfriend, Middleton, Shattuck, Shorto). Middleton argues that Dutch legal and political notions were still visible through certain institutions and practices long after the seizure of New Netherland by the British in 1664 (109). Joyce Goodfriend similarly concludes that Dutch culture remained a considerable part of life in the British colonies, for example visible in churches, house interiors, books, and in beliefs more generally (“The social” 358). The arrival of the *Halve Mean* thus marked the start of a strong relationship between the two countries.

As David Voorhees notes, ironically the Dutch culture in America started to disappear more clearly only when the Dutch William III as King of England reformed the judicial system of New York from Dutch to British in 1691, thereby formally initiating the “Anglicization process” (139). This Anglicization process took more concrete forms over the years when the English language became the norm and when the Anglican Church became the dominant church which together with the English law caused society to follow English social patterns (Frijhoff, “Dutchness” 346). The Dutch community continued to celebrate their roots, however, and “developed a keen consciousness of its specific characteristics as a Calvinist, Dutch-speaking nation of democratic feelings” (Frijhoff, “Dutchness” 349). Although the total number of Dutch immigrants was marginal - only 1,412 Dutch people immigrated in the 1830s compared to 200,000 Irish in that decade - and they made up as little as 0.5% of all immigrants in the following decade, the Dutch immigrants created a “durable Dutch-American subculture” (Krabbendam, “But”, 136). After the World War II, Dutch emigration was extensive as a result of the war, but Dutch immigration to America remained relatively small, an average of 2,700 yearly. This was largely due to the strong immigration restrictions in the US in the post-war years (Knoops 1007).

Next to the presence of the Dutch in America, the Netherlands itself has also played a more direct role in the formation of the country due to the fact that the Dutch were among the first to recognize the United States of America as an independent country and was one of its largest financiers during its first years (Te Brake 204). This recognition and support from the Dutch government to the United States illustrate the strong ties between the two countries existed ever since the creation of the United States. Before World War I the relations between the two countries were limited, however, and mostly revolved around issues in Asia. Both countries wanted to keep Japan from spreading their interest in the region, but America had no objection to the Netherlands’ control of the Dutch East Indies. During the outbreak and the first years of World War I, both countries took neutral positions (Tuyll 420-5). The intervention of America in World War I eventually caused America to become more present in Europe, both physically and literally (Kroes, “anti-Amerikanisme” 273). In the subsequent years, America’s mass culture became increasingly prevalent in Europe. In the Netherlands, most of the films displayed in theaters were American, and by 1930 American films held 50-60% of the market (Bonin 152). These films inevitably had an influence on the image of America among the Dutch population.

World War II was a watershed moment for American's position in the world, and therefore also for its role and image in the Netherlands. As American presence and influence in the world increased, different visions and opinions of the country inevitably rose as well. Since it is beyond the scope as well as beyond the aim of this thesis to discuss all major American political events since World War 2, specific events have been selected. These moments in American history, or events, have been proven to have had a profound influence in the Netherlands, and were either directly or indirectly related to the Netherlands. As discussed in the introduction, these events will include Indonesian independence and the termination of Marshall Aid, the My Lai massacre during the Vietnam War and lastly, the double-track decision by NATO. Scholars have also defined these moments or events as significant moments for the Dutch view on America. Rob Kroes, for example, mentions the end of World War II and the Marshall Plan, and the Vietnam War as watershed moments for the Dutch view on America ("Dutch Impressions" 952). Josef Joffe demonstrates in "Peace and Populism" how important "the Euromissile crisis" was in the Dutch view on America (3).

## 1.2 Anti-Americanism

The events mentioned above supposedly spurred anti-Americanism in the Netherlands. The word anti-Americanism was not explicitly used until the beginning of the twentieth century. The sentiment itself, however, has presumably existed since the late eighteenth century, ever since the United States has existed (Markovits 19). Although the reasons for the European aversions to America are multi-layered, Markovits proposes that the human tendency to "hate the big guy" (31) might be the most profound reason. The big guy is often viewed as a threat, as hypocritical, arrogant and unfair (32). This proposal is complicated by the fact that even before America had any power the aversion had already existed for a long time.

Josef Joffe argues that this aversion, or anti-Americanism, has "roots" in three things. The first one relates to the big guy explanation and includes the power of the United States. Joffe states that the great power of America "instills fear in the lesser denizens of the planet and triggers feelings of inferiority" (Joffe, "What" par. 10), which consequently leads to compensation behavior. This behavior could, for example, include a cultural aspect, such as the premise that although American popular culture might be ubiquitous, it is perceived as inferior to

Europe's rich cultural history. The second root of anti-Americanism according to Joffe, "is America as steamroller of global modernization" (Joffe, "What" par. 11). America has the top position in modernization and forces the rest of the world to adapt, to keep up, or to compete, which is disliked by them. Global modernization is connotated with destructive capitalism which is in turn identified with America (Joffe, "What" par. 11). The third root is "seduction" (Joffe, "What" par.12). America is everywhere around us, in the clothes we wear, the food we eat, the phones and laptops we use and the websites we visit on those. These factors all seduce us, according to Joffe, and people "hate both the seducer and [themselves] for succumbing to him" (Joffe, "What" par. 12). The more America's products and its culture pervade the world, the more people develop aversion to it, something which Joffe calls "the curse of soft power" (Joffe, "What" par. 13).

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines anti-American as "hostile to the interests of the United States, opposed to Americans". This definition presents hostility and opposition towards the US as the main elements in this phenomenon. Many scholars have discussed the meaning of the concept, but many definitions have subtle differences. Alvin Rubinstein and Donald Smith see anti-Americanism "as any hostile action or expression that becomes part and parcel of an undifferentiated attack on the foreign policy, society, culture, and values of the United States" (qtd. in Markovits 17). Again, hostility is emphasized, as well as the comprehensiveness of that hostility in both politics and society as well culture. Todd Gitlin stresses emotion as an important aspect saying that

"Anti-Americanism is an emotion masquerading as an analysis, a morality, an ideal, even an idea about what to do. When hatred of foreign policies ignites into hatred of an entire people and their civilization, then thinking is dead and demonology lives. When complexity of thought devolves into caricature, intellect is close to reconciling itself to mass murder" (qtd. in Markovits 17).

Gitlin thus argues that the phenomenon is merely an emotion, leading to simplified notions or caricatures, with dangerous effects. Brendon O'Connor similarly claims that "America's vastness is often reduced to a series of stereotypes and caricatures .... From this narrow and biased focus emerges the specter of anti-Americanism" (1). Markovits views anti-Americanism as "a generalized and comprehensive normative dislike of America and things American that often

lacks distinct reasons or concrete causes”. He adds that “anti-Americanism has all tropes of a classic prejudice” (Markovits 17).

Although above-mentioned definitions are accurate and useful, they seem to treat anti-Americanism as a homogenized phenomenon to some extent. Gitlin’s argument that the sentiment is merely an emotion is quite narrow. Certain scholars propose an understanding of the concept that takes into consideration the multi-layered nature of it to stress its complexity. Brendon O’Connor provides five different understandings of how the term is used in both popular and scholarly debate. He argues anti-Americanism is presented as “one side of a dichotomy”, as “a tendency”, as “a pathology”, a “prejudice” or as “an ideology” (8-9). Anti-Americanism as one side of the dichotomy includes an unnuanced view of the phenomenon in which persons or things are either portrayed as pro-American or anti-American. This understanding is too simplistic to provide an effective explanation (9). The second understanding portrays anti-Americanism as a tendency that moves up and down depending on time and place. O’Connor views the understanding of anti-Americanism as a tendency as “too situational” (8) and too dependent “on a given day” (11) for it to be useful. He does state, however, that this view can “highlight some important trends” (11). He stresses a nuanced definition of anti-Americanism is required to be at the basis of this view. Viewing anti-Americanism as a pathology is the most literal explanation of the concept as it includes an aversion or hatred towards all things American. This definition seems too narrow as only a very small number of people could be called anti-American, the others would be mere critics (12). In common usage, the term encompasses more than hatred of all things American.

Markovits, O’Connor and Gitlin thus focus on prejudice as fundamental to the aversion to America. O’Connor states that “prejudice encompasses negative stereotyping, but goes beyond this to include more direct forms of hatred and vitriol” (13). Paul Sniderman wrote an essential work on the phenomenon of prejudices. According to Sniderman, a prejudice has a couple of characteristics. First of all, a prejudice always includes the aspect of us versus them. It emphasizes those who are like us as opposed to those that are not. Furthermore, prejudices should not be considered as backward but rather as a tool for “social ordering” which exists in all “modern and tolerant societies”. Similarly, this same ordering mechanism is present in the creation of stereotypes, which is therefore also inevitable. Finally, prejudices always judge an individual by their group membership rather than their personal qualities (qtd. in Markovits 12-

3). Anti-Americanism contains all of these characteristics, but unlike other prejudices, the United States is not a minority with little power, but rather an entity possessing considerable power. Whereas “classic prejudices” (Markovits 13) have become increasingly illegitimate, the prejudice of anti-Americanism still carries a positive connotation. The received legitimacy of the phenomenon keeps it alive and largely uncontested. Although not a classical type of prejudice, acknowledging anti-Americanism as such would create more awareness among the accusers. Lastly, O’Connor mentions that anti-Americanism as an ideology approaches the phenomenon as a “mass belief system” (16) based on ideas and philosophies.

Moises Naim also stresses “anti-Americanism’s varied roots” (par. 3). He prefers to use the term “anti-Americanisms”, emphasizing the multi-layered nature of the phenomenon by using the plural form of the word, meaning there cannot be said to exist one homogenized form of the concept. He proposes several categories of anti-Americanism. Politico-economic anti-Americanism is mostly a reaction to the United States’ current foreign policies. Historic anti-Americanism relates to historical American behavior, denouncing foreign policy of the past which is regarded to have negative influences now. Religious anti-Americanism is mostly expressed by Islam fundamentalists, although not necessarily restricted to this religious group. Cultural anti-Americanism is created by the omnipresence of American (popular) culture and the view of the displacement of local cultures by it. Lastly, psychological anti-Americanism “is fueled by jealousy, resentment, ambivalence, and crushed expectations” (par. 8).

The multidimensional nature of anti-Americanism is correspondingly touched upon by Rob Kroes. He argues anti-Americanism can either be political or cultural and that a rejection of one of the two does not have to mean one rejects the other one as well (Kroes, “European” 427). The different positions “often correspond with opposing positions on the political spectrum” (Kroes, “European” 427). Markovits explains similar dimensions to the phenomenon, arguing that right-wing conservatives traditionally reject American culture and see it as a threat to European ‘high culture’, and that left-wing politics usually denounces American politics (Markovits 29-30, Kroes, “European” 427). Although these two larger categories of anti-Americanism are often represented by a political standpoint, they are not necessarily restricted to them.

Similar to O’Connor, Kroes, Markovits and Naim, I want to propose a framework which focuses on the multifaceted nature of the concept. This framework has to meet two requirements:

firstly, it has to be workable in this thesis in order to test the presence of an anti-American sentiment in the selected newspapers and their articles. Secondly, it should encompass the fundamental characteristics as well as the multifaceted nature, in which generalization and simplification leading to prejudices are important. It should, however, also move beyond prejudices since the sentiment will most likely be shaped by fundamental ideas or values. Josef Joffe provides useful insights. According to him, anti-Americanism consists of the following five characteristics: stereotypization, denigration, omnipotence, conspiracy and obsession.

Stereotypization can be found in statements like “this is what they are all like”. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a stereotype as: “a preconceived and oversimplified idea of the characteristics which typify a person, situation, etc.; an attitude based on such perception”.

Generalization and oversimplification are important for this first condition. Denigration includes ascribing “cultural inferiority to the target group” and can be found in depreciation or even denial of American culture. Omnipotence relates to the power of the US and can be found in statements like “they control the media, the economy, the world”. It largely relates to hate of the immense power of the US and their supremacy around the world. Conspiracy suspects the US of having a hidden evil agenda and suggests that America “sull[ies] our racial purity, destroy[s] our traditional better and morally superior ways”. Obsession is a “constant occupation” with the target group, meaning that in this case America and everything it encompasses will constantly be talked or written about (qtd. in Markovits 12). The element of stereotypization will mostly relate to prejudices and generalization, whereas denigration, omnipotence and conspiracy will often arise as a result of ideas or values such as religious or cultural values. I will use these five characteristics in my framework, because they highlight the multilayered nature of anti-Americanism rather than treating it as a homogenized concept. At the same time, considering the sentiment to include these five characteristics allows me to effectively examine its existence in the newspapers.

Joffe argues that the roots of anti-Americanism, power, modernity, and seduction, will endure and therefore anti-Americanism will continue to exist in our world too. The assumption that the phenomenon is ever existing does not dismiss the notion that the level of existence can differ over time. Although O’Connor partly rejects viewing anti-Americanism as a tendency, he does admit this can “highlight ... important trends” (11). In the next chapters, I will discuss specific events to see to what extent an anti- American sentiment arose in the Netherlands as a

direct result of them. I will thus treat the sentiment as a tendency, exactly for the reason that O'Connor notes. This means that the anti-Americanism sentiment has the habit of changing over time, fluctuating in its level of existence. By looking at significant moments in history through specific newspaper articles I will measure to what extent anti-Americanism has existed as result of that particular event, using the framework as was constructed above. Eventually, by looking at anti-Americanism as a tendency, I aim to discover a trend over a longer period of time.

## **2. “Indië Verloren, Rampspoed Geboren” - Indonesian Independence and the Cessation of Marshall Aid**

1945 marked the end of one of the most horrible episodes in European history. It also started a new period, one which would provide Europe with new serious challenges. The Americans played a large role in the Netherlands in this period, both in the ending of these five dark years and in the new challenges that lay ahead. One of these challenges was the Dutch East-Indies’ struggle for independence. In 1949 the United States threatened to stop the Marshall aid the Dutch government received for Indonesia if the Dutch would continue to oppose Indonesian independence. How did this American threat influence the way America was portrayed in the two newspapers? Did an anti-American sentiment emerge in the newspapers? I will very briefly explore the background of this event after which I will examine the selected newspaper articles.

### **2.1 Historical Background**

#### **The Liberation and the Marshall Plan**

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 1944, British, Canadian and American troops landed in Normandy, France, as part of Operation Overlord. From the coasts of North France, the troops would span out further to the north and the east. D-Day would mark the beginning of the end of World War II. On the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 1945 the last remaining Germans surrendered in the Netherlands, which meant the whole country was now liberated. The liberation operations were executed by British, Canadian, Polish and American forces. All liberators were enthusiastically welcomed in towns throughout the country, where they received a warm welcome from the citizens, who were playing music and dancing exuberantly. Although in reality the Americans played a much smaller and more limited role than the British, Americans were the main liberators in the minds of the Dutch (Klinkert 566). Wim Klinkert notes that “America looms large in the Netherlands’ collective memory of the liberation” (565). He argues this is due to the fact that the operation was led by the Americans (Klinkert 566). The Americans thus played a large and mostly positive role in Dutch society at the moment of liberation.

This role would be even more extensive a couple of years later. Although relief and happiness were the dominant sentiments among most of the population immediately after the

liberation, the war had left Europe in ruins, both economically and socially. On June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1947, American secretary of state George Marshall held a speech in which he expressed his worries over Europe and stated that Europe's needs were substantially bigger than what the continent could pay for at that moment. Therefore the US would provide financial aid to Europe, which was meant to serve as a "cure rather than [a] palliative [remedy]" (Crafts 2). The Marshall plan, officially called European Recovery Plan (ERP), granted the European countries money in order for them to be able to rebuild and recover after the war. The Netherlands received 877.2 million dollars (Crafts 13) and invested the money, for example, in rebuilding the Rotterdam harbor, building polders and starting a new steel industry (Sorel 17). The dominant rhetoric surrounding the Marshall plan was that it was vital for the recovery of Europe, but the program included more than that. European economic recovery was also necessary for the interests of the United States, both economically and politically. A stable and economically strong Europe would mean a good trade partner and would leave less room for hostile, communist powers to take control (Hogan 26). Conditionality was embedded in the Marshall Plan and included signing contracts, committing to trade liberalization and needing American permission for receiving any other funds. Above all, Europe needed to start working together, which would foster intra-European trade and which would create a united Europe that would form a strong 'block' against communism. All these conditions gave the United States considerable influence in European affairs (Crafts 6). Initially, the ERP was treated as an immense success story for the recovery of Europe. More recently, the role the Marshall plan had in the rapid economic growth that occurred in Europe after World War II is more marginalized by scholars (Crafts 9). Nevertheless, the Marshall Plan has an "iconic status" (Crafts 1) and occupies a large space in European collective memory. Due to the American efforts during the liberation and the US financial aid program, the Dutch were generally positive about the Americans in the years after the war. Soon after the implementation of the Marshall plan in 1948, however, the Dutch would feel that American interference could also work against their interests.

### **Indonesian Independence**

The Dutch colony of Indonesia was of considerable economic importance for the Netherlands. In 1938, 8% of the import came from Indonesia and 10% of the export went to Indonesia (Eng 336). After the war, the Netherlands was determined to "[restore] the ties between [the] mother country

and the colon[y] [Indonesia], ..., which according to experts was essential for the revival of the Dutch economy” (White 211). ‘Indië verloren, rampspoed geboren’, ‘The Indies lost, misfortune born’, was a dominant phrase in the media during that time (White 218). The belief was that without an empire, the Netherlands would no longer be of any significance (Frey 610).

During the war, Indonesia had been occupied by the Japanese. After the sudden unconditional Japanese surrender as result of the atomic bombs, Indonesia was left in a political vacuum. This vacuum and the destruction left by the war, opened up a space of opportunity for the Indonesian nationalists to start their road to freedom. On August 17, 1945, Sukarno declared Indonesia independent and stated that “from this moment we build our state” (qtd. in Kahin 3). This ultimately led to the establishment of the Republic of Indonesia, which the Dutch government initially recognized de facto in the Linggadjati Agreement. Despite this agreement, the Dutch government started a ‘politioenele actie’, a police action on July 20, 1947, in an attempt to “revitalize the pre-war benefits” (White 218), to undermine the Republic and to prove to the US that they had the situation under control (Eng 337). Although called police actions, in reality it proved to be a military offensive against the Republic of Indonesia. The first attack by the Dutch was not overtly denounced by the US and financial aid was not endangered. The Americans seemed to share the belief that the colony was crucial for the recovery of the Netherlands, and the Dutch even received special Marshall Dollars to spend in Indonesia. In the following year, however, the American standpoint slowly shifted to a more negative attitude towards the Dutch presence in Indonesia. International critique of the Dutch regime, as well as the increasing emergence of communist movements in Indonesia, led the Americans to think that supporting the Indonesian nationalists would better serve their interests. A second military attack by the Dutch, from December 1948 to January 1949, finally convinced the Americans to overtly oppose the Dutch actions by shutting down the Marshall dollars for Indonesia in December 1948, and thereby also threatening to stop the financial aid to the Netherlands itself (Gouda 290-3). From this moment on, the Americans “consciously and deliberately” supported Indonesian independence (Frey 613). Although the actual influence Washington had on Indonesian independence is increasingly questioned by scholars, the American intervention in Indonesia left “[Dutch] politicians, the media, and the public at large [to feel] betrayed by a country that [they] had traditionally held in the highest regard” (Frey 609).

## 2.2 The Newspapers' Responses

To what extent did the shift towards an American denouncement of the Dutch actions throughout 1948, with the threat of ending financial aid ultimately, negatively influence the Dutch sentiment of America as expressed in the two newspapers? In other words, was the above-mentioned feeling of betrayal expressed in the papers and did it result in an anti-American sentiment in the selected newspapers? I have selected fourteen articles from *De Volkskrant*, seven from before the cessation of Marshall aid to Indonesia and six from after, and nine articles from *Elseviers Weekblad*, four from before and five from after.

### *De Volkskrant*

The shift in America's attitude on Indonesian independence was visible in the articles of *De Volkskrant*. In an article on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 1947, which was just a month before the first police action, the paper stated that secretary of state George Marshall declared at a press conference that he was "delighted to hear that the Republic of Indonesia responded quickly to the Dutch proposal" and that the US hoped for "the possibility of a quick and peaceful solution in the spirit of good faith and compromise" (A1). The proposal Marshall talked about was an ultimatum by the Netherlands, stating that the Dutch would retain the sovereignty over Indonesia (Burgers 540). At the moment of the press conference, Marshall did not yet know that Indonesia would reject the Dutch agreement, a rejection which would finally lead to the first police action a couple of weeks later. The statements presented by Marshall showed that the U.S. was initially very confident in the Dutch competence to handle the situation in the colony, as well as that the U.S. had faith in a good ending. The American confidence in the Dutch regime became clear from the fact that, after the first police action, the US department of foreign affairs "[did] not consider the possibility to recognize the Indonesian Republic as a separate nation" (A2), as stated in *De Volkskrant* on August 5, 1947. Interestingly, the title of this article was "Republic is not Independent," implying that the paper considered the American statement as a valid or binding recognition.

Similar to the American confidence and trust in the Netherlands, *De Volkskrant* expressed their faith in the United States. On August 11, 1947, the beginning of the week of the UN security council meetings on the situation in Indonesia just after the first police actions, *De Volkskrant*

stated that they were happy with the “good deeds” of the Americans, stating that they strive for “peaceful introduction of the program of Linggadjati” (A3) as well. In this article, the paper adopted a firm stance on the issue in Indonesia and stated that they shared the views of the Dutch government. Further on in the process of the UN meetings, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of September, the newspaper’s headline declared that “America has a clear image of the situation” in Indonesia (A4), thereby expressing their faith in America and the UN meetings. Positivity and faith in America was also expressed by Queen Wilhelmina in the beginning of 1948, who praised the Dutch allies and called America her “unforgettable friend” with whom the Netherlands would “make the world free of fear and free of shortages; [they] would make the world a place where the human-being is free to serve God in his way and where he can express his opinion freely” (A5). The head of the state was thus expressing pro-American views by stressing their friendship and shared values of freedom and liberty. She used the rhetoric of the Four Freedoms, which was articulated by Franklin D. Roosevelt in a speech in 1941. He defined four freedoms every person in the world should have: freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want and freedom from fear (Roosevelt). During the time that America was supporting the Netherlands in their fight with their colony, the newspaper seemed to report positive news about America and expressed their faith in the nation. In September 1947, before the Marshall plan was implemented, the newspaper wrote that the communists Haken and Schonenberg did “not trust the offer of the capitalist west by any means” (A6). Although anti-communism existed throughout all pillars of Dutch society, so also in the Catholic pillar, *De Volkskrant* did report on the communist view and their opposition to America.

On January 1, 1948, the newspaper published an article called “America dares take the risk in Indonesia” (A7). In this article, four so-called facts were listed which were supposed to show the true intentions of America in Indonesia. The facts revealed “the interest America has, especially in economic sense, particularly in East-Indonesia”. The examples, or facts, the newspaper listed include the number of flights to Indonesia the KLM (Dutch Royal Airlines) was allowed to operate, which was one flight per week, compared to the higher number of flights American airlines were allowed to operate then. Furthermore, Philips planned to build a light bulb factory in Indonesia, but a few weeks later America presented a turnkey project for a light bulb factory in Indonesia. The article noted that it “is remarkable that the Americans apparently know every card the Dutch want to play”. The newspaper hereby strongly implied America had a

'hidden agenda', or insincere intentions. The article suggested that, rather than being involved in the process for Indonesian independence, America was involved in the issue for the economic benefits.

Another instance of this was expressed on the 5<sup>th</sup> of August 1948 in an article which very clearly demonstrated the Catholic nature of the newspaper. It stated that any Dutch colonial presence was temporary and would end when "a complete Catholic Christian community has been established" (A8). Americanism was openly seen as a threat for Catholicism and even viewed as equally dangerous as communism. The newspaper reported on a woman who believed that "especially for Catholicism ... [there is] is a great danger in Americanism, which is definitely as disastrous as communism, although it presents itself as more innocent". This woman portrayed Americanism as a threat for Catholicism, almost turning America and everything it entailed into something heathen. The article merely reported on what one person said, without explaining their understanding of Americanism or why exactly this was forming a threat. So, although the dominant sentiment about America in *De Volkskrant* was quite positive after the first police actions, it had grown more negative throughout 1948.

During the second police actions, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December 1948, the newspaper reported that the United States demanded a cease-fire between the Netherlands and their colony, because "Washington finds the action 'disturbing'" and "thinks it is wrong that the Netherlands ignored the American advice not to start an action, especially because the Netherlands, with regards to the recovery program, could have been more susceptible to American advices" (A9). On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of December 1948, the newspaper published an article heading "E.C.A stops Marshall Aid to Indonesia". The newspaper noted that

"the suspension will mean that the import of material, which is required for the reconstruction of Indonesia, will decrease. This means a decrease of the opportunity of extension of the export of those Indonesian products the world market and therefore also the United States are in need of" (A10).

The article mentioned the unclarity of the usage of the funds in Indonesia as reason for the termination of the American dollars. No overt disapproval or negativity about the action of the United States was expressed, but the newspaper did clearly state the negative consequences for Indonesia as well as for the United States itself. It also implicitly talked about the potential complete suspension of all Marshall Aid to the Netherlands, by stating that the acting minister of

foreign affairs Robert Lovett did not want to predict anything about the possibility of a suspension of Marshall Aid to the Netherlands.

Interestingly, on January 14, 1949, shortly after the halt to Marshall Aid to Indonesia, *De Volkskrant* wrote: “Marshall Aid saved the Netherlands from disaster” (A11). The article highlighted numerous examples of ways the American financial aid had been used and noted several times that without this help “a catastrophe” would have unfolded. The article mentioned Indonesia once, when it stated that

“The Marshall Plan positively contributes to the recovery of the Netherlands, after a war in which the Netherlands witnessed the disappearance of its rich resources. The situation in Indonesia makes it almost impossible right now to bring the resources there to its full development. The revenue resulting from international service trade and from foreign investments has lost considerable meaning. A total reorientation is needed.”

It is remarkable that this article was published so soon after the cessation of Marshall Aid to Indonesia. Instead of discussing the American sanctions or American disapproval of the Dutch actions, the article acknowledged that change was needed in Indonesia. The emphasis on the American help and its contributions to Dutch recovery almost put America on a pedestal.

On that same day, the editorial staff published a special addition to the newspaper, completely dedicated to the “Europees Herstel Programma”, or the European Recovery Program. The most interesting part of this edition was a questionnaire made by the Common Council for American Unity in order to answer the question “How does Europe think of America?”. This council wanted “competent observers of public opinion” throughout Europe to fill out the questionnaire so they could find an answer to their question. The editorial board of *De Volkskrant* considered itself “a competent observer”, as they stated to have answered the questions for ‘the Netherlands’. A couple of questions and answers were:

“ [Who] [t]hinks the Marshall plan is:

A program to advance the American dominance of European industry?

- View held by an individual or no one.

A program which contributes to European recovery and is likely to succeed?

- View held by the majority”.

The questionnaire continued with broader questions on American politics:

“[Who] [t]hinks American foreign policy is:

Imperialistic?

- View held by an individual or no one.

Aiming to impose American capitalism on Europe?

- View held by an individual or no one.

Aiming for peace, within the framework of the United Nations?

- View held by the majority”.

The last section of the questionnaire focused on the Dutch view about American people. To the questions whether American people are imperialistic, uncivilized or too materialistic, the board answered that only “an individual or no one” held that view in the Netherlands. The board did say that the majority of Dutch people thought Americans were as “noble as they can permit”. In a small note below the questions the board stated that:

“The majority of Dutch people does not understand the American position on the problem in Indonesia. The Dutch people consider the case righteous and considers the measures, taken after three years of useless deliberation, commanded in such way that they wonder how it is possible that the United States seems to have such little sympathy for the Dutch views” (A12).

The article expressed an extremely pro-American view and presented this to be the view of the Dutch people. It should be noted that the board did not explain how they came to these answers and how they could make such claims for the entirety of the Dutch population other than arguing they are ‘competent observers’. The emphasis was put on America’s good intentions and their values of freedom, and any connotation with imperialism, materialism or dominance was opposed. The note at the end did show the opposition to the American decision to stop Marshall Aid to Indonesia a couple of weeks earlier and can be seen as a direct response to and result of that. The termination did not, however, seem to negatively affect the view of America’s values and its actions throughout the world expressed in *De Volkskrant*.

On January 28, the newspaper published six responses by readers to this special edition which seemed to reveal a lot more critique on America than the board claimed there existed two weeks earlier. One person noted that he or she “does not consider *De Volkskrant* authorized to act as competent observer of the Netherlands” and thought that the board “did not answer several questions right”. The reader thought the board was wrong to say only some people consider America to be materialistic or imperialistic. Furthermore, he or she believed that the Dutch

people should also keep in mind that the Marshall plan was not just a selfless act by the Americans, they “need a prosperous and stable Europe” for themselves. (A13). Another reader also disagreed with the board’s observations. The person thought that the newspaper was wrong in its statement about Indonesia and stated that “the average Dutch person is irritated by the way ... America interferes in a situation which is purely Dutch, and which can be handled in a fair way by the Netherlands” (A14). All six responses revealed strong oppositions to the insights of *De Volkskrant* two weeks earlier, thereby indicating that the editorial board might not have been right in its pro-American answers.

### ***Elseviers Weekblad***

I selected *De Telegraaf* to represent the other segment of the society, in opposition to *De Volkskrant*. Right after the war, however, *De Telegraaf* received a publication ban as a result of their cooperation with the Nazis. This ban was supposed to last thirty years, but already ended in 1949 (Wolf 340, 342). During the time of the Indonesian independence, however, the newspaper was not published. During the war the editor of *De Telegraaf*, H.A Lunshof, decided to transfer and start a new project together with several other employees of *De Telegraaf*. *Elseviers Weekblad* was first published on the 27<sup>th</sup> of October 1945. Since a large part of the initial board of *De Telegraaf* worked here, the views and audience may be assumed to be largely the same. I will therefore use this newspaper to cover the other segment in society in this first chapter.

The editors wanted *Elseviers Weekblad* to be a journal of opinion that would express opinions of different political spectra and would provide an inclusive and broad look on the world. Soon after its establishment, however, the newspaper shifted away from their ideal and took a clear political position. This was illustrated by their articles on the issues in Indonesia, as the newspaper started to fiercely and overtly oppose Indonesian independence. This viewpoint turned *Elsevier Weekblad* into a conservative and liberal newspaper, roughly representing the political right of the country (“Over Elsevier”).

*Elseviers Weekblad* was initially quite positive about the American attitude on the Dutch colony. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of August 1947, just after the first police actions, the newspaper published an article on the UN Security Council’s decision on a cease-fire. It stated that it were the big powers, like the United States and Great Britain, who had influence in an organization like the United Nations. According to the newspaper, these powers only took decisions against countries whom

they know were not strong enough to counter that decision. The newspaper stated that it was a “fact” that “the police action was a success and Indonesia, as well as the Netherlands and a large part of the rest of the world, showed understanding [towards the situation]. The police action succeeded ... and was never a war” (A15). It moved on to discuss the Security Council’s presence and American observations in Indonesia. The newspaper said it “trusts America’s valid and sensible judgement” and “think[s] that the United States is the right power to take on this job, because [they] can expect an objective attitude from them” (A15). So, although *Elseviers Weekblad* very strongly opposed independence from the beginning on, it had faith in a good ending and did not seem to see America’s interference as a threat.

A couple of weeks later, on August 23, 1947, *Elsevier Weekblad* published an article called “an appeal to America”, in which they requested America to take a responsible attitude during the negotiations on Indonesia. The article stated that “the American people are people with common sense. These people condemn dictatorship. We want to say to them: recognize your enemy, also in places where you do not expect or want to see him. Recognize him in Indonesia” (A16). Although still not negative about America, there already seemed to be a slight difference in *Elsevier’s* approach compared to the unconditional faith they expressed in the previous article. The board felt the need to warn the United States, indicating a slight change in their attitude towards the country’s actions.

The aversion towards America in relation to Indonesian independence grew rapidly over time, even before the American decision to end Marshall Aid to Indonesia. In June 1948, the newspaper published an article which illustrated the growing frustration the editorial board felt with America’s dealing with Indonesia. It was around this time that America’s standpoint began to develop more opposed to the Dutch actions in Indonesia, and the Dutch people become more aware of that opposition. The article reacted on leaked “working papers” drafted by the American and Australian state departments’ representatives in which they made proposals for an Indonesian “interim government” in order “to avoid another diplomatic impasse” (Gouda 246). The board viewed this as a direct “violation of the Renville Agreement”, which was a prolongation of the Linggadjati agreement. The working papers prompted questions in *Elseviers Weekblad* about the true intentions of the United States. The newspaper stated that “it seems very unlikely to us that people in the responsible and well-informed community in Washington, really think that via the Republic [of Indonesia] we can create a sound situation in the Dutch-Indies”. Furthermore, the

board could not “imagine that the best equipped department of foreign relations of the world does not know that the same dollar that is used in Europe to fight communism, is used in Indonesia to support it” (A17). Serious doubts about the United States were raised and the article implied that the United States must be ignorant if they really think an independent Indonesia would be the answer.

Just before the second police actions, on December 18, 1948, the board wrote an article because “many Dutch people are concerned as to what [the Netherlands] can still do [in Indonesia] without losing Marshall Aid”. The board stated that they had always warned that the aid was not merely an economic tool but would have political consequences. They hereby revealed the serious concerns it had always had about American aid. They stated that “it seems that capitalistic America expects the Netherlands to find an agreement with the Republic” (A18). The newspaper called it “bizarre” that America had this influence in their country now. So even before the actual decision of the United States, *Elsevier Weekblad's* view had already changed. Although the sentiment on America as expressed in the newspaper shortly after the first police action was rather positive, it shifted towards a skeptical and distrusting sentiment within a year, before the second police actions took place.

After the Americans ended the Marshall aid to Indonesia, the skeptical view in *Elseviers Weekblad* increased. On the 8<sup>th</sup> of January 1949, the newspaper published an article on the American decision to bring a halt to the Marshall aid to Indonesia. Instead of criticizing America, however, the newspaper focused on the importance of the Indonesian colony for the Netherlands. It acknowledged the benefits the Netherlands had gained from the ERP, but it stated that Indonesia was of greater importance to the Netherlands. The Marshall plan was “a series of useful boosts, but the Dutch-Indonesia relations were about the survival of ‘the tissue of a body’” (A19). The board expressed its gratitude for the help the Netherlands received so far from the Americans, but moved on quickly to stating how important Indonesia was, not just for economic reasons but also considering the relationship that had existed for centuries. By this, it downplayed America’s judgement of the Dutch actions and more or less neglected the importance of the American aid. The cessation of Marshall Aid did not seem to matter that much and they put more emphasis on the importance of keeping Indonesia than on the cut back of financial aid.

On February 26, 1949, America’s intervention was much more openly criticized. An article stated that “America disrupts the normal development” of Indonesia. It stated that

“America says that: ‘[the Dutch] are suppressors, [they] extort the people of ... Indonesia and [they] don’t grant them freedom. Look at us. We let everyone be free and only care about trading. ... [the Dutch] do colonialism’ (an unusual word in the Netherlands)”. The article thought the idea that the Netherlands would be guilty of colonialism was a ridiculous accusation. Colonialism was not even a common term in the Netherlands, as the board observed. The board turned the accusations around and argued that America, with its interference everywhere in the world and with the spread of their values, was guilty of colonialism. Guilty of colonialism “in its most simple, most primitive form and in its first stage”. They accused America of imperialism and “unrestrained dollar colonialism”. The article concluded by saying that “the Dutch more or less have to be imperialistic in Indonesia, to resist American colonialism. They have to protect the Indonesian people against that” (A20). America was thus portrayed as the evil actor here, against who the Dutch needed to protect the Indonesian people.

In several other articles during 1949, the same type of accusations was made. Phrases like “capitalist America”, “free enterprise” and “free trade” reoccurred in many articles and the differences between America and Europe were emphasized (A21). Another article, titled “Benelux endangered by America”, responded to a Belgian newspaper which reported on the negotiations on the Benelux. The negotiations were not making progress and the Belgian newspaper blamed the Netherlands for that, as the Dutch were in a weaker and poorer position than Belgium. *Elseviers Weekblad* argued that Belgium should not blame the Netherlands, but should instead look at America as the root of the problem. Their intervention in Indonesia was threatening the formation of the Benelux, as this was an attack on Dutch prosperity. Like the board did in many articles, it emphasized that “[they] have always said this”. This time they claimed that they “have always stated that the problem in Indonesia is a Dutch one” (A22). According to *Elseviers Weekblad*, the fruitless negotiations on the Benelux were another proof that the American involvement in Indonesian independence was negatively affecting Dutch interests.

In the rich collection of articles like these, there was also an exception to be found. This exception was a report about Americans by an American, published on October 8, 1949. The article was full of praise for the American people. It focused on freedom, the American education system and the American work ethic and tried to show there are more good sides than bad sides to America and its people by emphasizing “the good characteristics”. At the same time, the article

included several statements such as: “at first sight Americans might seem undisciplined, which they partly are”, or “in European eyes an American person is careless”. So even in a positive article on America, *Elseviers Weekblad* incorporated multiple generalizing statements about the Americans (A23).

### **Anti-American?**

There is no doubt that negativity about or disapproval of America’s termination of the Marshall aid to Indonesia existed in both newspapers. There is, however, a distinction between the degree and the moment of publication of that negativity in the two newspapers. Initially, before the first police action, both newspapers were positive about America and its involvement in Indonesian independence. *De Volkskrant* published a large range of objective articles, which served to inform people rather than to state an opinion the newspaper holds. In general, the articles left space for the reader to form their own opinion. Despite its objective tone, *De Volkskrant* published some critical and skeptical articles on America in relation to Indonesia, but these occurred *before* the stop on Marshall Aid to Indonesia. After the decision to end the financial aid to Indonesia, *De Volkskrant* published a couple of articles which expressed an extremely positive view on America. *Elseviers Weekblad* provided a much more unnuanced view in their articles and expressed a strong opinion which becomes more negative throughout these years. The newspaper’s goal had always been to provide different opinions, but it adopted a very clear standpoint against independence, leaving little space for other viewpoints. The American sympathy for Indonesian independence automatically caused the newspaper to be more skeptical about America’s interference. This skepticism turned into negativity when America more openly opposed the Dutch presence in Indonesia.

As explained before, negativity or aversion to America does not automatically mean anti-Americanism is present. Anti-Americanism is so multi-layered, that this negativity alone cannot account for a complete anti-American sentiment. So, let us examine the five characteristics that I defined; stereotypization, denigration, omnipotence, conspiracy and obsession in relation to the previous discussed articles. In both newspapers, several articles include doubts over America’s real intentions in Indonesia, which indicates something which resembles the conditions of conspiracy. These articles imply that America’s real intentions are not to fight for the suppressed but are economic and imperialistic. Although they present themselves as freedom fighters, the

articles imply, the Americans have a hidden agenda behind their strive for Indonesian independence (A7, A18, A20, A21, A22). Although there appeared examples in both newspapers, the majority of them occurred in *Elseviers Weekblad*. Many of the *Elseviers Weekblad* articles that are discussed also included the omnipotence element. It can be found in statements claiming that it was unbelievable how much influence America had in the Netherlands, or that Indonesian independence was a Dutch problem in which America should not interfere. The statement that Americanism was a serious threat for Catholicism, as expressed in an article of *De Volkskrant* (A8), implies the superiority of Catholicism and can be seen as denigration. That same characteristic was present in an article of *Elseviers Weekblad* which talked about the “rich history” of Europe which is in sharp contrast to America’s history (A21).

Many of these characteristics were more nuanced in *De Volkskrant*. *De Volkskrant* leaned more toward instances of these characteristics, if they can even be defined as such. The reports on the cancelation of Marshall Aid were objective and do not overtly express any opinion on the American decision. Interestingly, already a couple of weeks after the decision, the newspaper published one of the most pro-American articles (A12) I came across; although the note about Indonesia does show the discontent with the stop of financial aid for Indonesia, it did not seem to affect the general sentiment on America as expressed in the newspaper. Although the general sentiment was contested by the readers’ responses which seemed to express some stereotypization and conspiracy elements (A13, A14), the feeling of admiration and gratitude for American help remained dominant. *Elseviers Weekblad* was much more unnuanced and had stronger opinions on America. Even before the stop of Marshall Aid to Indonesia, the newspaper often expressed statements relating to America being capitalistic, imperialistic, and spreading their influence everywhere around the world, or in other words, the omnipotence of America. Many anti-American characteristics shimmered through many of the articles, but the extent to which this arose as a result of the decision to stop Marshall Aid to Indonesia is to be questioned. The newspaper was more interested in the Indonesian colony than in American financial aid.

To come back to the questions posed in the beginning of this section, it can be concluded that the Dutch sentiment was negatively influenced by the cessation of Marshall Aid, although *De Volkskrant* shows contrasting signs. Overall, we can conclude that although *De Volkskrant* might reveal a few characteristics of anti-Americanism, these occur occasionally and in a context in which the newspaper is largely objective. Besides that, after the termination of Marshall Aid to

Indonesia the newspaper is positive and grateful to America. An anti-American sentiment in *De Volkskrant* can therefore not be said to have existed at that time. *Elseviers Weekblad*, on the other hand, exposes many characteristics and can be said to express an anti-American sentiment. This sentiment is, however, already present before the actual cessation of financial aid and seems to arise more as a result of the growing American sympathy for Indonesian independence than as a result of the termination of financial aid for Indonesia. This is illustrated by the emergence of anti-American characteristics when America expresses their support for Indonesian independence, which was opposite of *Elsevier's* political view. *Elsevier's* desire to retain the Dutch colony and America's opposite desires fueled the newspaper's fear of the United States and its power, one of the "roots" which anti-Americanism emerges out of according to Joffe ("What" par. 10). Interestingly, these findings are opposite to the claim made by Markovits and Kroes (29-30, "European" 427), who argued that left-wing politics usually denounces American politics. It was noted in the first chapter, however, that anti-Americanism is not necessarily restricted to a specific political standpoint.

### **3. “Johnson Moordenaar”- The My Lai Massacre**

The Cold War came to a head during the Vietnam War. Ultimately, the war in Vietnam showed the excessiveness of the Cold War to the rest of the world. One of these excesses was the My Lai massacre, which Bernd Greiner called “the most shocking episode of the Vietnam War” (519). In this event, around 500 Vietnamese civilians were brutally killed by an American troop. The atrocities took place in March 1968, but became known to the world only 1.5 years later. Consequently, the Vietnam War painted a picture of the United States as an immoral and evil superpower (Maar 684). The My Lai massacre contributed substantially to that image. How was the My Lai reported in *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf*? To what extent did an anti-American sentiment develop in the newspapers as a result of the massacre? Firstly, I will very briefly provide some historical background on the Vietnam War and the My Lai massacre. After that, I will examine the selected newspaper articles and letters to the editor.

#### 3.1 Historical Background

##### **The American Intervention in the Vietnam War**

After the Geneva Conference in 1954, the war between France and their former colony Vietnam came to an end. During the conference, agreements on a temporary divide of the country were signed. As a result of this, a northern communist state and a southern liberal society emerged. The divide of the country did, however, not mean the fighting between the North and the South came to an end. The United States’ strong belief in the domino theory led them to think that the defeat of South Vietnam by North Vietnam would lead other countries to fall into communist hands. To prevent this, America sent advisors and financial aid to South-Vietnam to support them in their fight against the North. Under President Johnson this aid would develop into an all-out war, which would last ten years (Hall 2-17). The absolute military superiority the American forces had over the North Vietnamese forces created the expectation that the Americans could win this war quickly and comfortably. The Vietnam War would, however, be characterized by the absence of a front, the Vietnamese guerrilla fighters, the destructive American bombardments, the unconventional weapons such as napalm, the excessive civilian casualties and finally the fierce protests, not just domestically, but also internationally.

## **The Dutch and the Vietnam War**

The larger question that arose throughout all of the Vietnam War was, “was the American government setting up a blockade against international communism or did Vietnam have an internal social conflict that in principle did not warrant US involvement?” (Maar 684). The Dutch largely held on to the former interpretation during the beginning of the war. The Dutch government supported the Americans and gave their approval for the interference in Vietnam in 1965. Although the Dutch government supported the American actions in Vietnam, the Dutch population moved more towards the latter interpretation of the question and increasingly denounced the American interference during the 1960s. The criticism caused severe tensions between the Dutch people and the government, and “the Vietnam War began to be used as a means of putting pressure on the establishment” (Maar 685). Anti-war protests were organized in Amsterdam and in 1966 the Labor Party (PvdA) even wrote an open letter to the American ambassador calling for the termination of American bombing of North Vietnam (Zuijdam “Van Stichtelijke” 173). The criticism increased as the conflict escalated in the late 1960s. In 1967, thousands of Dutch people gathered to protest the American atrocities in Vietnam. “Johnson moordenaar”, Johnson murderer, was a phrase used among the Dutch protesters. Later, this phrase would be changed to “Johnson molenaar”, Johnson miller, as the Dutch courts prohibited the use of the first phrase (Eekert et al. 23). One of the events that triggered the growing opposition to the Vietnam War was the My Lai massacre. The Dutch government’s approval of the American actions continued, however, even after these atrocious crimes. In May 1970, the Netherlands was the only NATO ally that expressed its understanding for the American invasion in Cambodia to shut down North Vietnamese bases (Eekert et al. 108). The resumption of the bombing of North Vietnam in the early 1970s caused international outrage and slowly evoked more protest from within the Dutch government, ultimately resulting in an official statement in 1973 by the Catholic minister of foreign affairs Schmelzer which denounced the American actions. A new, left-wing government took office in 1973, which was expected to adopt a firm stance opposed to the American actions, but was rather ambiguous on their standpoint in the beginning. Ultimately, in 1975, the Netherlands granted hundred million guilders to the unified country of Vietnam, thereby overtly shifting away from the United States which boycotted unified Vietnam (Maar 693).

## **My Lai Massacre**

As mentioned above, the My Lai massacre was among one of the events that caused public outrage in the United States, but also in the Netherlands, and was presumably the most shocking episode in the Vietnam War (Greiner 519).

Most American soldiers fighting in the Vietnam War were on a constant and fruitless search for an enemy. Often, this meant endless hikes in the hot sun or through the impenetrable jungle without any encounters. The soldiers from Charlie's Company, a military unit of the 20<sup>th</sup> infantry regiment of the U.S.' army, had encountered many booby traps but never a direct battle in their first months of fighting in Vietnam. Despite the lack of a clear enemy, the company had lost 28 of their men, which had left the soldiers frustrated and increasingly desperate to fight. On March 15, 1968, they were told to prepare for a fierce, face to face battle the next day. The small village of My Lai was allegedly full of hiding Vietcong fighters and the company was instructed to completely destroy the village. They were told that the residents of the village would have left for the market early in the morning and that anyone still present was a Vietcong sympathizer. Early in the morning the next day, the soldiers landed near the village, ready to fight the Vietcong. Although not fired at upon landing, the company still thought the guerilla fighters were hiding somewhere. Contrary to the expectations, the village was full of civilians performing their morning rituals. When the attack by the Americans started, they hid in their underground bunkers until the shooting stopped. When emerging from the bunkers, the residents were driven into one group and anyone trying to escape was shot. Their houses were set afire and grenades were thrown into the bunkers killing all remaining people in there. The US soldiers were ordered to shoot the residents from point-blank range. They raped many of the women and girls and killed them afterwards. One of the soldiers, Varnado Simpson recalled: "From shooting them to cutting their throats to scalping them to cutting off their hands and cutting out their tongue," he said, "I did that." (qtd. in Cookman 156). On this morning, over 500 civilians were slaughtered, among them mostly women, children and old men. The Americans were never fired upon (Cookman 155-7).

The My Lai massacre was kept a secret by the American military for over 1.5 years. Soldier Ron Ridenhour heard of the event and reported the massacre to the government in an unanswered letter after being dismissed from the army. Eventually, in November 1969, investigation journalist Seymour Hersh revealed the story to the public which would soon be

accompanied by photographs taken by Ron Haeberle. It were especially the horrific, revealing photos that brought My Lai to the foreground and that sparked international outrage. Greiner notes that even after the Tet Offensive, the start of the bloodiest phase in the Vietnam War, “the human cost of the war was mentioned only in passing in the press” (3). My Lai was, however, the first event to be extensively covered in the press. The news and photos of the massacre also reached the Netherlands and caused similar shock. The role the My Lai massacre played in the anti-war movement due to the brutal behavior of the Americans, its press coverage, as well as its image of the “bloodiest episode in the Vietnam war” (Greiner 519), marks this event as an important one to examine within the newspapers.

### 3.1 The Newspapers’ Responses

To what extent did the My Lai massacre negatively affect the view about America as expressed in *De Volkskrant* and in *De Telegraaf*? Or in other words, to what extent did the most inhumane, brutal and shocking episode in the Vietnam War cause the emergence of an anti-American sentiment in either of the newspapers? For this analysis, I have selected nine articles and six letters from *De Volkskrant* and ten articles and four letters from *De Telegraaf*.

#### ***De Volkskrant***

The outrage that arose as result of the atrocities of the Vietnam War in the 1960s, including the My Lai massacre, was expressed in left-wing media such as *De Volkskrant*, which referred to support for the American intervention as conservative and right-wing, as Rimko van der Maar notes (“Dutch” 685). In *De Volkskrant*, criticism about the war increased during 1967. The newspaper published anti-war statements, thereby clearly positioning itself in the debate. On November 25, 1967, for example, an article stated that the conflict in Vietnam “is a war for freedom, fought by people of whom, incidentally, the majority is communist”, or in other words, the war should be treated as a struggle for freedom by the Vietnamese people, regardless of whether they are communist or not. US President Johnson was called “narrow minded” and “blind” and the article argued that the American optimism about winning the war is unjustified and wrong, because the reality was different (B1). This criticism was echoed by many of the letters sent in by readers during 1967 and the beginning of 1968. On March 8, 1968, reader W.

Gerbrands expressed their concerns about the Vietnam War, writing that “everything needs to be done to stop the war crimes in Vietnam” (B2). Although negativity about the American intervention in Vietnam was dominant in *De Volkskrant* during this time, there were also certain exceptions to be found in the letters sent in by readers. On February 24, 1968, for instance, Mrs. Marie Thérèse Sprokel wrote that “Russian propaganda is working [in the Netherlands]”. She argued that America earns a little more respect since it is “preventing a third world war” (B3).

During the first days after the event became publicly known, *De Volkskrant* published informative articles, but remained careful in their choice of words. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of November 1969, the first article on the My Lai massacre was published. It reported that a massacre “is alleged to have been committed by Americans in March last year” (B4), which indicates the newspaper was not yet sure about the truth of the event. The article was very short. A few pages further, an article by the *New York Times* was published in which the events during and after the massacre were described. Survivor Haoi was interviewed, who described the events in graphic detail. He and his wife survived by lying underneath a pile of dead bodies. He stated that he was willing to travel to the United States to testify against Lieutenant Calley, if he would be brought to trial. The casualties were estimated between 450 and 500. The event was treated with less carefulness or doubt as in the other article on that day. Although the exact number of casualties or perpetrators was not clear yet, the truthfulness of the event itself was not doubted in the article (B5). The day after, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of November, another article on the massacre was published. The newspaper set out how the massacre became known to the US government via the letter written by Ridenhour. Similarly to the day before, *De Volkskrant* remained careful in their wording. It wrote about the massacre that “supposedly” took place and about who “might” have been involved (B6). This illustrates that *De Volkskrant* sought to remain objective and informative, since the revelation was still fresh and in a preliminary stage at that moment.

As time went on, this carefulness gradually vanished. The massacre was assumed to be true and the horrors were exposed in the newspaper. On November 26, for example, an interview with one of the veterans who participated in the massacre was published. 22 year-old Paul Meadlo was interviewed on CBS and the transcription was published in *De Volkskrant*. He confessed to have killed ten to fifteen women, children and men. Meadlo explained to the interviewer how they landed near the village on that day, how they ordered the residents to stand together in a group in the center, how he shot four of his cartridges empty on one group of

people, not knowing how many exactly he killed, and how they “collected even more [people] together, and had seven or eight persons [standing in a group] and threw a hand grenade between them”. After Meadlo told his story, interviewer Wallace said:

“the thing that goes through my mind all the time ... I also served some time overseas, and I have killed in the Second World War, etcetera. But the thing that goes through my mind is that we made such a fuss about what de Nazis did, or what the Japanese did, but especially what the Nazis did in the Second World War, the horrors, etcetera. For a lot of Americans, it is hard to understand that young, appropriate, brave Americans are capable of putting old men, women, children and babies in a row and kill them in cold blood” (B7).

The article thus referenced World War II very clearly. The interviewer compared the atrocities committed by the Nazis to the American actions in Vietnam. This comparison reoccurred in several articles. Like on December 6, 1969, when reader B. Gerritsen responded to an interview they heard on the radio. The interviewee argued that the atrocities in Vietnam cannot be compared to those of the Nazis for four reasons:

“fellow Americans have denounced the actions, the Americans themselves made video material available, the American democracy will lead to judgement and conviction of the persecutors, and the order for destruction was not an official one”.

Gerritsen disagreed, because he or she thought “it does not make any difference whether it are Germans, Nazis, Dutch people in Indonesia, English in Burma, or French in Algeria”. Gerritsen reasoned that making a distinction between the Americans in My Lai and the Nazis like the interviewee did was cynical. My Lai is thus very clearly denounced, but it was also very clearly expressed that it does not matter whoever the prosecutors were, so the Americans are not specifically focused upon (B8).

The horrible nature of the actions was sometimes put into perspective by emphasizing the moral values of the Americans. In some articles, this resulted into a fear for the consequences the acts would have on the international image of America. On November 27, another article from the *New York Times* was published in *De Volkskrant*. The article argued that certain fundamental questions arise from the My Lai drama. It stated that questions such as “who carries the blame?” should be asked, “[is] it the soldiers who killed the people, the officers who gave the orders, or is it the system of war they are caught up in?”. The article deemed certain facts in the massacre

undeniable and did not doubt the truthfulness of them. However, it also talked about the “morality” of Americans and about the ideal image of America. It was aware of the atrocities, and rather than denouncing America for it, it feared the negative impact it would have on America’s image. In this reasoning, the role of the media was also questioned. The article stated that the media only contributed to the already-existing polarization in American society and damaged the “American ideal image around the world” (B9). The fear for damage of America’s image reoccurred in several other articles. It reoccurred on the same day as the previous article, for example, when the newspaper reported on Stanley Resor, secretary of the army, who stated that “the revelations will damage the American government”. Resor continued by saying that “despite that, we are following the only path which is in agreement with our international duties, our national politics and ethics of the American military operations” (B10).

The number of letters sent in by readers in *De Volkskrant* on the My Lai massacre or the Vietnam war, after the massacre became known to the public, is, contrary to what one might expect, lower than in 1967 and 1968. The few letters that were sent in, were mostly denouncing the war. On December 9, 1969, for example, reader J.A Vink called the Vietnam War a “dirty war” which, according to the writer, had not yet resulted in enough aversion in the Netherlands. Vink thought this was illustrated by the low attendance at an anti-war protest in the Netherlands. He stated that “protesting can be done fairly easily, wearing a black armband would be enough”. Furthermore, Vink was also surprised by the fact that on Moratorium Day in America, mostly American victims were commemorated and no Vietnamese victims. According to the reader, this was a sign of “the bad taste” of the Americans (B11). Another reader expressed an opposite view. He or she argued that the Dutch had been “brainwashed” by the communist propaganda and had become unable to create their own judgement on the Vietnam War. The reader thought Dutch people were holding the Americans responsible for the many deaths, but they should realize that the Vietcong had also murdered hundreds of South Vietnamese people (B12).

On December 1, *De Volkskrant* reported that the President of South Vietnam, Nguyen Van Thieu, officially defined the My Lai massacre as an “act of war” rather than a war crime. He considered the investigation closed. Later, on January 6, 1970, *De Volkskrant* reported that the South Vietnamese government considered the event to be “an isolated instance” committed by one American military company and therefore should not be seen as the politics of the whole American military. The South Vietnamese senate avoided words such as massacre or bloodbath,

and determined the number of deaths to be 47. This was in stark contrast with the conclusion of the American investigation, which estimated the number of victims between 350 and 500. It very clearly showed how the South Vietnamese government desperately tried to hide the American atrocities, in an attempt to keep the American support in the war. The article also reported on an inquiry set up by the magazine *Time*, which found that 65% of the Americans saw the My Lai massacre as an “incident” that “can happen in any war”. The inquiry also concluded that the majority of Americans felt sympathy for Lieutenant Calley and that 65% of the Americans thought that My Lai did *not* prove that the American intervention in the Vietnam War was morally wrong from the beginning. These findings seemed to imply the opposite of what the growing number of protests after the event illustrated. The article only reported on the American opinion, not on the Dutch thoughts of the massacre (B13).

Although *De Volkskrant* clearly disapproved of the American actions, the published articles remained mostly objective and informative. One article formed an interesting exception, and expressed a clear anti-American sentiment. This exception was published on December 16<sup>th</sup>, 1969, in the form of a poem about the massacre. Interestingly, this poem was written by a Russian writer and translated into Dutch. The poem fiercely condemned the events in My Lai, but also condemned America itself.

“de lange kaarsen hoog geheven,  
Moet gij, Amerika van het geweten,  
De waarheid zeggen bij dit licht  
Tot het ganse Amerika der leugens”

This part of the poem stated that America, with its conscience, has to tell the truth to the entire “America of lies”. The last paragraph of the poem said:

“en grijs van schaamte  
Houdt het Bevrijdingsbeeld  
Zijn fakkel omhoog  
Gelijk een grafkaars”

“Red with shame, the statue of liberty holds her torch up high, like a grave candle”. The ultimate symbol of liberty was placed into a context of horror and death, the opposites of freedom. The Russian poet contrasted America’s moral and cultural values, such as freedom, with the atrocities the Americans had committed in My Lai and thereby emphasized the sheer hypocrisy of the

situation. *De Volkskrant* published this poem which openly expressed criticism and denounced the American acts, which was all intensified by the fact that it was written by a Russian poet (B14).

As mentioned before, the photos taken by Ronald Haerberle caused the most outrage. They gave the victims a face and visualized the horrible acts in My Lai. *De Volkskrant* did not publish any of these photos in the months after the massacre was exposed. The photos and photographer were mentioned in some of the articles (B6), but the actual photos seem to have kept outside the newspaper. It seems an attempt to hide parts of the atrocity, since the photos played such a large role in the aftermath of the event. It is possible that *De Volkskrant* was unable to acquire the photos, or that they were considered to be inappropriate or too revealing to be published in the newspaper. Another reason was mentioned in an article on the 29<sup>th</sup> of November 1969, which was called “blood money”. The article stated about Haerberle’s war photography that “een man zijn brood is de ander zijn dood”, which translates to “one man’s bread is another one’s death” (B15). The article argued that Haerberle “smelled money” and asked an amount of money for his photos which *De Volkskrant* considered disproportionately large. Ultimately, he sold his photos to *The Sunday Times*. The article showed *De Volkskrant*’s opinion on war photography and might have served to illustrate the argument not to publish any of the photos: publishing them for these financial or commercial purposes was inappropriate and showed disrespect for the victims in the eyes of *De Volkskrant*.

### ***De Telegraaf***

After *De Telegraaf* had been banned and denounced because of their standpoint in World War II, the newspaper had grown to the largest newspaper in the country again in 1966 (Wolf 412).

Rimko van der Maar classifies *De Telegraaf* as a newspaper which was supporting the United States in their war in Vietnam (122). During 1968, when the opposition against the Vietnam War was increasingly growing internationally, the newspaper published many optimistic and positive articles about America’s intervention. On February 13, 1968, the newspaper stated that “America will persevere in Vietnam” (B16) and the focus was placed on the cruelties of the Vietcong. The majority of the letters sent in by readers expressed the same view. Johanna Schalwijk argued that the Americans liberated the Dutch, and then helped other people in need. “And what do we do?”, she wrote, “We fiercely condemn the Americans. How about a little gratitude?” (B17). The

protests against the war were defined as “left-wing terror” and as merely organized by naïve, young students in other letters (B18). Mariette Wolf also notes that *De Telegraaf* disapproved of any protest organized by the rebellious youth (408).

The first reports on the massacre appeared later in *De Telegraaf* than in *De Volkskrant*. The first mention of the event was on November 22, 1969. This did not appear on the front page or in an extensive article, but was slipped into another article. This article put the emphasis on the British Minister Brown who had stated that he thought “America should continue fighting [in Vietnam]”. The Minister responded to a question on his thoughts about the My Lai massacre. He answered that these things happen in a war, but that “the Americans fight communism and therefore have to strike hard” (B19). It was not until days after the massacre was exposed that *De Telegraaf* published an extensive article on the event. On November 24, the newspaper wrote in its’ headline: “after accusations of massacre; The American military in a tough position again”. The word ‘accusations’ was an initial indication of the paper’s thoughts on the event. The emphasis in the article was placed on the negative consequences the news coverage of the massacre would have for America: “military and civil leaders fear that the slaughter of civilians in the South Vietnamese village of Son My will increase the call for withdrawal of the troops and will strengthen anti-militarist feelings in America” (B20). This statement was followed by a false witness testimony. One of the men of the C-Company, Charles West, declared that they were fired upon when entering the village and then shoot back at the Vietcong fighters. The testimony *De Telegraaf* published framed the Americans as if they were defending themselves against the Vietnamese. Later, when more witness accounts were exposed, this testimony was proven to be wrong, since the Americans were never fired upon during the whole action. *De Telegraaf* did not publish a rectification or discussion on this false statement.

In later articles, the same type of profound skepticism about the truthfulness of the massacre was expressed. On November 28, *De Telegraaf* published an article which clearly impugned the situation. The last paragraph, called “suspicious,” stated that:

“although people might believe that the reports of the massacre could be true, many [people] here [at the editorial staff] think it is suspicious that such things could have been hidden for 6 to 18 months. Some do not consider it to be a coincidence that ... the majority of the atrocities are told by former army officials who have returned to the United States and now joined anti-war groups” (B21).

The article also stated that “someone is innocent until the contrary has been proven”. Besides the severe doubt *De Telegraaf* expressed, it also put some focus on the good nature of America by stating that if the country really lacked a conscience, then why would the news be full of the massacre? *De Telegraaf* argued that the fact that the media was flooded with accounts of the massacre demonstrated the morality of America.

The focus on the morality of America reoccurred in several articles. In an article on the 10<sup>th</sup> of December, 1969, *De Telegraaf* reported on a press conference given by President Nixon about the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam. In his speech, he denounced the massacre. *De Telegraaf* stated that the President “seemed” to accept the facts of the massacre as the truth, but like the newspaper also emphasized, he considered it to be an individual incident. The article finished by pointing towards “all the good things the American soldiers have done in South-Vietnam. They built roads, schools, churches, pagodas and donated 750.000 out of their own pockets to the local population” (B22). The article seemed to imply that, if one accepted the massacre as true, the good deeds by the Americans would erase or would at least compensate the horrible acts in My Lai. A similar argument was made when the newspaper reported on statements made by doctor De Waal, on December 30. This Dutch doctor, who served in American hospitals in Vietnam, argued that the reports on the massacre were very biased. According to him “there [was] no case of low morale among the American soldiers,” the Vietcong fighters received exactly the same medical treatment as American fighters, and the two sides even fraternized with each other (B23).

*De Telegraaf* clearly had its doubts about the truth of the massacre. These were very obviously expressed on January 21, 1970 in an article that is titled “support for suspects of My Lai”. The main suspect, Lieutenant Calley, is described as a friendly soft person who could never have done anything so horrible:

“whoever sees small and thin Calley (1.65 m, 55 kg), finds it hard to imagine that this young man, with his open face and friendly eyes, could have committed a massacre. His friends – which he has a lot – describe him as a sensitive, friendly person” (B24).

The article continued by stating that Calley had lost 10 kg of weight since the news became publicly known. Besides the unlikelihood that Calley committed such a crime, *De Telegraaf* argued, it was also highly suspicious that the photos and facts of the massacre only came out a year later. Furthermore, the newspaper stated that the innocence of the victims could never be

proven because the Vietcong recruited young boys and girls to fight for them. In other words, the newspaper fiercely tried to oppose all evidence that pointed towards the massacre.

This was accompanied by doubts on the number of victims. Whereas *De Volkskrant* spoke of 350-500 casualties from the beginning, *De Telegraaf* wrote about “over hundred” or 102 victims (B24, B27) in several articles. One article, which reported on the trial against Calley, focused on the uncertainty about the number of victims. The South Vietnamese government argued that the actual number of casualties was considerably lower than the claimed 350-500. The commander of the South Vietnamese forces stated that the residents of My Lai had greatly exaggerated the number of victims, in order to claim higher compensation from the American government. *De Telegraaf* gave this part of the article the subheading “doubts” and added in the final sentence that “Washington pays compensation to South Vietnamese citizens for all the losses and damages the Americans inflicted” (B25). The paper implied that these financial compensations offered a valid argument to think that the residents of My Lai lied about the number of deaths. Again, the prime focus was on the morality of the Americans and on the highly questionable nature of the massacre.

In the rare moments that the acts in My Lai were overtly denounced in *De Telegraaf*, the newspaper took away the responsibility from the American soldiers who were involved. In an article on November 26, 1969, *De Telegraaf* stated, similar to articles in *De Volkskrant*, that the massacre “arouses memories of the crimes committed by the Hitler-regime in the Second World War”. It moved on, however, by saying that soldiers were sent to war and were subsequently ordered to kill. The command “thou shalt not kill” was replaced by “thou shalt kill” according to the article. The article thereby implied that the climate in which the soldiers came to live forced them to kill, assigning responsibility for the atrocious acts to the system rather than to the soldiers (B26). Next to this article, only few other instances of disapproval of the massacre were expressed in the newspaper. On December 1, for example, *De Telegraaf* talked about the “cruelties” in Vietnam, how these were increasingly revealed by veterans and how the Vietnam War is met with increasing resistance (B27).

The support for America and the suspicion expressed by *De Telegraaf* remained dominant throughout the paper, and was in line with the letters sent in by the readers. Isabel Proper stated that:

“When a government in North-Vietnam commits these cruelties to American soldiers day in day out, thereby affecting thousands of American families, you barely hear anything about it. But as soon as a few Americans cross a line in My Lai everybody loses their mind. Then anti-Americanism is present everywhere. Also in the Netherlands” (B28).

Propper expressed high indignation about the amount of attention that arose for My Lai in comparison to the attention that was paid to the American casualties. This was published with reference to an article about American prisoners of war, in which wives of American soldiers were interviewed. Propper also noted that “people should be reminded of the fact that it were the Americans who liberated the Netherlands. Then they were called heroes, now murderers...” (B28). This reader displayed what has become known as a culture of gratitude, or giving thanks to America, a phenomenon which has gradually emerged after World War II (Doss 190). Erika Doss argues that gratitude has developed into one of the main elements in World War II, both in America and in Europe (195).

Another interesting letter was sent in by J.L. Maarsen. He responded to an interview on television, in which a young journalist interviewed an American professor about the atrocities in the Vietnam war, among which the My Lai massacre. With reference to this interview, Maarsen thought “it is time, that we end the one-sided and biased information and that we hear the voice of ‘others’, authorities and citizens simultaneously. It is time to stop smirching the name of a friendly power, to which we Dutch people owe a lot” (B29). The letter was a clear call to end criticism of the United States in Vietnam. While asking for nuance and objectivity, Maarsen stated that the Dutch people should stop criticizing the United States actions and instead be thankful to the country, which seems to be in sharp contrast to being objective. The letter fits in the overall sentiment as expressed in *De Telegraaf* at that time which was, as we have seen, predominantly positive about the American intervention in Vietnam. It should be noted that, the number of letters sent in by readers about the massacre, remained fairly low especially in the immediate period after the event. In the first six weeks, only one letter was published (B26). The reason for this remains a matter of guessing. *De Telegraaf* might not have published any because they did not want to show criticism on America, or the readers of *De Telegraaf* might not have felt the same outrage as was increasingly expressed throughout the world after the massacre.

The call to hear more voices, and to provide a nuanced account of things as expressed in the letter by Maarsen, is somewhat ironic in *De Telegraaf* as it clearly only reported on one side

of the story, which was the one which favored the least number of victims and focused on the morality of the Americans. This can also account for the fact that none of the photos of Heaberle were published in *De Telegraaf*. The reason for this is a matter for conjecture. Whereas *De Volkskrant* might have decided not to publish them for moral reasons, *De Telegraaf* most likely did not want to show their readers the photos of the atrocities, which had so much influence on the anti-war movement in America itself. *De Volkskrant* still mentioned the photos in some of their articles, in *De Telegraaf* the photos were kept silent.

### **Anti-American?**

The My Lai massacre has clearly evoked different things in the two newspapers. The first difference can be noted in the fact that *De Volkskrant* wrote about the massacre immediately after this became known, whereas *De Telegraaf* took several days before they published about the issue. Moreover, *De Volkskrant* wrote an extensive article, whereas *De Telegraaf* slipped the news into a small article about the statements of a British minister. Although *De Volkskrant* was careful in their wording in the early stage, they soon treated the massacre as true. *De Telegraaf*, on the other hand, treated the event with great uncertainty. Its suspicion about the truth of the massacre was expressed through the distrust of the witness accounts of both the American soldiers and the Vietnamese victims. This was accompanied by the account of the number of deaths. *De Telegraaf* held on to 102 casualties, whereas *De Volkskrant* spoke about 350-500 victims from the beginning.

Overall, these differences point to a couple of things. The observation made in the previous chapter is at stake in this chapter as well. *De Volkskrant*, although negative about the intervention, remains objective in most instances. *De Telegraaf* does, however, not always seem to show objectivity. Subjectivity was also visible in the articles in *Elseviers Weekblad* on Indonesian independence in the previous chapter, which led *Telegraaf's* 'substitute' to express anti-American characteristics such as stereotypization and denigration. In the aftermath of the massacre, subjectivity in the form of false witness statements, wrong numbers of victims, and overt justifications of the actions were published and led to support of the United States in *De Telegraaf*. Correspondingly, Rimko van de Maar and Mariette Wolf note that the reports of the newspapers are very clearly in line with their political views (Maar "Weltrusten" 122, Wolf 408). Left-wing *Volkskrant* was anti-war, therefore reported very early on the American atrocities,

spoke about a higher number of victims and denounced the acts of the Americans. Completely opposite of this was *De Telegraaf*, which was supporting the Americans in Vietnam and therefore a lot more careful in their reports on the massacre and focused on emphasizing the morality of the Americans. This is also in accordance with the claims made by Andrei Markovits, who argued that right-wing politics is more likely to reject American culture rather than politics, whereas left-wing politics is more likely to denounce American politics (29-30), as already mentioned in chapter one. In this case, it meant that *De Telegraaf* showed sympathy for America and supported them, and an anti-American sentiment did clearly not emerge. *De Volkskrant*, however, showed much more criticism and negativity.

Does this negativity about the American acts or denunciation of them in *De Volkskrant* mean that an anti-American sentiment emerged in this newspaper as a result of the My Lai massacre? First of all, the question remains to what extent the responses of *De Volkskrant* grew as a result of the My Lai massacre. As we have seen, negativity and denouncement of the American intervention in *De Volkskrant* already existed in 1967 and 1968. Although the negativity was already present in the newspaper, the My Lai massacre most likely intensified it. Most importantly, however, is the fact that the negativity in *De Volkskrant* did not seem to lead to any clear expressions of the five characteristics of anti-Americanism. For an explanation of this, it should be noted that the negativity is mostly directed towards what America *does*, it is about their actions. Much less is written about who America *is*, encompassing its character, values and the American people, of which we only saw one example, the Russian poem. Andrei Markovits points out the difference between denouncing what America *is* and what it *does*. He argues that “the difference between ‘does’ and ‘is’ corresponds well with John Elster’s distinction between ‘anger’ and ‘hatred’. Elster writes: ‘in anger, my hostility is directed toward another’s action and can be extinguished by getting even.... In hatred, my hostility is directed toward another person or category of individuals [, for example Americans,] who are seen as intrinsically and irremediably bad” (11).

In the previous chapter, we analyzed that *Elseviers Weekblad* expressed clear antipathy towards what America *is*, most likely as a result of the threat to stop Marshall Aid. This was mostly expressed through statements about capitalism, imperialism, the omnipotence of America or their conflicting and immoral values. In other words, it included hostility directed at what America *is*. As mentioned above, *De Telegraaf* does not express any hostility at America after the massacre.

*De Volkskrant*, however, does express antipathy after My Lai, but this is much more directed at America's actions or policies. Josef Joffe states that "to attack particular policies ... is *not* anti-American" (qtd. in Markovits 11). This is in contrast with *De Volkskrant*'s publications during Indonesian independence, as analyzed in the previous chapter, in which the newspaper did express some instances of antipathy towards what America *is*, which resulted into some examples of anti-Americanism.

Antipathy which is mostly directed towards American policies and actions and not towards their character or values, leads to the fact that many of the characteristics of anti-Americanism are not present in the articles of *De Volkskrant*. In one instance, *De Volkskrant* published an article which included statements that implied the hypocrisy of American values, which was in the Russian poem. Apart from that, generalization or oversimplification, or more generally stereotypization, denigration, omnipotence or conspiracy are mostly absent in *De Volkskrant*. The characteristic of obsession can also not be argued to exist, since the number of readers' responses was low after the massacre, and the number of articles on the massacre, or on America in general, was not higher than before. Although *De Volkskrant* denounced the atrocities, an anti-American sentiment did not emerge. So, although not in line with the expectations, it can be concluded that in neither of the newspapers a clear anti-American sentiment arose as a result of the My Lai massacre.

## 4. “Kaaskoppen tegen Kernkoppen” – NATO’s Double-Track Decision

When the Cold War reached its final stage in the 1980s, the two world powers were still in the midst of their battle over supremacy in nuclear warfare. The United States desire for superiority in this matter, transformed Western Europe into their main site of interest in the early 1980s. NATO’s “double-track decision” foresaw the placement of over 500 American cruise missiles in five Western European countries. As one of these countries, the Netherlands initially agreed with the placement of American missiles but found itself in an increasingly difficult position when opposition to the decision in the country grew. How did *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf* report on the double-track decision? What role did the Americans receive in the newspapers? And most importantly: to what extent did an anti-American sentiment emerge in the two newspapers as a result of the double-track decision and the approval of that decision by the Dutch government? I will briefly explore the context of the double-track decision, after which I will analyze the newspaper articles and letters.

### 4.1 Historical Background

#### **NATO Membership**

After World War II, the Netherlands was in search of a new security policy. Up until then, the small country had tried to pursue a politics of neutrality. The fear of Soviet expansion and the threat of communism were the main reasons for the Netherlands to abandon the neutrality policy after the war. NATO could offer the protection the country felt it needed. Besides that, joining NATO would secure the financial aid the Netherlands received from the United States via the Marshall Plan. Ultimately, joining NATO was generally seen as an obvious step (Wessel 141-2).

Membership was, however, not regarded as a good choice by everyone. Unsurprisingly, the Dutch Communist Party (CPN) strongly opposed joining NATO stating that: “[w]hat is proposed will turn our young men into a battalion of mercenaries in the pay of American imperialism” (qtd. in Zuijdam “Dutch” 652-3). The Labor Party (PvdA) was not extremely enthusiastic about membership in the beginning either. The party had hoped to find an alternative in between capitalism and communism, thereby building a bridge between the ideologies. PvdA also criticized the membership of certain “clearly undemocratic countries” (qtd. in Zuijdam

“Dutch” 653) arguing that NATO lost its credibility by accepting countries such as Portugal. Nonetheless it was under a left-wing government, led by PvdA Minister President Drees, that the Netherlands became one of the first countries to sign the 1949 treaty. Ramses Wessel argues that joining NATO, which went without much political debate, was generally seen as a “logical step”, because “the Netherlands was liberated by the Americans (and others) and saw its future linked to Atlantic developments” (142).

### **Cruise Missiles in the Netherlands**

These Atlantic developments were first contested on a large scale by the Dutch population, when NATO decided to station over 500 American cruise missiles on European soil. The NATO double-track decision was a reaction to the placement of SS-20 missiles on multiple locations in the Soviet Union. Over 700 missiles of this kind were capable of reaching any target in Western Europe. Consequently, the NATO decision foresaw the placement of 576 American nuclear missiles in Western Europe in 1979 (Beek 39). Simultaneously, NATO offered the Soviet Union to negotiate on the reduction in the number of missiles – hence the name ‘double-track decision’. The five countries that were supposed to station the American missiles were the United Kingdom, Belgium, Italy, West Germany and the Netherlands. Air base Woensdrecht was the planned location for the 48 missiles that were supposed to be placed in the Netherlands.

The Dutch government signed the double-track decision, essentially agreeing with the placement of cruise missiles in Europe. It did, however, request for the postponement of the stationing of the missiles in the Netherlands. The initial acceptance of the agreement would, however, soon be contested by the Dutch people. The new phase in the nuclear arms race, which was slowly leading up to an escalation of the conflict, caused peace movements to reappear around Western Europe after they decreased in number at the end of the Vietnam War. Already before the 1979 NATO decision, the Interkerkelijk Vredesberaad (IKV, Interdenominational Alliance for Peace) took on the main role in fighting the nuclear arms race in the Netherlands (Beek 40). Zuijdam states that “the IKV was able to mobilize large segments of the population around its moral antinuclear argument” (“Dutch” 659). Not only did the IKV focus on mobilizing people in the Netherlands, it also attempted to set up a campaign internationally. Hence, Lawrence Wittner, professor of history and specialist in peace movements, deemed the organization “the leading force within the international peace movement” (qtd. in Beek 40). In a

1981 article, Wittner argued that the Dutch peace movement more or less spread as a disease over other NATO allies, calling this phenomenon “Hollanditis”. It was argued that the Dutch disease had “its roots in prewar neutralism and the cultural revolution in the 1960s” (Beek 41).

The IKV most definitely spread its influence over the Netherlands with their slogan “help rid the world of nuclear weapons, starting with the Netherlands” (qtd. in Zuijdam “Dutch” 659). In December 1981, over 400.000 people gathered in Amsterdam to protest the placement of the missiles. This protest was even exceeded in numbers in 1983, when over half a million people gathered in The Hague. A committee called “Komitee Kruisraketten Nee” (Committee Cruise Missiles No) gathered 3.75 million signatures for a petition against the decision. The widespread protest led the Van Agt cabinet to question its approval and finally to postpone the placement of missiles, opting to wait until the conclusion of the negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union. Later in 1981, the second Van Agt cabinet, under pressure of continued protests, postponed the decision again. In 1982 a cabinet led by Ruud Lubbers postponed the placement for a third time. Ultimately, the Lubbers cabinet gave permission to the Americans to station the missiles in November 1985. An actual placement of the missiles was never realized, however, since the Americans signed an agreement with the Soviet Union to remove all medium-range nuclear weapons from Western Europe. The Netherlands remained the only one of the five countries not to station the missiles (Zuijdam “Dutch” 659-60). The NATO decision was viewed by many as “an American initiative with the alleged intention to shift the threat of a nuclear war from the US to Europe” (Kroes, “Anti-Amerikanisme” 281). Josef Joffe states in his paper “Peace and Populism” that distrust of America to deal with world problems responsibly rose from 37 percent to 50 percent in the Netherlands in 1981 (Joffe 16). Rob Kroes notes that researchers viewed the protests in the Netherlands as a sign of rising anti-Americanism in Dutch society (Kroes, “Anti-Amerikanisme” 281).

#### 4.2 The Newspapers’ Responses

Did the decreased trust in America, as mentioned above, lead to anti-Americanism? Or in other words, did the decision to station American cruise missiles in the Netherlands result in an anti-American sentiment in the two newspapers? The whole process, beginning with the NATO decision in 1979 and ending with the approval of the Lubbers cabinet in 1985, lasted six years. In

these years, there were certain moments in which the discussion became extra heated in the Netherlands. I will therefore explore four moments in the analysis of newspaper articles. Firstly, the period after the double-track decision in 1979. Secondly, the moment of the first widespread protest in Amsterdam on November 21, 1981. Thirdly, the moment of the second large protest, this time in The Hague on October 29, 1983. Lastly, I will explore the moment of the final decision in 1985. For this event 17 articles and 17 letters from *De Volkskrant* were selected and 16 articles and 11 letters from *De Telegraaf*. This number is considerably larger than the number of articles in the previous chapters due to the long period this event occupies, and the excessive number of articles published during that period.

### ***De Volkskrant***

*De Volkskrant* treated the double-track decision with great seriousness from the beginning. This can be seen from the fact that the newspaper reported on it even before the actual decision was taken on December 12. On December 8, 1979, *De Volkskrant* published several articles on the NATO talks and negotiations on nuclear weapons. The Dutch premier Van Agt had travelled to the United States to discuss the matter with the American President Carter. Carter emphasized the renewal of nuclear weapons was absolutely necessary for “the protection of the Western world and the free world” (C1). On the same page, another article regarding this topic is published. This article stated, however, that there were many disagreeing parties in the Dutch government about the nuclear weapons matter, leading to intense discussions (C2). Both articles appeared on the front page.

Not only was the newspaper itself concerned with the developments on nuclear warfare, but readers also expressed their views in *De Volkskrant* early on in the process. They expressed different views on the modernization of nuclear weapons and the placement of them in the Netherlands. Opposition as well as support for the placement of the missiles existed among the readers. In the same edition of *De Volkskrant* as above-mentioned articles, on December 8, several letters about the NATO talks on nuclear weapons sent in by readers were published. Reader A.H.A van Galen was against the modernization of nuclear weapons and thought that prominent figures within different churches should step forward and resist the modernization of nuclear weapons. Van Galen asked: “Did the Russians with their armament wage war in distant countries to contain capitalism and in that way brutally kill thousands of people?” (C3). In other words, it were not the Russians who committed so many atrocities, for example in Vietnam, but

the Americans, all under the guise of containing communism. Van Galen thus questioned whether the Russians were really an enemy of the Netherlands, and implied that America is the ‘bad guy’ of the two. By asking the former question, Van Galen placed the Russian morality above the American. In the same section, another reader expressed a different view. G. Vellinga thought that the Dutch should have learned from the disunity that existed before World War II. The Western world has to act in a unified manner, Vellinga argued, in order to stand up to the Soviet Union. For Vellinga this meant that renewal and placement of nuclear weapons in the Netherlands was crucial. The reader wrote that “a people, that is not willing to give anything for its country’s defense, is not worth living in freedom” (C4).

After December 12, the day of the double-track decision, the majority of articles in *De Volkskrant* focused on the Dutch government. This focus presumably existed because the crisis that emerged in the Dutch government as result of the double-track decision received priority over publishing anything about the Americans. On the 13 of December 1979, *De Volkskrant* reported on the decision taken by NATO the day before. The secretary of NATO called the decision “unanimous” but stated that the other allies of NATO were disappointed in the Dutch view on the matter. *De Volkskrant* wrote on the meeting between the different allies and stated that American politicians Vance and Brown were content with the course of events and that they thought “unity [among the allies] did not lack”. Vance and Brown did not seem to care too much about the standpoint of the Netherlands, because “only 20 percent of the cruise missiles will be stationed there” (C5). Two days later, the lack of clarity on the Dutch standpoint in the matter and the turmoil this caused in the Dutch cabinet were explained in an article. It stated that “the cabinet has a long list of questions on NATO”. The cabinet wondered what obligations the Netherlands had under NATO and to what extent they had to commit to the double-track decision. The article emphasized the trouble “the largest opposition party”, the PvdA, had with the decision. *De Volkskrant* focused on how the PvdA had become frustrated by the lack of clarity in the agreement, particularly the ambiguity over the number of cruise missiles (C6). The newspaper criticized the CDA, the leading party, in several articles. The political department of the newspaper wrote that CDA “is putting on a show and deceiving [the Dutch people]” (C7). On the same day, a CDA member wrote to the newspaper that “CDA is under pressure from hawks and makes decision like lemmings”. The reader, Slooff, represented the Americans as hawks, and

the Netherlands and the rest of the NATO allies as lemmings. Slooff called for a decrease of nuclear weapons (C8).

The criticism on the Dutch government was also highlighted in many of the readers' responses. The readers seemed to be unanimous in their opinions; the double-track decision and the Van Agt cabinet's approval were wrong. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of December several readers' responses were published. The NATO decision was called "undemocratic" by several readers. One reader, C.J Mentz said that the decision is supposed to fight dictatorship, but "what is [the CDA] doing itself?" (C9). Another reader stated that "the NATO pretends to defend democracy and freedom", but the decision in Brussels only showed how "undemocratic and unfree" NATO actually was (C10). Reader Koen van Dooren argued that Van Agt "is blinded by his love for the American interference" and that love will ultimately lead to the destruction of the world (C11).

So, in the first weeks after the double-track decision, we can detect very strong criticism towards the Dutch government in *De Volkskrant*, but not much clear or overt negativity about the United States. America is only focused upon in a few articles. For example, on December 13, when an article revolved around the American thought that "the Dutch are schismatics" (C12), which was a thought that arose as result of the strong opposition against the double-track decision in the Netherlands. Another article stated that the double-track decision demonstrated that "the United States has the strong urge to remain the strongest country on earth" (C13).

The growing opposition that arose in the Netherlands resulted in a large-scale protest in Amsterdam, on November the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1981. Over 400.000 people gathered to show their discontent and to put pressure on the Dutch government. Similar to after the double-track decision, the articles during the immediate weeks after the first large protest remained objective and informative, focusing on the march, but not specifically on America. *De Volkskrant* reported on the protest in an extremely extensive article on November 23. The newspaper added a large photo of the protest to the article, showing hundreds of thousands of people on Museum Square in Amsterdam. The article stated that "the march puts pressure on the government". As a result of the march, Van Agt reconsidered his standpoint, and finally postponed the placement of missiles (C14). In the weeks after the protest, readers' responses in *De Volkskrant* echoed the general sentiment of the Dutch population. The vast majority of the responses in the weeks after the protest criticized the Dutch government but did not express criticism or negativity about the United States. On November 25, four letters by readers were published on the same page and all

four letters were called “demonstration”. Each letter applauded the march in Amsterdam and declared itself against nuclear weapons (C15). A week later, another reader criticized Ruud Lubbers for stating that the Dutch should wait to decide over the placement of missiles until West Germany took a decision. The reader argued that Lubbers thereby “ignored what happened on November 21”, stating that the protest showed that “the Dutch don’t want nuclear weapons” (C16). Although criticism over the double-track decision prevailed in *De Volkskrant*, the newspaper still managed to incorporate other opinions as well. F. Bolkenstein, for example, argued in favor of the cruise missiles, stating that “a policy of deterrence exists and *does* work” (C17).

One article formed a notable exception to the other articles, which were focused on the Dutch government and did express profound antipathy towards the United States. In this article, a Malagasy woman, who participated in the international women’s peace conference, was interviewed. In the last section of the article she focused on America and criticized its history arguing that “the profound contempt for non-whites is inherent [in American society]. Look at the slave trade, the colonial and neo-colonial exploitation. Look at what the Americans did in Vietnam”. For the woman, this was proof that a nuclear war would not take place in Europe, but in Africa or Asia, which is why she argued that “third world countries should join Europe’s growing peace movements” (C18). Some other articles, although not focused on the United States, mentioned growing anti-American feelings in Europe. One article, for example, concluded that the reason for the growing opposition to the double-track decision was a result of “growing anti-American feelings among the population of NATO allies” (C19). Another article argued something similar, stating that America considered “growing anti-Americanism [as] a refusal to fight against communism” (C20).

Although the protest in 1981 was already considered a significant achievement, it was outnumbered by the march in 1983. *De Volkskrant* wrote that the “determination [of the] peace march [was] larger than two years ago”. The newspaper reported on different speakers during the march and provided examples of the different slogans used during the demonstration. “tegen het militarisme” (against militarism), “ons dubbelbesluit: nee, nee” (our double-track decision: no no), and “tegen Reagan” (against Reagan) are some of the examples given, some of which were shown on the photos attached to the article (C21). Another extensive article on the march was published on November 2, this time focusing on the steps the IKV would take if the Dutch

government would agree with the placement of the missiles (C22). Next to this article, three letters by readers were published, which, again, mostly expressed criticism of the Dutch government. One letter focused on the march, stating that minister Den Uyl also made a “double-track decision”, by opposing the placement of cruise missiles during the peace march but arguing in favor of sending warships to Taiwan, since this would create employment in the Netherlands. The reader thought these two statements were in conflict with each other (C23). A different reader questioned the existence of democracy in the Netherlands, arguing that the protests in 1981 and 1983 were completely ignored by the Dutch government (C24).

After six years of debate and discussion in the Netherlands, wide-scale protests and uncertainty about the standpoint of the Dutch government, the cabinet led by Ruud Lubbers made a final decision on November 2, 1985. Lubbers decided to approve the placement of American cruise missiles in the Netherlands, thereby going against the vocal objections of the thousands of protesters. On the front page of *De Volkskrant* it said on November 2, that the “cabinet agrees with [the] placement”. The article informed on the negotiations and the final decision by the cabinet (C25). Below this article, a small article stated that “there are less SS-20 missiles than NATO claims” (C26), undermining the cabinet’s statement that the large number of missiles in the Soviet Union was the main reason for their decision. Further on in the newspaper, an article stated that “The United States views the cabinet’s decision as a welcome step”. “The Netherlands,” the American response to the decision stated, “have showed their remaining loyalty to the fundamental principle that is at the basis of the alliance: that the members are ready to face the risks and enjoy the benefits of mutual defense” (C27). The rest of the page on which the article was published, was also dedicated to Lubbers’ decision and the responses to the decision. Protests around the country took place, unsurprisingly in Amsterdam and The Hague, as one article reported, but Woensdrecht, the village where the cruise missiles would be placed, remained relatively silent. The people of Woensdrecht, the article stated, had been used to the idea for years now, it had just been a matter of time until the plan would become reality (C28).

The readers’ responses after the decision in 1985 were more critical of the United States than at any other moment since 1979. One person called the Americans “the hawks” and stated that “the Netherlands fell prey to the hawks” (C29). Another reader noted that the Americans were not as happy with the Dutch decision as everyone thought they were, arguing that the Americans were more occupied with their own decisions. He or she stated that “the Netherlands

should start to act and think as a sovereign country again”, thereby implying that the Netherlands should break loose from the United States (C30). One person thought it would never come to an actual placement of the missiles. Why would “the Americans want to station their valuable and dangerous nuclear weapons in a country that does not even want those bloody things” (C31). Most readers responses remained, however, focused on the Netherlands itself and the decision made by the Dutch government. The term “civil disobedience” was mentioned in one letter (C32) and focused on in one article. The article explored the options of civil disobedience to the decision made by the cabinet and set out the risks of it. The author argued there were too many risks in civil disobedience and thought the IKV was more likely to achieve something if it would renegotiate with the government (C33). In many of these letters, the undemocratic nature of the decision was focused on, as well as the immense opposition among the Dutch people, who felt ignored by the government (C32, C33, C34).

### ***De Telegraaf***

Whereas *De Volkskrant* reported extensively on the double-track decision and the negotiations prior to the decision, *De Telegraaf* seemed to be less concerned with the matter. *De Telegraaf* reported on the issue only after the decision was taken, and predominantly expressed disapproval on the Dutch position in the issue. *De Telegraaf* did not focus on the essential approval by the Dutch government, but rather on the request to postpone the placement, so it took a different position than *De Volkskrant*. The focus was mostly on the danger *De Telegraaf* considered there to be as a result of postponement. Not only were the security dangers for the Netherlands itself focused on, but the dangers for the survival of NATO were also put in the foreground. On December 13, 1979, *De Telegraaf* reported on the decision taken the day before. The title of the article that appeared on the front page was “VVD furious about attitude cabinet”, emphasizing the VVD’s anger and the fact that the Netherlands was “the only NATO ally” which would postpone the final decision about the placement to 1981 (C35). Further on in the newspaper, an entire page is dedicated to the NATO decision. Again, VVD’s disapproval of the Dutch standpoint and the fact that the Netherlands is the only country to postpone the decision until 1981 are mentioned (C36, C37). Although *De Telegraaf* had not given much attention to the issue before, they clearly conveyed their standpoint on the issue after the decision by focusing on the VVD’s view and portraying the Netherlands as ‘the odd one out’ in NATO.

The idea that the Netherlands was ‘the odd one out’ in NATO evolved into the view that the Netherlands would become a second-class NATO ally as a result of its decision to postpone the placement. On December 14, *De Telegraaf* reported, for example, that there was “danger of exclusion” of the Netherlands from other NATO talks on nuclear weapons (C38). A similar view was expressed by a reader the day after. He or she wrote that the Netherlands would become known as an “unreliable ally”, which would have all sorts of negative consequences. The reader called the Dutch decision “ironic”, because according to them it would lead to the opposite of what the government wanted: less influence on nuclear arms policies and therefore less influence on the control and reduction of nuclear arms (C39).

In the weeks after the double-track decision, above-mentioned topics were mostly focused on. Again, not much attention was given to the United States or the fact that the missiles were American. In the instances that this did happen in *De Telegraaf*, we can detect support or empathy for America. For example, in an article on December 15, 1979, written by former secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs H.N. Boon. He wrote that “the Netherlands went beyond the limits of decency among the allies” by postponing the placement of missiles. Boon emphasized that the alliance is based on cooperation and “a question of give and take”. The position the Netherlands took in this matter did not show it comprehends the idea of an alliance according to Boon. He stated that the Netherlands “wants to join in the conversation in the NATO but does not want to participate” (“meepraten, maar niet meedoen”). In his argument he focused on the fact that America “produces and funds [the cruise missiles] themselves, all as a means to defend Europe”. Boon thus suggested a certain ingratitude in the Dutch position, as they rejected a selfless act by the United States which was directed at protecting Europe (C40).

Interestingly, *De Telegraaf* portrayed the immense protest in Amsterdam in 1981 as a rather positive development, opposite to what one would expect after their deep dissatisfaction over the postponement in 1979. The sheer size of the protest potentially made it difficult for the newspaper to take any other stance. *De Telegraaf* published a couple of informative articles on the march, reporting on developments during the day and showing photos of the crowd on Museum Square. One article included a timeline of the day, setting out the events in detail. It stated that the protest “even had a happy character” and emphasized that violence was completely absent. It reported that the protest had experienced only one incident: people burnt the American flag (C41). The article that appeared on the front page stated that the peace march was an

“impressive call for peace”. This article had a different angle, because it tried to emphasize that the protest was directed at both American and Russian nuclear weapons. *De Telegraaf* did not want it to be portrayed as an “aggressive anti-American event”, which it had been suspected to become. Instead, it was a peaceful event calling for worldwide denuclearization (C42).

Next to the focus on the protest as a call for denuclearization of both the Soviet Union and America, and the confirmation that the protest was not anti-American, *De Telegraaf* published several articles which understated the size and importance of the march. These seemed to express the opposite of what the previous articles conveyed and drew a more negative picture. On November 28, for example, an article reported on a statement from Luns, the secretary of NATO. He stated that “the peace march did not impress the Russians”, arguing that Russia would not take the call for denuclearization serious. Luns furthermore argued that the Dutch people needed to “realize that nuclear weapons are necessary for peace”. He undermined the peace protest by stating that the “peace movement is financially supported by Russia” which he claimed to have evidence for. In a later article, Luns was quoted again stating that “Russia takes advantage of the public upheaval”. He thought that the decision to postpone placement would lead to cancellation ultimately (C41). The denouncement of the peace movement was also expressed by the editor of *De Telegraaf*. Two weeks before the protest, the editor J.G. Heitink had reported on the phenomenon of ‘Hollanditis’. As mentioned before, this term came up after Lawrence Wittner wrote an article in which he argued that the Dutch peace movement spread as a disease over Europe. Heitink stated that the “Dutch disease kicks in and is growing worse”. He denounced the Dutch position in the matter and questioned whether the Netherlands was still pro-NATO or pro-American (C42). The newspaper also reported on the phenomenon of ‘Hollanditis’ multiple times after the demonstration. Although the term was often used with a negative connotation by the proponents of the cruise missiles, *De Telegraaf* did not use it in a negative context after the protest. On November 23, although the newspaper declared that “Amsterdam [was] infected with Hollanditis”, it was not portrayed as a negative phenomenon. The newspaper also mentioned several slogans used during the march such as “Hollanditis, a healthy disease” or “Hollanditis, make sure you get it” (C43).

Interestingly, letters to the editor about the issue, in the weeks after the protest, seem to be completely absent. Whether the readers were not concerned with the matter, or whether the board decided not to publish any remains a matter of guessing.

After the second large protest, this time in The Hague, *De Telegraaf* wrote “peace march keeps politicians divided” on its front page. The focus of the articles after the 1983 protest was, again, on opposing the supposedly anti-American nature of the protest. Besides that, the march was deemed illegitimate in several articles, considered to only represent the political left of the country. These concerns were expressed in both the articles and the letters to the editor. The article “peace march keeps politicians divided” on October 31, 1983, stated that the CDA had called the march “impressive”, but the VVD thought the march had been “one-sided” and did “not contribute to the issue of nuclear arms at all”. The article stated that the chairman of VVD “was not impressed by the 500.000 protesters” and that he thought the march was “fairly uncritical towards the nuclear arms on the Russian side” (C44). This article on the front page thus included the two main points of criticism which would reoccur in *De Telegraaf* in de weeks after the protest on October 29. The “one-sidedness” of the march as reported by *De Telegraaf* was articulated by some of the readers as well. Prior to the march, many people sent in their criticism and disapproval of the upcoming march. On October 28, C.J.J. Wolters stated that “about 93% of the people who will protest in The Hague on October 29, will belong to the PvdA or ‘small left’” (the other left-wing political parties). The reader argued that there will be 14 million Dutch people who will stay at home during the march, which was “the silent majority” according to them (C45). After the march, another reader noted similar things in a letter called “left wing march”. He or she referred to an inquiry conducted by the University of Nijmegen, which concluded that 96% of the protesters had voted for left-wing parties in the previous elections. The reader stated that “even though the march was impressive, it is in no way a faithful representation of society” and that “the government does not have to be swayed by it” (C46).

The second point of criticism on the protest which reoccurred in *De Telegraaf*, was the disapproval or denial of the anti-American nature of the protest. Wolters, the reader mentioned above, stated in his letter that “the anti-Americanism of the so-called peace march makes you feel sick” (C45). Another reader argued that “this march is an invitation for a third world war” because the protest will “oppose America” (C47). The opposition to America was also focused on by a reader on October 31. He or she stated that

“because of the emphatic presence of anti-cruise missiles protesters, because of the slogans by the organization and because of the words of the majority of the speakers the completely wrong impression was created that the protest in The Hague only had one

message and was exclusively aimed at opposing the placement of cruise missiles. So also opposing NATO and opposing America” (C48).

The editor of *De Telegraaf*, J.G. Heitink, similarly argued that “the peace march only speaks badly of America and pretends the Russians are saints” (C49).

Other criticism on the march included that the march “requests a fence around the Netherlands to keep our freedom” (C50). Another reader reminded the people of World War II, “thanks to NATO we still have both freedom and peace” (C51). The number of letters to the editor was extremely high, especially compared to the absence of letter after the first wide-scale protest. Among these letters, there were rare instances of support for the demonstration. One reader hoped “the message will be loud enough” (C52), and another thought it would be ridiculous if “we would have weapons in our country which can destroy human kind and can be exploded whenever a gray-haired old American man wants to” (C53).

The final decision on November 2, 1985 received a front-page article in *De Telegraaf*. The article, called “green light for cruise missiles today”, stated that the missiles were planned to be stationed in Woensdrecht in 1988 (C54). Further on in the newspaper, *De Telegraaf* published an overview of “seven years of struggle over cruise missiles” in which it set out the events surrounding the debate about the placement of the missiles (C55). After the decision in 1985, the dominant sentiment in *De Telegraaf* was positive about the matter, in line with expectations. The focus in the newspaper was mostly on the approval the Netherlands would win from America. On November 2, the newspaper stated that the “contract will be signed on Monday”. One paragraph in the article was called “America is happy”, and articulated that Washington saw the decision as a “welcome step” and that they have “complete confidence that the Netherlands will meet its obligations under NATO” (C56). Special attention was also drawn to a Russian invite for the Dutch Premier to come to Moscow to talk about the reduction of nuclear weapons. *De Telegraaf* deemed this offer an absurd idea, as it “only came just before the November 1<sup>st</sup> decision. [This invitation was] about propaganda and creating social unrest” (C54). This view was also expressed by a reader. He or she thought that the Russian invitation was only aimed at “playing the Netherlands off against the United States” (C57).

Next to the emphasis on American approval and the Russian invitation, the phenomenon of civil disobedience as a response to the decision reoccurred a couple of times. Like in *De Volkskrant*, the articles in *De Telegraaf* did not consider civil disobedience to be an answer to the

decision of the government. One article emphasized that the churches behind the IKV did not approve of civil disobedience (C58). Another article articulated that the government rejected acts which were aimed at opposing the decision (C59). One reader argued that civil disobedience “goes against all values of a democracy” (C60).

The support for the decision for placement of the cruise missiles and the pro-American sentiment that *De Telegraaf* wanted to convey became most clear in an article called “the rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union” on November 23, 1985. This article was a transcript from the radio show of G.B.J. Hilterman called “the world today”, which was often published in *De Telegraaf*. Hilterman argued that the rivalry between the two world powers was based on “mutual distrust”, a fear of imperialism and a fear of communism. He posed the question “who is right?”. Hilterman articulated that

“it wasn’t the Americans who annexed territory after the Second World War, but the Russians. And it wasn’t the Americans who brought people under their sphere of influence against their will, but the Russians. The Americans had the monopoly on nuclear weapons for years, no one can argue that they ever misused that monopoly. The nuclear arms race started in Russia”.

He concluded that the answer to “who is right?” was not very hard. The article sketched a picture of America, the good guy versus the Soviet Union, the bad guy (C61).

### **Anti-American?**

Did an anti-American sentiment develop in *De Volkskrant* and/or *De Telegraaf* as a result of the double-track decision? The first thing to note here is the fact that there was an extensive number of articles to be found on this topic, which shows the turmoil it caused in Dutch society.

Especially *De Volkskrant* published a great number of articles on this topic, particularly in comparison to the number of articles about the events discussed in previous chapters. A “constant occupation” (Markovits 12) with the target seems to be at play here, or in other words the characteristic of obsession (Joffe par.5). It should be noted however, that this occupation largely dealt with the Dutch government rather than the United States and can therefore not be said to belong to an anti-American sentiment. Of all the published articles, only a small number specifically focused on America and the fact that these missiles were American. The issue was clearly treated as an internal problem, in which the Dutch government had the largest role. What can we conclude from those instances or articles that were focused on America?

Left-wing *Volkskrant* was opposing the placement of American cruise missiles in the Netherlands. This standpoint was expressed in the articles and letters, and led in several of the letters to the emergence of characteristics of anti-Americanism. Especially stereotypization, a fixed and oversimplified image of the United States, was expressed multiple times. The Americans were portrayed as “the bad guy” (C3), as “hawks” (C8, C29), or as imperialist monsters (C18). Implying that the American morality is inferior to Russian or European morality like one reader did (C3), could be defined as denigration, or ascribing social “inferiority to the target group” (qtd. in Markovits 12). The double-track decision was, furthermore, seen by some readers as the United States’ desire to remain the most powerful country on earth, or even to dominate the world (C13, C30). These statements could relate to the omnipresence of America, or to the United States’ having different plans, a hidden agenda, or in other words to the conspiracy element. The articles of *De Volkskrant* itself remained largely objective, although focusing more on views that opposed the placement, without showing any clear signs of anti-Americanism. The phenomenon of anti-Americanism was, however, discussed in the newspaper (C19, C20) and said to increasingly manifest itself in Dutch society. Although the emergence of the sentiment in society was reported in *De Volkskrant*, the sentiment itself remained mostly absent from the articles published by the newspaper itself. The readers’ responses contained many of the instances of anti-Americanism as described above. Although focus and criticism on the Dutch government remained more dominant in *De Volkskrant*, the readers’ responses created an anti-American sentiment in the newspaper to some extent.

In contrast to *De Volkskrant*, *De Telegraaf* largely approved of the decision to accept American missiles and disapproved with the postponement. Both newspapers thus expressed severe condemnation of the Dutch government, although they had opposing views on the issue of the cruise missiles. The view held by *De Telegraaf* caused the newspaper to largely express a pro-American sentiment. They emphasized the danger for the Netherlands if it would not station the missiles, as it would antagonize their long time American ally. The newspaper tried to undermine the size and impact of the protests in 1981 and 1983 to some extent. Besides that, it opposed the thought that these were anti-American or that an anti-American sentiment arose in society. *De Telegraaf* tried to portray the protests as anti-nuclear weapons rather than anti-American. After the Lubbers’ decision in 1985, it focused on the United States’ approval of that decision and on its moral superiority to Russia.

All in all, we can conclude that *De Telegraaf* was largely positive about the United States after the double-track decision and *De Volkskrant* was mostly negative about the double-track decision. This is, again, in line with the claim that left-wing politics is more likely to denounce American politics than right-wing politics is (Markovits 29-30). The denunciation of *De Volkskrant* resulted in several cases of anti-American characteristics, which were mostly present in the letters sent in by readers. The anti-American sentiment that was thought to have arisen after the double-track decision as mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, was only present to some extent in one segment of Dutch society, the political left of the country. Overall, both papers were more occupied with the Dutch government than with America's role in the matter.

## Conclusion

What can we conclude in light of the main question posed in the introduction: to what extent did an anti-American sentiment develop in the Netherlands during the Cold War as an effect of major political events in that period? In order to come to an answer to this question, the findings laid out in this thesis will be briefly discussed and brought together.

First, the concept of anti-Americanism was examined in order to create a better understanding of the phenomenon which would form the framework of this thesis. Anti-Americanism has its roots in three factors, as argued by Josef Joffe, which relate to the power of the United States, its leading position in modernization, and lastly to the country as a seducer to the rest of the world. The concept is the focus of interpretations by different scholars, which ultimately led to the awareness of the multidimensional nature of the concept. Building further on several scholars such as Rob Kroes, Andrei Markovits and Brendon O'Connor, but relying most heavily on Josef Joffe's work, a framework was created in which the diversity of anti-Americanism received a central role. The five characteristics of anti-Americanism that Joffe determined, stereotypization, denigration, omnipotence, conspiracy and obsession, were examined and defined in such a way that they would form useful tools in the analyses of the newspaper articles.

The realization that anti-Americanism is not a homogenized concept, but rather a multidimensional phenomenon, which was confirmed by the analysis of the way in which the two newspapers and its readers responded to the political events, leads to the realization that a onefold or simple answer to the main question is not possible. None of the in-depth discussions on the newspaper articles and letters that were published in *De Volkskrant* and *De Telegraaf* after the political events showed a clear-cut answer to the question of anti-Americanism arose in Dutch society as result of those events.

The first event, the Indonesian struggle for independence and the halt on Marshall Aid to Indonesia, showed the most distinct features of anti-Americanism of all three events that were discussed. Although *De Volkskrant* showed some clear examples of the characteristics of anti-Americanism, it remained largely objective and informative and even published one of the most pro-American articles examined right after the Americans brought a halt to financial aid to Indonesia. Even though a critical and negative tone about the United States took the overhand in

*De Volkskrant*, an anti-American sentiment as a result of this political event did not emerge in the left-wing newspaper. *Elseviers Weekblad*, on the other hand, displayed a different narrative. The newspaper adopted a very clear standpoint that opposed Indonesian independence, and thus also opposed America's point of view. The newspaper provided an unnuanced view and anti-American characteristics such as stereotypization and denigration were common. An anti-American sentiment existed in *Elseviers Weekblad*, but it should be questioned whether this arose as result of the cessation of Marshall Aid or had already existed before that, since instances of it were already shimmering through before the cessation. Both newspapers, even though they were both negative about the United States, one more occasional than the other, showed something different. So, already after the first event, the complexity of interpreting criticism against America and attempting to classify it as anti-Americanism or something else became clear.

The second event, which was discussed in chapter three, revolved around the My Lai massacre in Vietnam and complicated the matter even more. Both newspapers acted in accordance with their political background. *De Telegraaf* largely supported the United States in their war in Vietnam and was therefore not very critical or negative on the My Lai massacre. It even published inaccurate numbers of victims and false witness accounts without rectifying these mistakes. Hence, an anti-American sentiment cannot be argued to have existed in *De Telegraaf*. *De Telegraaf* was therefore not the element to complicate the matter, *De Volkskrant* was. This newspaper was very critical on America after the massacre. It seemed to utter some of the characteristics of anti-Americanism. An important observation was, however, made. *De Volkskrant's* criticism was mostly directed at America's policies, their acts in My Lai, or in other words, directed at what America *does*. Whereas for something to be anti-American, like Andrei Markovits argues, it needs to be directed at what America *is*. This includes clear denunciations of America's morals, values and character, which would result in expressions of the characteristics of anti-Americanism. This did, however, not happen in *De Volkskrant* after the My Lai massacre was exposed to the public. So, where *De Volkskrant's* articles might show anti-Americanism at first glance, a closer look tells us something different and complicates the narrative more.

The third and final event was the NATO double-track decision and its aftermath in the Netherlands. The newspapers published by far the most articles on this event. In both popular media, and in academic discussion it is often argued that a clear anti-American sentiment emerged in the newspapers as result of the double-track decision. The newspaper articles

illustrated something more complex however. *De Telegraaf* expressed opinions which were largely in favor of the placement of American missiles and was mostly positive about the United States. *De Volkskrant* uttered several cases of the characteristics of anti-Americanism, which appeared mostly in the letters sent in by readers. Although *De Volkskrant* published mostly objective articles, these readers' responses led to some extent to an anti-American sentiment in the newspaper. The sentiment thus only selectively appeared in one segment of society. Overall, contrary to what was expected, the newspapers were much more occupied with the Dutch government than with America. Criticism was largely directed at the Dutch government rather than at America or the fact that the missiles were American.

What can we conclude from these different findings? Overall, the extent to which anti-Americanism emerged in the two newspapers that were analyzed during the Cold War is not considerably large. Only during the Indonesian struggle for independence and the cessation of American financial aid is a clear-cut anti-American sentiment detected. This sentiment was, however, only detected in one of the two segments that were analyzed, which was represented in *Elseviers Weekblad*. After the other two events, in the middle and end of the Cold War, this segment of society, now analyzed as represented by *De Telegraaf*, grew more positive in their perception of the United States. Especially during the most tragic episode of the Cold War *De Telegraaf* expressed support for America. The other segment of society, the political left, which was represented by *De Volkskrant*, displayed opposite sentiments. After the event in the beginning of the Cold War, this segment seemed mostly positive about the United States. Over time, this grew more negative, as was illustrated in the analysis of the other two events. Fierce criticism directed at the United States was not uncommon, and some instances of anti-Americanism were detected. More generally, this tells us that the political left of the country, although often not anti-American, was most critical of the United States during the Cold War. This did, however, not always lead to an anti-American sentiment. All in all, anti-Americanism in the Netherlands during the Cold War makes a messy curve. A specific trend, as I stated to aim to discover, cannot be detected. That is to say a linear, straightforward trend. The political events seem to trigger certain instances of anti-Americanism, but do not cause drastic structural, permanent changes.

These conclusions were arrived at by using the definition of anti-Americanism as carefully constructed in the beginning of this thesis and by analyzing two Dutch newspapers. If

one, however, chooses a freer definition of the concept, in the sense that the conditions for something to be anti-American are less strict and more likely to view any negativity or criticism about the United States as anti-American, then we would come to a different conclusion. This would mean that, especially in the political left of the country, more anti-American sentiments arose after both the My Lai massacre and the double-track decision. The framework as set up in the beginning was, however, carefully constructed and not made without a reason. As stated above, it highlights the diversity of the concept and, moreover, it also makes crucial distinctions between antipathy towards what America does and what America is. Furthermore, as presented in the first chapter, anti-Americanism is often treated as “one side of the dichotomy” (O’Connor 9). The fact that, in many of the instances examined, we cannot confirm the existence of an anti-American sentiment does, however, not automatically mean a pro-American sentiment existed. The narrative is much more nuanced than that and, as we have seen in many instances, the fact that an anti-American sentiment can simply not be argued to exist, does not mean negativity about the United States or antipathy towards what America does, its policies, were not expressed.

Rob Kroes questioned whether we should retain the term anti-Americanism at all (“European” 427), which is a valid question to pose. As the conclusions have shown, the phenomenon entails, after all, a very ambivalent set of feelings or expressions, which never seem to apply to a whole society, but always to a select part of it. If we retain the term, however, it is important to use it in a careful, consistent and well-constructed way, as was done in this thesis. Only then, as this thesis has shown, can we come to valid and useful conclusions.

Furthermore, as stated above, anti-Americanism is analyzed as it arose in these two newspapers. Although carefully selected and considered to represent two segments of society, they remain only a selection of different parts of society. As stated in the introduction, newspapers “express the opinion of the public” (Dwivedi et al. 83), but it was also stated that we can arrive at more full conclusions when we combine different data and observations. Further research should thus not only focus on finding more voices in society, but also on combining different types of media or sources in which these voices are expressed. Finally, one other realization should be stressed here as well. As was mentioned in the first chapter, anti-Americanism does not differ that much from other anti-isms (such as anti-Semitism) and shows elements of a classic prejudice (Markovits 13). Whereas other isms are, however, increasingly contested, anti-Americanism seems to continue to be accepted or is even applauded. Analyzing

anti-Americanism, starting with well-constructed definitions as was done in this work, and determining the reason of existence, could ultimately lead to an insight into why exactly the phenomenon remains uncontested and what this means for America's place and image in the world. As long as the unawareness among the accusers of the prejudice continues to exist and if the roots of anti-Americanism, as defined in the first chapter, will endure, the phenomenon will as well.

All in all, the extent to which anti-Americanism emerged in the Netherlands during the Cold War was not considerably large, as was demonstrated. It was, however, selectively present at certain moments, even in the midst of what was deemed "the American Century". Considering the above mentioned implications, analyzing the emergence of the sentiment in a time in which "anti-Americanism is becoming a defining feature" (Krastev and McPherson 1) could therefore lead to even more revealing insights.

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