

Welcome to episode 11. So we finally made it guys, the episode in which the war is finally an open fact, the diplomatic dancing is over, and both monarchs begin to implement the plans which they had been sitting on for so long. It was the confirmation of Johan de Witt's worst fears, and the beginning of William of Orange's rise to distinction in the face of adversity. The little republic had for years distinguished itself as a resister, a state which would fight for its independence to the end if necessary, be that against Spain, England or anyone else. Now though, they faced a foe quite unlike any other they had faced, because this foe was motivated by the singular desire to destroy their independence, and unlike previous dangers, this foe was actually equipped to deal such a crushing blow. In this episode, the opening months of the war are experienced with dizzying speed, as the French and their English allies move nauseatingly close to the nerve centre of the republic, and town after town, province after province, Dutch statesman after statesman, falls to the invader. The *rampjaar* – the year of disaster – had begun. Let's jump right into it, as I take you to early April 1672...

We are not waging any war against your Nation, but only against your King and his courtiers, who have valued your blood at six-millions-a small price for the blood that your and our Saviour has shed for us. We bemoan our common loss, we dread to think what may happen when we envisage the possibility of the success of an enterprise which aims much further than at the destruction of our temporal welfare. Your King, a Defender of the Christian faith, has made peace with the Turks in order to make war on Christians, and in order to have his hands free against those who hold the Prince of Peace as their Saviour and Messiah. Make your prayers to God, that He may in His mercy either change the heart of your King, or else foil his designs.

Anonymous response to the English declaration of war on the DR, found in the pamphlet *Considerations of the Present State of the United Netherlands*, early April 1672.¹

The situation was about as grave as Johan de Witt could possibly have imagined. The previous 4 years had hardly been years of calm, but they had at least suggested, in their own way, that through diplomacy the Dutch and English may be able to bury old rivalries, and use their supremacy in naval power to pressure France, if necessary. In the background to such suggestions were the rumours, accompanied increasingly by fact after summer 1670, that the

¹ Cited in C R Boxer, 'Some Second Thoughts on the Third Anglo-Dutch War, 1672-1674', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 19 (1969), pp. 67-94; referenced in this case is p. 77.

French and English, contrary to the expectations and feeling of both populations, were in fact moving closer together, owing almost completely to the close relationship of the two cousin monarchs. De Witt would have known that in many ways, the war was the design of these two monarchs and their closest advisors. In France this didn't necessarily matter, since France had neither the governmental structure nor the lessons of history when it came to war with the Dutch to discourage its actions. In the English case though, de Witt and Conrad van Beuningen, his English ambassador for much of the period, had hoped that through a combination of the Triple Alliance (TA), granting limited concessions to Charles' nephew William and anti-French feeling in London, a terrible two front war against its most formidable enemies could be avoided. Increasingly though, as 1671 had worn on, these hopes became more and more illusory, as the plain aggression of both powers towards the republic was consistently and nakedly exposed.

Thus, though the attack had come as terrible news, it is unlikely that de Witt was all that shocked at its coming to pass. In the dangerous circumstances of the age, the Dutch had made efforts to prepare, mostly under the orders of de Witt and his party, for what may be on the horizon. The military preparations hadn't been laden with success, mostly due to the selfish stonewalling of the provinces as the Orangists sought the promotion of William III to the office of Captain-General (CG). This promotion was eventually given in February, and only then, it seemed, would the other provinces actually cooperate with Holland's vision of preparation. The Orangists maintained, much to de Witt's immense frustration, the idea that England would be pacified through concessions to William. If de Witt had believed this at one point, he soon became convinced that no amount of concessions to William would ever placate Charles' ambitions.² When Peter de Groot – ambassador in France during the period and the man probably most responsible for filling de Witt in on the worsening situation – had written home as to Louis' belligerent replies to the concerned queries of the Dutch, de Witt anticipated that the axe was soon to fall, and suspected that the rumours of Anglo-French duplicity would soon bear fruit.

The last weeks of peace had been frantic in the republic, as de Witt tried his best to rally supporters to the idea of increasing Dutch armaments, preparing its forts and improving its diplomatic contacts abroad. In light of the latter point, Peter Geyl notes that by the time the war was declared, the only diplomatic success worth speaking of was the mutual

² Geyl's attestations of this.

assistance pact signed with, of all countries, Spain. The irony that the old enemies of the Spanish and Dutch were now allies out of necessity was not lost on de Witt; not only that, but the very fact that the TA still existed, but that such insurance was acknowledged as insufficient for Dutch security, would have struck de Witt as an abject failure. Whether or not he realised the extent to which the two monarchs had given him the run around over the last few years, certainly by late spring 1672 de Witt and his party had come to accept that the TA could save them from nothing.



Conrad van Beuningen, Burgomaster of Amsterdam and diplomatic extraordinaire.

Thus de Witt had instructed Conrad van Beuningen out of London and into Brussels, from which the experienced Dutch diplomat could create at least a semblance of mutually assured security with Europe's other threatened power. Madrid at least seemed to have no illusions of the international situation; for all the talk at the time of Spain's lauded poverty and sluggishness, its agents remained tuned into the rumour and fact of the day. No official in Spain would have seen anything other than disaster for their interests if the Dutch were overrun, and thus sought to reinforce the TA by applying, quite publicly in fact, their own weight to a separate treaty with The Hague. The news must have been greatly appreciated in Paris. Louis was nothing if not still eager to resume where he had left off, and his war minister Louvois, who we met last time, probably intimated to Louis that Spanish involvement was a blessing rather than a curse. Rather than need to find an excuse to attack

the Spanish Netherlands (SN) again, Louis could simply shift his attentions from the Dutch to the Spanish once either caved first.



Louvois, the French Minister for War.

And cave they were expected to do; by the time of the declaration of war Louis' forces had reached their peak, at nearly 130k strong.³ Facing them were the militias and small professional, but much neglected army of the Netherlands. Combined with this pressure, it was expected that a one-two punch of a naval campaign alongside the English would tie up the Netherlands nicely. Once this was done, it was only a matter of applying the necessary pressure to that ingrate William of Orange, and the Dutch Rump state would be recreated as a vassal state on the edge of Europe. Following this, Louis' forces could roll over everything right up to Brussels. Who would stop his conquest of the Netherlands if the Dutch were already subjected? Everywhere he looked, Louis would have seen \$ signs, or at least, whatever the sign for the French livre was.

So it was that Louis' actual declaration of war on 6th April 1672, following suspiciously close to that of the English on 26 March, referenced the King's displeasure at the

³ Figures quoted by Lynn.

previous behaviour of the Dutch States, and insisted that the glory of France could no longer be disrespected in such a way. The justification complete – in a vein that sounds not dissimilar to the ‘your presence insults me’ line of *Civilisation* fame – Louis sent his well-prepared forces into action, and the greased wheels of the French war machine whirred into life for the second time in less than five years. This time the scale was far larger, and to match this, the French war plan operated on numerous levels. To begin with, the French army was divided in its command, with a large portion under the ever-keen-to-prove-himself Prince of Conde, and the other under Marshal Turenne, that stalwart general from the previous campaigns of the Thirty Years War (TYW) and War of Devolution, who had once been suggested by de Witt as a candidate, ironically enough, to lead Dutch armies instead of an Orange CG. With 100k men did the united French army, not yet split, mass and present itself before Maastricht on 19th May. Maastricht was perhaps the sole Dutch fortress which could reasonably be expected to hold its ground, and desperate Dutch officials poured men and materials into its improvements, hoping to stall the French for as long as possible with its use.



Louis XIV, portrayed in Civilisation 4 (left) and Civilisation 5.

Yet it wasn't merely French troops that the Dutch had to contend with. As we saw last time, French diplomacy had ensured that the tap of German mercenaries had been shut off to the Dutch, but that wasn't all that French diplomacy achieved. The ever-ambitious Bishop of Munster, Bernhard van Galen, sought to invade the Dutch province of Overijssel just as he had in the Second Anglo-Dutch War (SADW). As before, the invasion caused mass panic and confusion, and by the middle of June 1672, Munster's troops had occupied much of the province with his soldiers and mercenaries. Elsewhere, the news was equally bad. Peter Geyl

recounts that some fortifications were so old in the republic that they hadn't been significantly altered or upgraded since they were captured from the Spanish in the 1620s.⁴ Furthermore, many of these fortifications contained crumbling walls, defective guns or didn't contain any gunpowder whatsoever. It was no wonder de Witt had so emphasised the need to reinforce the republic's defences – he understood that for the last generation the Dutch had so focused on fighting the English that they had neglected their land defences. This had been the crux of the reason why the Franco-Dutch alliance had been so beneficial, and why de Witt had for so long argued for it. Reports were now proving the futility of a little republic like the Dutch in resisting such overwhelming efforts from its enemies.

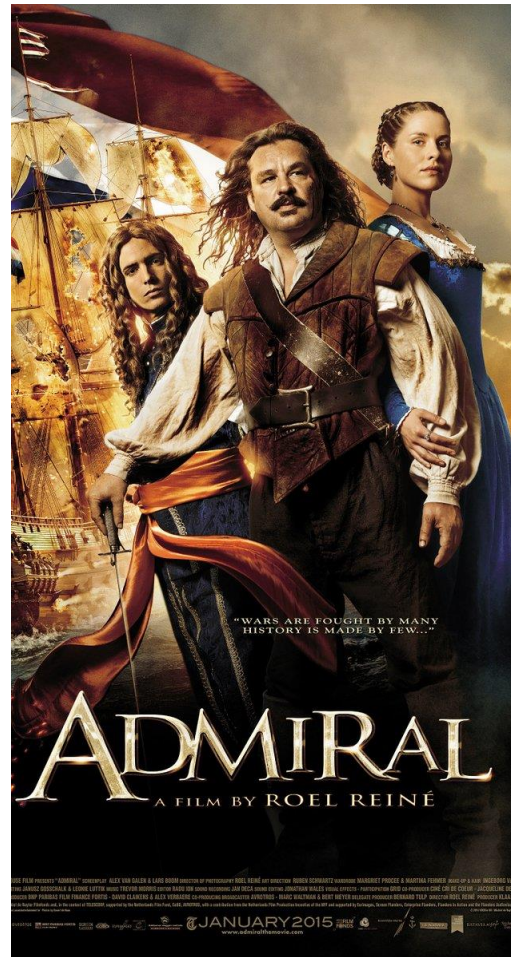


Bernhard von Galen, Prince Bishop of Munster and the ultimate thorn in the side of the Dutch

At the very least, de Witt and his allies now worked their peers in the Council of State – the body that took over administration of the republic in times of war, and filled with deputies from each province's parliament – to send the fleet out and provide some kind of answer to the Anglo-French assault. In the event, due to the exasperating provincial bickering, Zeeland refused to send its portion of the fleet out in May, which meant that the Dutch were prevented from landing a killer blow against the English before the combined fleet gathered nearby. Faced with such disastrous circumstances, de Witt once again turned to Admiral de Ruyter for help; he would be outnumbered once more, but it was imperative that he sallied forth and did something to show that the republic wasn't finished yet. With the

⁴ Geyl.

Anglo-French fleet gathering confidently off shore, in preparation, de Witt feared, for a landing that would surround the republic and box it in on all sides, de Ruyter sallied forth, accompanied by de Witt's brother Cornelius, and the desperate hopes of the republic blowing through their sails.



A somewhat stressed-looking Admiral Michiel de Ruyter, who apparently has his own film too!

On 7th June 1672 de Ruyter managed to restore hope once again. Though the English sailed away before they could be heavily defeated, the attack had been a daring and an aggressive one, which took the English by surprise. Judging by the relative inaction of the French portion of the fleet, it had taken them by surprise as well. The sight of the English bearing the brunt of the Dutch manoeuvres set a pattern of inter-ally quarrelling which was to become a common theme during the early phase of the war; the idea that the French were not upholding their side of the bargain, at sea in particular, was to further sour relations and contribute the anti-French feeling which already remained high. Cornelius de Witt, accompanying de Ruyter in these campaigns as he had done during the raid of the Medway at the close of the SADW, had been given pause for thought as he left. His brother Johan

somehow found time to write to Cornelius, and warned him of a troubling scene wherein residents in the de Witt's home town had stormed the town hall and removed the painting of the victorious Dutch at the Medway scene – a painting whose triumphalist message was heavily critiqued as proof of Dutch arrogance and intransigence within the English declaration of war – and once the painting was removed it was burned, but not before Cornelius' head was cut out of it.⁵ The message was a strange one, but the idea that de Witts were somehow to blame for what had befallen the republic was already gaining ground, even though it had been the Orangists who had so manifestly failed to put petty quarrels aside for the sake of the greater good; the result of which was the chronically insufficient military state of the republic.

While the Dutch defended as best as they could against a terrifying French advance, de Witt may have hoped that if he could just hold out, if he could persuade his countrymen to hold out, then other powers in Europe would eventually come to the Dutch defence. Surely European opinion wouldn't allow France to take over the entirety of the Netherlands, especially with the Emperor's ties to Spain. Indeed, Austrian Habsburg agents were beginning to work on Emperor Leopold once it was learned that a Spanish-Dutch assistance pact had been signed in late 1671. This agreement made an impression in Vienna, and with the additional pressure of Brandenburg, courtesy of the Great Elector in Frederick William, de Witt could be hopeful that within a year at the most, the Austrian Habsburgs and thus most of Germany would rally against the French.⁶ With such a rallying more soldiers would be available for hire to the Dutch, but to reach such a situation the Dutch would have to defy the expectations of the Anglo-French onslaught, which stated that the Dutch would fold early and before any other power could jump to their defence, *and* they would have to demonstrate their tenacity to the continent by providing such a courageous foil to Louis' plans, and by doing so inspire wider European resistance.

If Leopold was too concerned of Turkish moves to fully commit his territories and dependencies to war, and if it was expected that Louis may court the Ottoman Empire for the purpose of keeping the Habsburgs busy in central Europe, then it wasn't difficult to predict the possibility of a large war on the horizon, the likes of which hadn't been seen since a generation before in the TYW. For this to happen though, de Witt knew he would have to outlast the French onslaught, and this was easier said than done.

⁵ Geyl's account of this.

⁶ Lynn

The Council of State sent out resolutions to arm its citizens, its peasantry and the provincial police forces, and use them to man the fortresses rather than the mercenaries which were nowhere to be found. These brave citizens would be reinforced by the small professional army the Dutch could mobilise, a force of barely 15,000, and the resulting barriers of natural and artificial defences were hoped to do the rest. This was the plan, the only plan, that the Dutch could rely upon. It would be fruitless to combat the French in the open with the size of the force which they possessed – the Dutch would be vanquished in a day and the Republic would have been left wide open to further French advances. Yet even before the true extent of the French military capabilities were made clear to Dutch provincial officials, a great deal of panic was present which spread and was disseminated throughout the republic so thoroughly that it seemed to virtually paralyse effective responses to the military crisis for two critical months. Not until late June, with the exception of the navy, would the republic be truly steeled to do what was necessary; for the opening months the Dutch provinces as a whole greeted the unfolding situation in vastly different ways. Holland insisted on holding every line, and made repeated requests for all forces to converge on Holland's outer ring of fortresses when these failed. Following these acts, the final desperate method of defence was the releasing of the sluices, essentially the opening of the dams which held considerable levels of seawater at bay. Through this water, Holland's deputies, when they were able to cooperate and see eye to eye, believed the last hopes of the republic could be saved.

Of course, the six other provinces were outraged at this, and accused Holland in the Council of State and States General of casting the other provinces to the wind. Cliques formed in the opening months of the war determined to oppose Holland's monopolising of the war effort, while some provincial officials flip-flopped between wanting to transform their country into a flooded wasteland or wanting to surrender amidst a hopeless situation. As Peter Geyl perceptively noted, the Dutch statesman's apparent bravery or lack thereof when it came to debate what to do next, depended heavily on where he was from. Holland tried to argue that, whatever happened in the war, the only way the republic could be rebuilt after it was through its funding, a fact which many provinces found difficult to stomach. The idea that all forces should rally to the interior was a tough pill to swallow for many, and some of the inland provinces like the aforementioned Overijssel, as well as Utrecht, Gelderland and Groningen, would be exposed to French armies from the outset, so they fiercely resisted the idea of giving up their lands in trust, essentially, to Holland. Provincial rivalries reached a

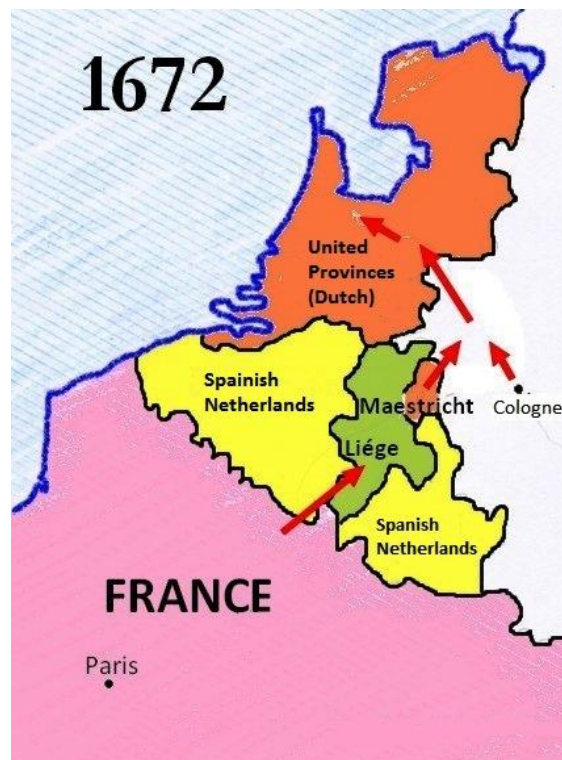
high point at the worst possible time, and in my head the first 6 months or so of 1672 read like a disaster movie for the Dutch, from the collective refusal to band together in face of the looming threat, to their resurrection of meaningless squabbles when they could least afford it.



Map of the Dutch Republic in 1650; note the number of rivers which bisect the state – these were upheld as crucial barriers for the Dutch defence.

When I was crafting this episode I had to start and restart numerous times, as I consulted the maps and geography of the region and proceeded to get more and more confused. Eventually a kind of lightbulb went off when I realised that even if I could pinpoint where the 20 or so forts were that fell to the French and Bishop of Munster in the opening months, I'd never be able to describe each one to you properly and even if I did, such details would bog us down and disrupt the momentum of the story I'm trying to tell, rather than add to it. So I reached a compromise. Similar to what Mike Duncan did when he was trying to condense the SPW into a digestible few episodes, skimming over the five or so years when Hannibal captured settlements and the Romans flipped them back, I'm going to provide you guys with a really simple image so that we're both on the same page in the surprisingly dense

Netherlands. Sound good? It means you won't know the names of all the forts that Louis takes, unless I feel there's a really important one to examine, like Maastricht for example which the French take in June 1673. However, at the same time, it means that my major focus – the war's disparate events rather than army a moved to point b – will continue, and we'll all be able to grasp the general direction of the war. Because I won't be bombarding you with a load of names, you'll likely enjoy this section of the episode more than you would have if I'd just listed a load of forts you've probably never heard of. If you're really sad right now because you're an expert on 17th century Dutch geography and wanted to follow exactly where Louis marched along your special map constructed especially for this particular episode, sorry to let you down, you big weirdo.



This map should also come in handy – the red arrows indicate the French advance, note how French and their allied forces essentially bypassed the best defences that the Dutch had!

The easiest way to describe the Dutch Republic (DR) geographically is as a sizeable chunk of land in the corner of Europe, with Dutch ingenuity enabling swatches of land to be reclaimed from the sea, especially in the case of Holland, which was the largest, richest and most influential province in the Union. What you need to know is that the DR was bisected by two major rivers, the Meuse, which flowed from south west France, and the Rhine, which as we know began in the Swiss Alps. What you also need to know is that the Dutch, clever

devils⁷ that they were, had built much of their defences along these rivers, and that these rivers ran parallel to one another, so if you picture it, they presented a good set of defences in depth from one another. If the French invaded, they first hit the series of forts along the Meuse, and then if they crossed that there would be the Rhine. The Rhine River is a bit confusing because it conveniently splits into two different directions just as it reaches the south east Dutch border. The two forks in this river head in different directions, with the lesser Rhine emptying into the sea just below Holland, and the larger river, named the Waal, going east into Germany. This fork provided another opportunity for the Dutch to build fortresses, and you have to remember as well that for much of the TYW these rivers were the lifeblood of the Dutch for reasons of trade, and were the best defence for their republic as well. Threatened again by land, the Dutch likely hoped that the series of larger rivers with their smaller streams, which we won't mention because they're too numerous, would protect them against France as they had protected them against Spain before, but Louis had other ideas.

Because the River Meuse began in France, Louis' two most important marshals for this venture, Conde and Turenne, who we met last time, could begin on different sides to it, and follow its course into the DR, mopping up resistance as they did along the way. They began their river tracing activities from mid-April, a week after war had been declared, with plans to cross over at a later point and join up on the right bank of the river, which would establish them firmly in Dutch territory. From there, having got past the first line of defences, the plan was to make use of the hazy land ownership of the era, and cash in on the threats Louis had made in the years before to the German rulers surrounding the DR. The first of these were situated in Liege, whose lands were owned not merely by the Bishop of Munster, but also by other German princes who had parcels of land within it, and the Dutch, who owned larger pockets, within one of these pockets resided the impressive fortress of Maastricht, upon which the Dutch placed much of their hopes. That the Dutch owned lands outside of their 7 provinces is another fun fact we have to accommodate ourselves with; these were called the Generality Lands, and they were administered directly by the States General or Dutch national government. If it helps, you can imagine them as Dutch European colonies, even they this doesn't quite describe their strange status.

⁷ Irish expression for 'devil', I promise it's a word!

The most important thing to remember is that Maastricht was in one of these pockets, to the south west of the immediate Dutch border. Nowadays the Kingdom of the Netherlands is far tidier on the map of Europe, and the likes of Maastricht have been subsumed into additional provinces, with Limburg and Brabant accounting for these further territories, and better reflecting the reality of Dutch culture and history, but in the 1670s nothing really made sense, so we're left with a weird patchwork of states akin to the HRE's example on the Dutch border. The Bishop of Munster's domains snaked through them and essentially hugged the southern Dutch border, but in Liege the grey areas had enabled the French to build up stores in preparation for their planned invasion route. By going through Liege, the French could avoid the major fortifications along the Lesser Rhine, which they would have bumped into had they followed the expected route of invasion through the SN. Would-be invaders along this route would have faced first the River Meuse barriers, only to traverse the difficult ground in between, and be met with the even more impressive barrier provided by the Rhine. The Dutch historical experience stated that this defensive line made strategic as well as practical sense, and the artificial defence system of the Republic had grown up around it. But the French weren't invading from the SN; not only that, but with the likes of Vauban in the French camp seeking better ways to avoid or bypass the better Dutch defences, by the time war was declared the war path had already been mapped out for Louis' marshals, and it would have the effect of making the considerable natural and artificial barriers within Dutch territory almost completely redundant.

The question of how Vauban and the marshals managed to hand the tried and tested Dutch defences their own redundancy package takes a small bit of explaining,⁸ but once that's finished with we'll be well on our way to return to the business of the day. As I've said, the DR was bisected by the two major rivers of the Meuse and the Lesser Rhine, but what I didn't mention is that Liege provided a handy means through which an enemy could skirt around these rivers – were they to follow this route, they would still have to face up to Maastricht which resided within Liege in a Dutch owned pocket as we know, but they would also have to cross a thinner portion of the Rhine shortly after Maastricht. Following that crossing, the enemy would be essentially in German lands, but would also be poised at the soft underbelly of the Republic, where the fortifications were based upon far smaller and less impressive natural river barriers, and where the garrisons – expecting the attack from another direction – were less well prepared or equipped.

⁸ Vauban's role in Faulkner's bio.



French engineer extraordinaire – Sebastien le Prestre, otherwise known as Seigneur de Vauban.

It was along these defensive lines that neglect and apathy had set in over the years, which may sound strange since they straddled the border with the Bishop of Munster, and he didn't exactly like the Dutch all that much, but that was a relatively recent development, and if you think back the SADW, Munster had been pushed back by the other continental ally of the Dutch, France, less than five years before. Seen in this way, these Dutch defences didn't have to be impregnable, certainly not as urgently as the defences along the border with the SN had to be. Of course, times had since changed, and had de Witt had his way these fortifications, some of which hadn't been upgraded or sufficiently resupplied in nearly 50 years, would have been totally replaced, but remember these borderlands were in the control of other provinces like Gelderland, Overijssel and Groningen if you're standing in the Bishop of Munster's lands to the south of the republic, and looking from left to right. All these provinces, as a result of their geographic position, would be forced to bear the brunt of the attack. Historically these provinces had insulated the DR on land from any Habsburg attacks, while along the border with the SN, the TYW saw it become a battleground, and Zeeland, the southernmost coastal province, bore much of the Spanish assaults then, as the Dutch ensured their homeland's defence by capturing forts outside of their 7 provinces to anticipate Spanish attacks, hence the capture of Maastricht a day's ride from Dutch land proper.

For a long time, the geographic positioning of the DR, complete with its Generality Lands, had been its strength. This was because the Spanish never mustered enough strength to essentially do what the French were about to do; boldly march around the major fortifications and elicit the aid of the Bishop of Munster, to attack the Netherlands in force from their southern flank. Had the Spanish done this, the Dutch could have counterattacked to their west into the SN, forcing the Spanish to think on their feet. But French land was far away, and the sheer numbers of French armies invading from the South – in excess of 100k by some counts – meant that Marshals Turenne and Conde, after they linked up across the Meuse on 11th May 1672 under much pomp and ceremony, were able to simply swarm past Maastricht, almost totally ignoring its defences, and saving it for later. Louis didn't want a long siege to open his campaign anyway, he wanted to capitalise on the elements of panic and terror playing out in the republic by continuing with the momentum which had been gained.⁹ He was aiming, as we explained, to cross the thinner Rhine river, which was even thinner than normal thanks to light rains for much of 1672. Thus the two marshals brought their forces across, and after capturing a number of forts along the lesser Rhine, the French King followed, crossing a pontoon bridge on 12th June.

With this act, the entirety of the French army were now aimed at the soft underbelly of the DR, and their best defences had been made virtually useless. The weakest and poorest provinces would now have to rely on outdated and severely limited fortifications never meant to withstand the kind of pressure they now faced. Added to this was the fact that Marshals Turenne and Conde's previous sojourn up the River Meuse had established a number of French garrisons in what were once important Dutch forts to the republic's west. In short, the Dutch were virtually boxed in. As the French massed to the south, Maastricht was surrounded and would be plainly unable to provide assistance. Simultaneously did the Bishop of Munster capitalise and invade up towards the north east, capturing countless Dutch villages in the province of Overijssel, while the French prepared to attack due north into Gelderland. As if all this wasn't bad enough, Marshal Luxemburg had collected France's German mercenaries and prepared to march past the Bishop of Munster's forces into Groningen, securing the other two marshal's advance as he did so. The result of this three pronged offensive was total collapse and a deep panic and depression within the Dutch citizenry, who searched for a miracle as de Witt searched for soldiers to man the lines. Peter Geyl, to capture the mood of

⁹ Quote explaining this.

the day, explains that by June things were looking grim indeed for the DR, but that the French had yet to deliver the knockout blow which their numbers suggested:

If the French had continued their advance in the wake of the retiring States army, they would certainly have been able to enter Holland in force. But the invaders' perspective, too, was clouded by superstitious fear of the fortresses, and while the Munster troops were able to take the Overijssel towns within a few days, the French were wasting precious days on the capture of fortresses along the rivers Ijssel, Rhine and Waal. On 27th June, Louis XIV himself appeared at Zeist, the French headquarters new Utrecht. Peace negotiations had already been opened, and he was waiting confidently for the surrender.¹⁰

With the inner suburbs of the Netherlands smashed, and perhaps only Holland spared disaster; with some provinces like Gelderland, Overijssel, Groningen and Utrecht losing virtually all of their land, and much representations of order in the process of a French occupation, we can't fault Louis for expecting that the Dutch would roll over now and spare themselves further pain. Yet, though the Sun King couldn't have known it, by late June elements within the DR were clamouring on the one hand for peace, but on the other for stubborn resistance to the bitter end – Johan de Witt was determined to lead this latter party, even if, it killed him.



Johan de Witt, Grand Pensionary of Holland and an incredibly influential guy all in all.

END

¹⁰ Geyl, p.