THE ROLE OF THE DUTCH IN THE IROQUOIS WARS

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As early as 1606 the Dutch probed the St. Lawrence River in search of furs, in defiance of the French monopoly. In that year, the ship Witteleeuw captured two French vessels and took quantities of whale oil, guns and codfish from Spanish and Portuguese ships.[1]

More legitimate Dutch enterprises also began in North America during that period. On July 26th, 1610, Arnout Vogels from Amsterdam chartered a ship called **de Hoope** in response to discoveries made by Henri Hudson for the Dutch the year before. Vogels was involved in the fur trade with Russia but had been denied access to the trade with New France.[2] He tried to circumvent the French monopoly by trading with the Indians directly via the newly discovered Hudson River and by establishing a partnership with two French merchants, who could trade with New France as the de Mont monopoly had lapsed in January 1609 and trade was now open to all Frenchmen. Thus began both competition and cooperation between Dutch and French fur trade interests in North America. Other Dutch traders followed soon. Lambert van Tweenhuysen established trading companies to get the valuable beaver and otter pelts, while Adriaen Block not only traded furs, but also did important cartographic work along the New England coast.[3]

It was risky to trade with North America. Adventures could be very profitable but could also end in financial disaster. Only large stock-companies had the finances to establish fortifications and to settle people permanently. Instead of the one-ship mobile trading post, which would barter with the Indians as soon as the ice would break up and would sail as soon as the ship was loaded with furs, a permanent settlement with year-round trading staff could extend exploration throughout the summer and fall. That way remote tribes could be contacted.

Such large companies were also in a better position to secure monopolies from the Dutch government to limit risks and receive better profits. On January 1, 1615 a monopoly was given to the New Netherland Company which would last till December 31st, 1617. In 1618, trade with the colony was thrown open and competition between the New Netherland Company and independent traders was vigorous.

On June 3, 1621 the West India Company was incorporated. It was for that time a tremendous enterprise. Established primarily to harass Spanish shipping through piracy, the company was also active for some years in Brazil and was given a monopoly to trade with all of North America.

Although financed on a much larger scale than the earlier companies, the West India Company still had to face the same four basic problems of the New Netherland fur trade: (1) establish regular shipping with New Netherland, (2) contact as many Indian tribes as possible, (3) induce them to hunt, and (4) try and sell the furs on the European market.[4]

The raison d'etre for the W.I.C. for being in North America was trade and not settlement or empire building. In this respect, Dutch activity in North America was similar to that of the French, but contrasted sharply with British policies in New England, and specially in Virginia where serious attempts were made to establish permanent colonies.[5] It is difficult to establish if the W.I.C. made much of a profit in North America. Poor local administration, constant interlopers, encroachment by the British, and the many conflicts with the Indians along the Lower Hudson, made management costly.[6] In 1639 poor trade results caused the abandonment of the West India Company monopoly, but goods continued to be transported in W.I.C. ships.[7]

Although major settlement was not the aim of the West India Company, some form of trading post was nevertheless necessary. As early as 1614 the New Netherland Company established a trading fort on an island in the Hudson River, several leagues south of the mouth of the Mohawk River where it joins the Hudson. It was called Fort van Nassoueen.[8] It wasn't much, a small redoubt, surrounded by a moat and protected with two cast iron pieces and eleven light cannon. The garrison consisted of ten to twelve men.[9] The island was, however, subject to flooding and soon a new fort had to be built. It was called Oranje, today's Albany. By 1624 some Dutch and Walloon families had settled around the fort.

In 1630, Kiliaen van Rensselaer bought a domain surrounding Fort Oranje and called it Rensselaerwyck. Although the **patroon** of the estate, he never came to the colony himself and instead controlled his estate through members of his family. His major aim was to develop an agriculturally based colony with additional income from the fur trade.

The domain grew very slowly and van Rensselaer blamed the policies of the West Indian Company for this. As a director of the W.I.C.,

van Rensselaer had hoped for a more generous patroonship, but by the time he bought his estate, directorship of the W.I.C. had shifted toward those who wanted to strengthen the monopoly of the company and van Rensselaer had to accept a much less generous deal in terms of free trade.[10]

Over the years Rensselaerwyck received more settlers, but if New Amsterdam (New York) could be called a "molehill", the settlement around Fort Oranje was even smaller.[11]

In 1646, Father Isaac Jogues, who had been ransomed by the Dutch from the Mohawks, wrote that Fort Oranje was nothing but a "wretched little fort, built with logs with four or five pieces of cannon of Breteuil and as many swivels." He further mentioned that the van Rensselaer colony was "composed of a hundred persons, who reside along the river, as each one found it most convenient... All their houses are merely boards and thatched. As yet there is no mason work, except in the chimneys. The forests furnishing large pines, they make boards by means of their mills...Trade is free to all, this gives the Indians all things cheap, each of the Hollanders outbidding his neighbour and being satisfied provided he can gain some little profit."[13] Other settlers lived isolated on their farms, scattered over the immense hilly estate. In 1635 only five farms had been cleared.

Poor trade results, caused by the many Indian wars during the 1630's and 40's, poor crop years, and disastrous floods, as well as the uncertainty of possession after the British conquest of New Netherland in 1664, kept the van Rensselaer family in North America from prosperity. Only after the 1740's did the family do better.

The rest of the settlers were considerably less well off than the van Rensselaers.[14] During the seventeenth century, the Dutch settlement around Fort Oranje was thus small and not very prosperous. The settlement on the Upper Hudson River was far away from New Amsterdam, physically as well as politically, as fur trade interest frequently conflicted with the more agricultural pursuits of the settlers along the Lower Hudson. Even when the colony changed hands in 1664, only the names of the towns changed, the political relationships remained the same.[15]

II

Dutch-Indian Relationships

Relations between the Dutch and the Indians were realistic. Each side knew that it needed the other. The Dutch around Fort Oranje had come primarily to trade and although Kiliaen van Rensselaer had bought his estate from the defeated Mahicans in 1630, it was not until 1661 that Arent van Curler actually bought land from the Mohawks.[16]

Trade was the bond that kept Iroquois and Dutch together. Although personal and racial animosities did flare up, trade interests always ensured that conflicts were kept to a minimum.

The first and last major conflict with the Mohawks had occurred in 1626 when commander Crieckenbeeck had involved himself in the Mohawk-Mahican war, paying with his life for it. The Mohawks had later apologized for the killings, stating that they had never injured whites before and asked "the reason why the latter had meddled with them; had it been otherwise, they would not have acted as they had."[17] This was just so much diplomatic language, as the Mohawks knew very well why the Dutch had meddled in a conflict which had been caused by the Mohawk aim of monopolizing the fur trade with the Dutch and Mahican unwillingness to give the Mohawks free passage to Fort Oranje.[18] By 1628, the Mohawks had driven the Mahicans from the region and thus established a trade pattern that would last a long time. The Dutch would have preferred to deal with as many tribes as possible, playing one against the other and keeping prices low. Now they had to deal with the Mohawks only. The Dutch did not like this development at all and made efforts to break up the peace between Mohawks, French and northern Algonquian tribes.[19] The Mohawks imposed themselves upon the Dutch as sole middlemen, and tried at the same time to establish friendly relations with the French.

The Mohawks did not have much of a choice. As a result of the increasing strength of their Algonquian neighbours, as well as the Iroquoian Hurons, they were threatened with encirclement and lock-out from the important European trade. In an all-out effort they had driven the Mahicans away, having first made sure in 1624 that their northern flank with the French had been secured in a peace treaty.[20]

The settlers were numerically at the mercy of the Mohawks, but the Indians needed European trade goods. Thus the Dutch had little to fear from the Mohawks, but were repeatedly in conflict with those Indians along the lower banks of the Hudson River who saw the Dutch taking their land. The inhabitants of the northern villages needed the Mohawks to protect them against these "River Indians" who belonged to the Algonquian group of Indian tribes and who

saw the Dutch as allies of their traditional enemies, the Mohawks.

The conflict between the Mohawks and the Mahicans lasted well into the 1660's. The wars with the Esopus Indians were the result of the inept policies of the Dutch government in New Amsterdam. The Dutch in Fort Oranje knew that the fault was with their compatriots and made every effort to pleas the Mohawks hoping that they could prevent a "common front" between Iroquois and Algonquian tribes against them.[21]

Peace between the various Indian tribes along the Hudson River did not come until 1671.[23] The settlers in Fort Oranje would have preferred an earlier peace but Jeremiah van Renssalaerwyck was not **that** independent from New York.

The problem the French had was that by maintaining friendship with the Mohawks, they would alienate the Algonquians as well as the Hurons. Peace between the Iroquois and the Algonquians threatened diversion of the fur trade from Quebec to Fort Oranje. Thus a peace within the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region would be beneficial for the Mohawks if furs would flow to Fort Oranje from as many Indian tribes as possible, with them as sole middlemen.

The other Iroquois tribes preferred peace as long as they could trade with the Dutch and the French, but they resented Mohawk dominance. Peace would be beneficial to the French as long as they could keep control over their alliance with the Hurons and prevent furs from flowing to the Hudson.

Obviously with so many contradictory aims, lasting peace was almost impossible to achieve, although all sides realized that wars seriously interfered with the fur trade.

The Mohawks and the Dutch realized, however, that they had everything to lose and nothing to gain by hostilities between them. "The two races regarded each other less often as corn thieves, trespassers, or Indian givers, than as sources of economic prosperity; what they though of each other personally was beside the point."[24]

The arrival of th e Europeans had a profound effect on the Indians in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region and it provided the Iroquois with a timely opportunity to make the most of their accidental geographic position.

The Iroquois Confederacy had not started out as a mighty military machine. The Konoshioni, or Long House People, had been a hunter-subsistence agricultural society with a strong hunter-warrior tradition. They had been a small, relatively unobtrusive people, who had been driven from their territories by Huron and Algonquian tribes. Instead of preventing the rise of a mighty Iroquois nation, as Parkman and other romantic historians have maintained,[25] the arrival of the Europeans offered the Iroquois a golden opportunity, which they used astutely and not as pawns of European powers.

The Iroquois Confederacy should not be exaggerated and did not really come into effective existence until after the 1630's, as the Iroquois were still fending for themselves on an individual tribal basis.[26] Each one of the five nations continued to do so to a large degree even after that date and the **Jesuit Relations**, as well as the documents from the Dutch and English in New York, are full of incidents showing that conflicts would flare up frequently between the five nations, mostly caused by differences over the fur trade and the Mohawk dominance of that trade.[27] For instance, Stuyvesant found it necessary to warn the Senecas not use Dutch gunpowder against the Mohawks.[28] Even when, late in the seventeenth century, the Seneca were struggling against encroachment by the Susquehannocks they had to fight their battles without the support of their Iroquois brethren. The best that can be said about the Confederacy is that it prevented bloodshed.[29]

III
The Indian Wars and the Position of the Dutch

The arrival of European guns had a profound effect on inter-tribal relations. Whereas earlier warfare was conducted with stone-age weaponry, the use of guns changed the casualty level considerably. Much has been made of the Dutch role in supplying guns to the Iroquois. Many arguments are based on the **Jesuit Relations** and other French sources which cannot be called unbiased. The Fathers tended to see the French point of view, and explained events in religious rather than in socio-economic terms.[30]

Documents show that the Dutch were not selling arms during the Crieckenbeeck incident in 1626.[31] William Bradford reported in 1628, however, that the French did sell weapons to the Indians.[32] Most probably, some illegal sales by interlopers did occur on both sides.

On March 31, 1639 the Dutch colonial government issued an ordinance which included a

penalty of death as punishment for selling muskets, powder, or lead to the Indians.[33] However, this was primarily enforced in view of the hostile attitudes of the Indians along the Lower Hudson River. In the northern parts of the colony control was much more difficult. The supply of guns to the Iroquois from Dutch sources increased considerably after the West Indian Company gave up its trade monopoly, as independent traders were hard to police.

When on June 5, 1641 a group of Mohawks arrived at Trois Rivières to try and make peace once again with the French, the Indians had 36 musketeers, "who were as skillful as the French."[34]

In 1642, Mohawks captured a party of Hurons accompanying Father Jogues. These Mohawks also carried muskets, which the French claimed had been obtained from the Dutch.[35]

In 1643, Father Jogues reported that the Mohawks had 300 muskets,[36] while in 1644, the Dutch Reverend Megapolensis (van Grootstede) mentions that the Dutch sold muskets to the Mohawks.[37]

De Vries, in "Voyages from Holland to America A.D. 1632-1644", estimates that there were 400 guns among the Iroquois. He also reports that control was difficult and politically unwise as the English, Swedes, and French were selling guns.[38] Besides, the Indians were operating well outside any laws set by Europeans and were pursuing their own aims. The Mohawks needed and demanded firearms and ammunition. If the Dutch wouldn't sell the Indians would go elsewhere.[39] Still the Dutch would impose restrictions and then relax them, all depending on perceived Indian threats and settler demands. Stuyvesant was afraid of weapons supply to the Mohawks, whom he considered to be a "vain-glorious, proud and bold tribe", already too arrogant after their victories over the Hurons and the French. To depend on them would make the Dutch "contemptible in the eyes of the other tribes", while the Mohawks themselves would become more demanding. "It is therefore safer to stand on our own feet as long as possible."[40]

But neither the Dutch nor the Mohawks had much choice after the early 1640's, when the fur bearing animals in Iroquois territory had been hunted close to extinction. Either the Mohawks would get a share of the Huron-French trade, or they had to expand westward themselves. The Dutch fur traders realized this very well and knew that they had to supply the Mohawks and other Iroquois tribes with guns to enable them to do so.[41]

The French, although they had a policy not to sell arms to "heathen savages", did sell arms to converts and actually used it as a tool for conversion. There were always enough converts to guarantee a sufficient clientèle for arms. That the Iroquois in 1649 were better armed than the Hurons was not the result of a no-sell policy of the French, but of the fact that French prices for guns were very high.[42]

The shortest fur trade route between the Great Lakes region and the Atlantic Ocean is via the Mohawk and Hudson rivers and not via the St. Lawrence, and therefore the French had to go into the interior to convince the Hurons to trade via Quebec. The Hurons preferred to trade with the Dutch **and** the French. Iroquois tribes, such as the Senecas and the Onondagas, would have preferred to do so too.[43] Therefore French policy was always aimed at creating discord between Iroquois and Hurons. Father Caron's visit to Huronia, for instance, was such an effort. The Récollet Father Sagard-Théodat writes naively: "I had hoped to promote a peace between the Hurons and the Iroquois, so that Christianity could be spread among them, and to open the roads to trade with many nations which were not accessible, but some of the members of the Company advised me that it was not expedient since if the Hurons were at peace with the Iroquois, the same Iroquois would lead the Hurons to trade with the Dutch and divert them from Quebec which is more distant."[44]

The Dutch were also afraid of trade diversions. As early as 1634 the surgeon at Fort Oranje, Harmen Myndertse van den Bogaert, visited the Oneidas deep within Iroquois territory. He reported that there were "French Indians in their land, and that they had made a truce because the Indians wanted to receive just as much for their skins as the French Indians did."[45] Tough negotiations between the Dutch and the Oneidas followed, and the Indians promised that they would sell beaver skins to the Dutch only.[46] However, they fully intended to continue to trade with the French.

Till the mid 1640's, tribal trade patterns with the Europeans remained fairly flexible. Convenient peace treaties would be signed between various tribes and the Europeans, which would be broken just as conveniently when mutual mistrust would cause a temporary resumption of the **petite guerre** of ambush and counter ambush.

Thus the Mohawks would come to the French to "parley" at regular intervals. They signed a treaty with Champlain as early as 1624 involving the Algonquians and as late as 1641 they maintained in Quebec that "they would give a kick to the Dutch, with whom they no longer wished to have an intercourse."[47] But nobody took such pronouncements too seriously.

This situation changed drastically in 1645. That year the Hurons and the French once again made peace with the Iroquois. The next summer a large flotilla of fur canoes arrived in Montreal from the interior unmolested by the Iroquois. In open breach of the treaty, however, the Iroquois were not allowed to participate in the trade.[48] Warfare and blockade were promptly renewed. In 1647, the Hurons made an aggressive alliance with the Susquehannocks, situated south of the Iroquois territory, which threatened the Iroquois with encirclement. The Iroquois realized that they would never be allowed to participate in the St. Lawrence River fur trade. They did not think they could defeat the French and did not want to destroy a potential supplier of much needed goods. They thought, however, that they could defeat the Huron middlemen.

In 1649 they attacked deep into Huron territory and demoralized the Hurons to such extent that they failed to defend themselves properly and were dispersed.

The Iroquois soon found out, however, that destroying Huronia was not enough, as the more remote tribes, specially the Ottawas, picked up the trade with the French. Although the Iroquois launched attacks upon these more northern tribes they could not prevent them from trading down the Ottawa and St. Lawrence rivers.

IV
Chief Canaqueese: An Illustration of Mohawk, Dutch and French Relations

In 1653, some of the Iroquois at least were again ready for peace with the French.[49] One of the Mohawk chiefs present at these negotiations was Canaqueese. His history, however little is known about it, forms an interesting illustration of Dutch, Mohawk, and French relationships with each other.

Although some of the Dutch, such as Arent van Curler and Jeremiah van Rensselaer had a good understanding of Mohawk aims and aspirations, most of them regarded the Indians as "wilden" or savages. This did not, however, prevent sexual relationships. Dominie Megapolensis complained that "our Dutchmen run after the Indian girls very much."[50] Van der Donck claimed that this was so because Indian women were so similar to Dutch women: "seldom very handsome and rarely very ugly."[51]

One result of such a relationship between a Dutch man and a Mohawk woman was Jan Smit, who became the respected Mohawk chief Canaqueese. He appears first in history in one of the many letters Marie Guyart, known as Marie de l'Incarnation, wrote to her son in France. In this letter she describes an attack on Trois Riviéres in 1650.[52]

In the Spring of 1654, Canaqueese participated in the negotiation for a peace settlement with the French. He brought with him some letters from Fort Oranje.[53] In these letters the Dutch assured the French "that they now really saw a disposition for Peace on the part of the savages allied to them."[54] Johannes Dyckman, the "commissary" of Fort Oranje and Beverwyck, wrote to de Lauzon in Quebec: "Canaqueese, the bearer hereof, a savage who is much loved by the Maquas(Mohawks), has requested of us a letter of recommendation to your honor, in order that he may be well treated there and be allowed to go and come freely, which we request hereby."[55] This indicated that the Mohawks considered the recommendation of one group of Europeans to another to be important, even though they might be competitors.

Canaqueese, as representative of the Mohawks, was not much in favor of a peace settlement which was mainly being pushed by the Onondagas and the Oneidas.[56] He made a speech clearly stating that the Mohawks considered themselves to be the most important members of the Confederacy and that it would be better if the French listened to them instead of to the other members.[57] The French ignored this, but the Mohawks did not send envoys to peace talks later at Onondaga.[58]

The Jesuits did not like Canaqueese and referred to him as a "Hollander – or rather, an execrable issue of sin, the monstrous offspring of a Dutch Heretic Father and a Pagan Woman."[59]

The main Mohawk aim during the negotiations was once again to create a split between the French and their Indian allies.[60] It was the French aim to make sure that the Mohawks would toe the line of the other members of the Confederacy who were better inclined to the French,[61] while hoping also that Mohawk recalcitrance would make the Onondagas and Oneidas turn away from the Mohawks and trade with the French.

Under these circumstances, it is not surprising that the treaty collapsed within a year and Canaqueese was involved in a number of skirmishes, all of them efforts to blockade the fur trade to Montreal.[62]

In 1658, the Mohawks asked the Dutch to help them establish a peace with the French. Although somewhat unwilling, the Dutch were obliged to send volunteers.[63] As these peace efforts seem inconsistent with Mohawk military activities at the same time, it indicates a split of opinion within the Mohawk nation.

A major French counter-attack came in the

Fall of 1665. It was the direct result of a Mohawk attack along the Richelieu River, which in turn had been a response to an ill-fated French campaign into Mohawk territory the previous winter, when de Tracy, who had been erroneously told that his nephew had been killed, sent a rescue operation. The French had met Canaqueese and a group of Mohawks on their way to Quebec to return the captives and to negotiate peace terms again. And since that time, Canaqueese, now referred to by the French as the "Flemish Bastard", had been held in a sort of open arrest in Quebec. The French did not hesitate to put considerable pressure on Canaqueese and his group. On the one hand they were required, with the exception of Canaqueese, to make snowshoes for the French, which they knew would be used against their own people; on the other hand Canaqueese was treated with respect by Jean Talon, while de Tracy gave him a fine suit of clothing.

When the army was drawn up, ready to depart, on the 14th of September 1665, Monsieur de Tracy had it pass before Canaqueese and said to him, "Now that we are going to your country, what do you say?" Marie de l'Incarnation writes: "Tears fell from the Flemish Bastard's eyes at seeing such fine troops in such good array. He replied nevertheless, 'Onontio' – (that is to say, 'great chief') – 'I clearly see that we are lost, but our destruction will cost you dear. Our nation will be no more, but I warn you that many fine young men will remain behind, for ours will fight till the end. I beg you only to save my wife and children who are in such and such a place'."[64]

After de Tracy returned from the campaign, during which they met few Mohawk warriors, but did serious harm to Mohawk villages and crops, he sent Canaqueese back "in search of his fugitive people, with the mandate to tell them that if they stirred again he would go back to see them and this time they would not get off so lightly."[65] During that winter many more Mohawks, women and children, died of starvation than whites would be killed during the raid on Lachine that was to follow.

The history of Canaqueese shows direct and indirect Dutch cooperation with both Mohawks and French. Some French captured by the Mohawks were ransomed by the Dutch, such as Father Jogues and Radisson. During the negotiation of 1653 and 1654, de Lauzon and Dyckman corresponded with each other.[66]

Dutch-French cooperation existed also on the illegal level. Coureurs de bois, dissatisfied with their employers in Montreal, and attracted by better Dutch and English trade goods, found their way to Fort Oranje and later to Albany. Officials of New France sometimes took them in for questioning, but on the whole they seem to have come and gone freely, and some even settled near Albany.[67] Marie de l'Incarnation mentions in a letter of October 1658 that there was considerable trade between the French and the Dutch that year.[68] She might, however, have been talking about overseas trade, as much of the trade between New France and France was in Dutch hands.[69] Groulx estimates that the illegal trade during the government of Talon amounted to 1,200,000 pound value of beaver sold yearly on the markets of Fort Oranje and Boston.[70]

The explorer La Salle began his famous expedition down the Mississippi in 1678 from Albany.[71]

Later, after the treaty of Utrecht, the traders in Albany found it often more profitable and less trouble to sell trade goods to the French and let the coureurs de bois distribute them to the Indians in the interior.[72]

In the context of Canaqueese's history, it is interesting to note what Nash writes in reference to Indian leaders in other parts of North America. He claims that the male offspring of Indian mothers and white fathers were often leaders of their tribes, and remained in almost all cases within the Indian society. Of all Indians, they were the most alienated from white society, the result of the fact that their white father left them "like bulls or bears to be provided for at random by their mothers" and "some of these bastards have been the leading men or war captains that have done us so much mischief", as one Virginian settler wrote.[73] There is a small postscript to Canaqueese's history. According to the Jesuit Relations, he settled later in Caughnawaga near Montreal together with several other members of his tribe, where they came to be known as the "praying Indians".[74]

Later he accompanied Denonville in his campaign against the Senecas in 1687 as the leader of 150 Christian Indians.[75] He had thus not only turned against the Dutch but against his own tribe and the Confederacy.

IV
Decline of the Dutch and Iroquois Position

The 1660's were an important decade in North America. Not only had the French launched their first major counter attack against the Mohawks, but the Dutch colony of New Netherland had been conquered by the British in 1664 and had been renamed New York. For the Dutch in Fort Oranje, now Albany, the situation did not change much as the British followed a similar policy toward the Indians

and the French as the Dutch. Neglect and misunderstandings between Albany and New York were similar to those between Fort Oranje and New Amsterdam. The British welcomed the peace of 1667, but the Dutch in Albany, as always, feared that peace would divert trade. It was to discuss trade relations with the French that Arent van Curler went to Quebec in 1667, although the supposed aim of his trip was to receive a reward from the French for what he had done for them in Schenectady earlier in the decade. He never got to Quebec, as he drowned in Lake Champlain under somewhat mysterious and disputed circumstances.[76]

All during these decades tribal wars were fought for economic gain and alliances changed when it seemed opportune to do so. The Senecas came under considerable pressure from the Susquehannocks and the French.[77] The Onondagas and Oneidas continued to establish better relations with the French against the wishes of the Mohawks, but were betrayed by the Deonondadies who had appeared suddenly in Michilimackinack in 1686, and who were interested in establishing trade relations with the Dutch. The Deonondadies followed the old political pattern of trying to create discord. Peace efforts between the Onondagas, the Oneidas and the French did not suit them, as this would block their trade with the Dutch. War between the Iroquois and the French[78] would, however, be advantageous.

They therefore convinced the Iroquois that the French were really plotting against them. The Iroquois attacked Lachine in response. As a result the Ottawas, impressed with Iroquois ferocity, deserted the French temporarily, and again trade came to a virtual standstill.[79] Thus the first Dutch effort to trade directly with the Indians in the interior was directly interwoven with inter-tribal schemes and the safety of the settlers on the island of Montreal.

These wars were never based on tribal linguistic relations. Hurons could cooperate fully with Algonquians and fight other Iroquois. They coud even cooperate with Oneidas and fight Mohawks. It was, however, always a war between hunters and hunters, and between traders and traders, never between hunters and traders.[80]

Toward the end of the seventeenth century, the dependence on Albany began to have serious disadvantages for the Iroquois. The one market at Fort Oranje had never fully satisfied them even in the earlier years, and they had always tried to trade with the French as well.

They also realized that the British and the Dutch were letting them fight on behalf of European interests without giving them sufficient military support. As a result of their aggressive and jealous guarding of their trade positions, the Mohawks had also manipulated themselves into a position in which they had antagonized many of the surrounding tribes, including the other members of the Confederacy.

French encroachment into the interior, only temporarily slowed down by the infighting between LaSalle and Lefebvre La Barre, strengthened the French position and the Iroquois had to accept the fact that they would never effectively blockade the fur trade routes to Montreal. The Iroquois had nowhere to run anymore.[81]

In 1668 they simultaneously negotiated in Albany and in Montreal, trying to secure support from the Dutch merchants and the British colonial government, while attempting to come to terms with the French.[82] Although temporarily successful, the **petite guerre** soon erupted again.

This time the French used Indian methods in their attack on Albany. But the undisciplined forces of the French only succeeded in destroying Schenectady in 1689. The campaign by Major Schuyler of Albany in 1690 against the French failed due to lack of money and commitment, and in the end the Mohawks had to do most of the fighting in the raid on La Prairie de Magdalene.[83]

The last military involvement of the Dutch in Albany came in 1709 when a conflict broke out over a French trading post among the Onondagas, too close to Dutch home territory. The post was destroyed by the Dutch under Schuyler with a party of Mohawks. But a larger campaign scheduled for 1711 came to nothing and never went beyond the head of Lake Champlain.

The role of the Dutch on the front lines of the conflict had ended. When the final conflict between the British and French was played out during the French and Indian Wars (1754-63) the Dutch would fulfill the role of suppliers to the redcoat army. They made considerable profits, but also saw the first influx of English speaking settlers, who would ultimately take over.[84]

The final relationship between the Dutch and Mohawks would come during the Revolutionary War when the Iroquois under Joseph Brant returned to their ancestral lands from Canada to ravage the Mohawk valley in 1780.[85]

VI
CONCLUSION

The Dutch influence in the Iroquois wars was thus indirect. They supplied the goods and weapons, the Mohawks did the policy-making and most of the fighting.

There was never any real plan of attack by the Dutch to displace the French in the North

American fur trade. It was a war between the Iroquois and the other Indian tribes and between the Iroquois and the French.

Only during the revolt by Leister did some of the Dutch colonists in New York think in terms of any "design" of eliminating French rule. But Leister did not have enough support and thought in terms of a "grand alliance" in the European tradition of the time, underestimating the peculiarities of the geographic environment.

The main policy of the fur traders in Fort Oranje, and later Albany, was to maintain as much trade with as many parties as possible, including French coureurs de bois. To maintain trade, the Dutch had to accept Mohawk dominance of the fur trade and the reality of arms trading, however dangerous that was considered to be.

The Dutch stayed aloof from the Indians. They did not proselytize to any extent and did not in large numbers mix with the Indian population. Their role in North America was as a catalyst in an already existing framework of inter-tribal conflicts and their particular relationships with the Iroquois were of necessity and not of design. Faced with Mohawk supremacy, they made the best of it. They were not involved in grand plots to disrupt the French fur trade through constant Indian wars, which affected Dutch fur trade as badly as the French. Rather, they were powerless to do much about it.

FOOTNOTES

1 Hart, "The Prehistory of the New Netherland Company", pp. 13-15, as quoted by George L. Smith, **Religion and Trade in New Netherland**, p. 143.

2 Van Claef Bachman, **Peltries or Plantations**, p. 3.

3 W.M. Williamson, **Adriaan Block**, passim.

4 Bachman, 15.

5 Smith, 147.

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28 Jeremias van Rensselaer, 21.

29 George T. Hunt. **The Wars of the Iroquois**, 8.

30 Hunt, 165.

31 O'Callaghan, III, 33, 43.

32 Hunt, 166-167.

33 Van Laer, RBMM, 426.

34 **Jesuit Relations**. 21: 350-7 and 22:269.

35 **Ibid.**, 29:30.

36 **Ibid.**, 24:305.

37 Grassmann, 91.

38 **Ibid.**, 168, quoting CHM - D, 135, 215.

39 O'Callaghan, XIII, 35.

40 **Ibid.**, XIII, 124-126.

41 Van Laer, RBMM, 553. See also O'Callaghan, XII, 35-36.

42 Hunt, 174.

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46 Codman Hislop. **The Mohawk**, 48.

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48 Hunt, 83.

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51 **Ibid.**, 106-107.

52 **Jesuit Relations**, 35:211-213.

53 **Ibid.**, 41:85-87.

54 **Ibid.**, 41:87.

55 Grassmann,

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58 Joyce Marshall, ed., **Word from New France. The Selected Letters of Marie de l'Incarnation**, 402. See also Hunt, 100.

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60 **Ibid.**, 41:55, 57-61.

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