Chapter 3. Phases of violence and public confrontations

Introduction

While several studies of Western European National Socialist collaborating organizations have explained very well the ideological development of leaders of the movements, research on the violence committed by members of National Socialist movements remains limited.\(^{516}\) This study hopes to add a new angle to the history of Dutch National Socialism with its focus on the day-to-day violent practices of NSB members. Its aim is to analyze the dynamics of confrontations in the streets between NSB members and their opponents.

In recent international historiography of fascism, scholars such as Michael Mann and Aristotle Kallis placed violence at the center of fascist ideology and practices. Kallis even labels the collaborating fascists as the “unique, crucial building blocs of the architecture of genocide in the NS ‘new order.’”\(^{517}\) He acknowledges the crucial role that collaborating fascists played in the violent history of the National Socialist occupation during the Second World War. In all occupied territories, indigenous National Socialists infiltrated the local administration and police. According to Kallis, collaborating National Socialists were often even more radical and violent towards their neighbors and compatriots than the Nazi occupier. As Stathis Kalyvas argues, the local dynamics of political violence should be analyzed in order to understand political developments.\(^{518}\) I will use their approach on the Dutch case.

Violence was not limited to fascist parties. As Pamela Swett argues: in Germany many young men may have perceived violence as a way to improve their own status.\(^{519}\) One important difference though is that fascists saw struggle as an aim in itself, not only as an instrument to reach a specific goal. In the fascist paradigm, violence was crucial ideologically and instrumentally. The use of violence was encouraged as a desirable aim in itself. In other words, violence was seen as inherently positive. In addition to this “intellectual” argument, the fascists did not neglect the “instrumental” side of violence. Fascists accepted violence as an inevitable instrument to accomplish a New Order in which their internal enemies would

\(^{516}\) De Wever, Greep naar de macht; Martin Conway, Collaboration in Belgium; Paul Hayes, ‘Quisling’s Political Ideas’; Fritz Petrick, ‘Die norwegischen Kollaboration’.

\(^{517}\) Kallis, Genocide and Fascism. 210, 261-264, 277-278, 282-283.

\(^{518}\) Kalyvas, The logic of violence in civil wars, 390; Swett., Neighbors and enemies.

\(^{519}\) Swett, Neighbors and enemies, 295-298.
be defeated and “inferior” racial groups would be eliminated. Violence also served as a method to gain power. Therefore, I will analyze the different methods used by the NSB members and their opponents to express their feelings towards each other. Of course, not all expressions were violent, and non-violent expressions on the street will be included as well.

National Socialist violence is a form of political violence. According to Ton Zwaan, political violence is defined as violence focused on the acquisition of political power or on influencing existing power relations. In the case of fascists, their violent acts were performed in the public sphere. Fascists used political violence to promote violence in the public sphere, with the aim of overthrowing the political system. Thus political violence was most important at times of regime change, when different political actors tried to win political power. However, when the German National Socialists took power, violence did not disappear because of the inherently violent character of fascist movements. This chapter will deal with violence in the public sphere, on the Dutch streets. In power, fascists had the opportunity to express their violence on the streets. When in power, fascists also used violence in prisons and concentration camps; these violent places are out of the scope of this research. This study focuses on the confrontations in the public sphere, where they were visible to bystanders.

Throughout the occupation, violence brought NSB members into conflict with their fellow citizens. Thus, violence was not just an ideological matter but a very realistic life experience shaped daily life. Violence also shaped the image of National Socialists. The threat of violence existed from both sides, widening the gap between National Socialists and Dutch society, and therefore it should to be analyzed from the perspective of interaction and polarization. As David Apter formulated: “Political violence not only divides people, it polarizes them around affiliations of race, ethnicity, religion, language, class.”

Following the ideas of international scholars of fascism and political violence, I will study the role of violence in the public confrontations of the NSB. During the occupation, violence played a significant role in the Netherlands. Political violence – an important phenomenon in the years of occupation – does not exist without actors on the local level.

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520 Kallis, Genocide and Fascism, 106-108, 112.
522 Morgan, Fascism in Europe, 4-5, 64; Mosse, Nazi culture, XXV
523 These are also forms of violence: Zwaan, ‘Politiek geweld, staten en naties. Een theoretische inleiding’, 10.
524 Apter, The legitimation of violence, 1.
and members of the NSB were among the most active local actors during the Nazi occupation. The NSB was an all-encompassing fascist party collaborating with the German Nazi occupier who was fighting a war against internal and external enemies. As the Dutch historian Peter Romijn points out in his study of local government during the German occupation, the German authorities encouraged Dutch National Socialists to act violently in the first period of the occupation. This study will not be a quantitative analysis of violence but a study of the dynamics of confrontations in public. On the basis of existing international studies on fascism, my hypothesis is that violence shaped the internal characteristics and external image of National Socialists in Dutch society.

This chapter is chronologically structured. I distinguish four phases: from May 1940 till mid-1941; mid-1941 till early 1943; early 1943 till September 1944 and the final phase after September 1944. The latter period will be discussed in the next chapter. The first phase was characterized by eager National Socialists expressing themselves in the public sphere. The paramilitary organization of the NSB (the WA) was the most visible actor on the streets, encouraged by Nazi Germany. WA members were active in the first year of the occupation in a concerted effort to conquer the streets. The second phase formed, as Romijn characterized it, the golden years of the NSB. In this period, individual members of the NSB took part in the process of physical exclusion of the Jews by assisting the police in rounding them up. From 1943 onwards the role of violent National Socialists changed. They became increasingly militarized; many were recruited for the German military. In 1943, the efforts of the NSB and Nazi Germany to nazify the Netherlands became subordinate to the German war effort. Violence became tangible for the Dutch National Socialists themselves after the first year when NSB members were expected to integrate into the Waffen SS to fight on the German side during the invasion of Russia. During this third phase, National Socialists in the Netherlands had to cope with disappointing results at the front and at home. From 1943 onwards, Dutch National Socialists had to fear the violence of the resistance.

525 Stathis N. Kalyvas “The Ontology of ‘Political Violence’. Action and Identity in Civil Wars”, Perspectives on Politics 1:3 (2003) 475-494, here 479-480, 487. Individuals tend to be seen as objects rather than as subjects of violence; Kalyvas, The logic of violence in civil wars, 390. They were not the only indigenous fascist violent actors; the NSB members had to compete with, for example, members of the Dutch SS and other smaller extreme-right groups. However, the NSB members formed the largest group of all Dutch National Socialists.

526 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 143-144.

527 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 143-144.
movement on Dutch territory. In some cases, the resistance tried to eliminate important Dutch collaborators and National Socialists. In this period of the occupation and partly due to the increasing attacks from the resistance fighters, the NSB was allowed to create its own police force for self-protection: the *Landwacht*. The members of the *Landwacht* roamed the streets and countryside. Its members were employed to arrest people and confiscate food bought on the black market.

Confrontations are visible in different sources, including the police reports of different cities: Amsterdam, Haarlem, Heemstede, Leiden, and Utrecht. The reports of the German Höhere SA- und Polizeiführer (HSSPF) are useful for their description of the general atmosphere in the Netherlands. One has to consider the bias in these reports because the HSSPF was an institution of the German occupation. However, read with a critical approach these reports offer insights into the development of the attitudes of and towards the NSB on the streets. Other sources include the reports of the *Afweerdienst*, the judicial department of the NSB. The organization assisted NSB members in legal matters; many complaints of NSB members about so-called antis were reported to the *Afweerdienst*, which was located in Utrecht. Insults of NSB members were also reported to the ATL, the internal intelligence service of the NSB.\(^{528}\)

The information from local party archives and police documents is not structured but scattered; it cannot offer a detailed quantitative analysis of the confrontations. What it can offer is an insight into the dynamics of confrontations between NSB members, civilians and the police.

### The first phase of confrontations, May 1940-mid 1941: conquering the streets

The first phase started immediately after the German takeover. Nazi officials encouraged (violent) expressions from the NSB. Seyss-Inquart aimed first at self-nazification; therefore all National Socialists had to express themselves openly in the public sphere.\(^{529}\) Nazi

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\(^{528}\) See chapter 2.  
\(^{529}\) Romijn, *Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd*, 144.
Germany returned to NSB members their right to wear uniforms and hold parades, in order to enable the NSB to demonstrate its fascist spirit and to conquer the streets.

At this stage, members of the NSB expressed themselves violently on the streets. NSB members ignored the laws issued by the prewar Dutch government. According to these national laws, NSB members were forbidden to wear their uniforms in the streets. But in the first months of the occupation NSB members marched through the streets in their black uniforms. During these months, the main spark of violent confrontations lay in propaganda, marches and selling newspapers. Many riots broke out, often involving hundreds of participants and sometimes even gunfire.

The activities of the NSB members, who supported the German occupation regime, provoked hostile reactions, violent and nonviolent, in the surrounding society. The NSB, formerly a movement of political and social outsiders, now suddenly had a power base. A shift in the balance of power can lead to an explosion of violence, according to Roger D. Petersen. In his analysis of the relationship between emotions and ethnic violence, Petersen argues, “Status reversal creates the highest intensity of resentment and produces the highest likelihood of violent conflict.” When a powerful group is dislodged from its position, as was the case with the former democratic Dutch elite, and is placed below a (previously) less powerful group like the NSB, the level of resentment among the new underdog increases. Following Petersen’s argument, violent responses are to be expected from anti-NSB groups.

The first demonstration of resistance occurred on June 29th 1940, the birthday of the Prince Consort of the future Queen. People showed their support for the Prince and their rejection of the German regime by placing flowers on the streets. People wore a carnation—the prince’s favorite flower—to express their support for the royal family. National Socialists saw these expressions as provocations and as occasions to start riots. They put on their uniforms and roamed the streets, looking for people wearing carnations. When they encountered someone, they tore off the carnation. But, some NSB opponents were prepared: they had hidden a razorblade within the carnation so that the NSB member would

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530 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 222.
531 NIOD, WA, June-September 1940; Heemstede, gemeentepolitie, July-September 1940, 25-27.
532 Roger D. Petersen, Understanding ethnic violence, fear, hatred, and resentment in twentieth-century eastern Europe (Cambridge 2002) 256.
533 HSSPF, July 6th, 1940.
hurt himself tearing out the flower.\textsuperscript{534} The police in Amsterdam reported over 30 major fights, with 23 people injured.\textsuperscript{535}

In the autumn of 1940, the HSSPF reported a general anti-NSB political climate.\textsuperscript{536} Many acts of opposition were small and were targeted at NSB propaganda, local NSB members, and their houses. Propaganda posters of the NSB were damaged during the night.\textsuperscript{537} NSB members were spit upon.\textsuperscript{538} NSB members were insulted because they were selling newspapers on the street or simply because they were members of the NSB.\textsuperscript{539} Houses of NSB members were the object of insults as well. Opponents painted swastikas on the German sympathizers’ houses with tar or orange paint.\textsuperscript{540} Some citizens broke the windows of NSB houses, shops, and party buildings.\textsuperscript{541}

In October 1940, one NSB member was pelted with stones.\textsuperscript{542} In November 1940, a WA man was harassed when he exited a cinema.\textsuperscript{543} However, these were exceptions; in the early period of the occupation, minor acts against the NSB prevailed. Bullying was a way to show their aversion to the NSB. These acts were numerous, though. The discontent of opponents was very visible on the streets during this period. Small, everyday acts of opposition, like chanting anti-NSB slogans and yelling at NSB members and throwing snowballs at them, came mainly from young people.\textsuperscript{544} Perhaps, because young people are more eager to present themselves on the street united in groups against an opponent.

In the beginning, the anti-NSB expressions came from different actors, who had in common that they felt threatened or had been attacked by the Dutch National Socialists: the NU, Jews and other opponents of the NSB, such as communists. The NU started off as a nonviolent political organization that perceived itself as an alternative to the NSB in sharing power with

\begin{footnotes}
\item[534] Damsma and Schumacher, \textit{Hier woont een NSB’er}, 33-34; Gertjan Broek \textit{Weerkorpsen}, ‘hergroepering’.
\item[535] De Jong, \textit{Het Koninkrijk} IV, 284.
\item[536] HSSPF, October 22th, 1940.
\item[537] Heemstede gemeentepolitie, November 1940, 31.
\item[538] NSB members complained, for example, that people from inside the streetcar spit on them; Heemstede gemeentepolitie, April 1941, 42-43.
\item[539] Heemstede gemeentepolitie, June 6th, 1941, 46; July 10th, 1941, 47; August 5th, 1942, 62; October 30th, 1944, 105; NIOD, ATL, December 1940.
\item[540] Heemstede gemeentepolitie, October 1941, 50-51.
\item[541] NIOD, Afweerdienst, November 1940 Bussum; NIOD, WA, file 1093, March 1941; NH Archive, Hilversum, December 6th, 1940.
\item[542] NIOD, Afweerdienst, October 1940.
\item[543] NIOD, Afweerdienst, November 1940, Bussum.
\item[544] In October 1940 a fight started at a school in Utrecht between the son of an NSB member and his classmates; NIOD, file 1279, Afweerdienst, October 1940; Heemstede gemeentepolitie, June 1st, 1941, 45.
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the Germans in the Netherlands. Whereas its leaders pleaded for deliberation and peaceful opposition, many of its followers thought and acted otherwise.\textsuperscript{545} The NU became one of the most important opponents of the NSB on the streets in the first period of the occupation. However, this does not mean that the NU established a paramilitary organization, like the WA. Thus, the “battle on the streets” was fought by very disparate groups.

In the summer of 1940, one of the most frequent, immediate causes of conflict was canvassing on the streets. Both NSB- and NU members tried to sell their newspapers on street corners. The street corner became a meeting point for troublemakers. The marches through the streets and the existence of two opposing groups selling newspapers on the streets led to regular riots in several cities.\textsuperscript{546} For example in October 1940, a confrontation between members of the NU and the NSB took place in the center of Amsterdam. A few NSB members were selling National Socialist newspapers on the streets, until NU members shouted: “long live the Queen! [...] Long live England!”\textsuperscript{547} Bystanders joined in. Someone slapped an NSB newspaper out of the hands of an NSB member, whereupon WA members responded violently. Finally, the police intervened.\textsuperscript{548}

In the autumn of 1940, the NU and NSB men were two groups who often engaged in violent confrontations. The German HSSPF held the NU responsible for disturbing the peace and accused the police of mistakenly choosing the side of the NU.\textsuperscript{549} However, the same report mentions the violent actions of NSB members towards NU members. On October 12\textsuperscript{th}, 1940 for example, 25 WA men attacked an NU building and trashed the place. According to the HSPPF, this incident reinforced the negative attitude towards the NSB and even elicited disapproval within the NSB organization.\textsuperscript{550}

Local governments tried to keep the confrontations under control by designating different places for the WA and the NU to sell their papers, thus eliminating the confrontational meetings on street corners. However, this approach did not succeed because

\textsuperscript{545} Ten Have, \textit{Nederlandse Unie}, 393.
\textsuperscript{546} NIOD, WA, July-August 1940, Utrecht; Haarlem gemeentepolitie, file 847, dagrapport June 20th, 1940; PG, June 26th, 1941, Hilversum.
\textsuperscript{547} “Leve de Koningin! Oranje boven! Leve Engeland!”; NIOD, WA (123), October 23th, 1940, file 1082 De Jong, \textit{Het Koninkrijk}.
\textsuperscript{548} NIOD, WA, October 23th, 1940, file 1082.
\textsuperscript{549} NIOD, HSSPF, October 22th, 1940, file 353, box 44.
\textsuperscript{550} NIOD, HSSPF, October 22th, 1940, file 353, box 44.
of the overconfidence of the WA men, who felt they could count on German support. They constantly tried to take over the NU posts and increase their territory.

The relationship between the NSB and the Dutch police was ambiguous in the first period of the occupation. The Dutch historian Guus Meershoek analyzed the Dutch police during German occupation. According to Meershoek, the police continued their prewar policies in the early months and refused to give the NSB a special position. Only gradually did the NSB gain greater leeway. The interaction between the NSB and the police was chaotic. The borders between their so-called neutering beginning and late support were vague.

Sometimes, the NSB successfully asked the police for assistance for public activities. In Haarlem, the police often stood by or gently removed the public. In other cases, the police corrected and reprimanded NSB members. On many occasions, it was a combination of both. For example, in July 1940 the NSB had permission to march in groups of five through the streets of Haarlem. The NSB ignored this order and marched instead in groups of six. This resulted in a reprimand from the police, after which the NSB limited its groups to the permitted five. From the perspective of the National Socialists, the interaction between WA members and the police did not proceed smoothly enough. In August 1940, a policeman accidentally hit an NSB member with his saber. Afterwards, this incident was discussed between the local NSB leader and the police, and the NSB agreed that it was an accident. However, the NSB complained to the police whenever they were confronted with obstruction from the public. In Haarlem, the police assisted the NSB members in many cases. The relationship with the police force differed regionally. The above-mentioned examples were reported in Haarlem, where the police were more favorable to the NSB than in Hilversum, according to the HSSPF.

552 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, file 847, nachtrapport June 28/29th, 1940.
553 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 847, dagrapport July 4th, 1940.
554 The major source of unrest was actually elsewhere in the city, where a demonstration by young male supporters of the Dutch royals was violently suppressed by German soldiers; Haarlem gemeentepolitie, dagrapport, July 4th, 1940.
555 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, file 847, dagrapport ,August 15th, 1940.
556 Besides assisting NSB members, the police also helped people who were attacked by NSB members; Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 847, dagrapport, August 15th, 1940.
557 HSSPF, July 6th, 1940.
In the fall of 1940, NSB members became more impatient in public. They had hoped to be allowed to take over power, in the streets at least, but were controlled by the police and kept strictly under German supervision. By conquering the street, National Socialists hoped to be able to show the German rulers that they were the only worthy candidates for power-sharing in the Netherlands. The Germans did nothing to prevent these actions; they even encouraged them. According to Seyss Inquart, the prewar laws against the marching through the streets were unlawful. NSB members in different places expressed their impatience and frustration. In October 1940, the NSB in Bussum expressed its disappointment about lack of assistance from the police and the German occupation regime. After a policeman in Haarlem requested a group of marching NSB men not to sing near churches, he received a snarl. When a group of NSB members saw a man on a bicycle with an NU flag, they knocked him off his bike and beat him in the face. The flag and his NU badge were violently removed. And after a group of schoolboys threw a few snowballs at a group of NSB men, the latter reacted furiously and hit the boys with their belts.

In addition to participating in street fights, WA members marched through the cities to show their power. The first grand march of the WA was organized on November 9th, 1940, in Amsterdam. Thousands of WA members marched through the capital; they deliberately marched through a Jewish neighborhood. Mussert greeted the WA troops at Dam Square. Cameras filmed the occasion to use as footage for a propaganda movie. The WA reported about its own march and closely looked at anti-NSB actions during the parade. With self-confidence, they stated to all NSB members that all the “antis” should be confronted with WA actions. Marching around was an important way to express the Dutch National Socialist presence in the public sphere.

By the end of 1940, the WA increasingly acted violently in Jewish neighborhoods in Amsterdam. They had provoked and harassed the Jewish population by the placement of signs announcing “no Jews allowed” — often with German stamps — in bars, restaurants and theaters. The policy conformed to the guidelines issued by the German administration but

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558 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 222.
559 Meershoek, Dienaren van het gezag, 106-107.
560 NIOD, Afweerdienst, file 1279, October 22nd, 1940.
561 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 847, dagrapport, November 3rd, 1940.
562 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 848, dagrapport, January 20th, 1941.
564 NIOD, WA, file 1093, against radio station AVRO, 1940.
was supported and enforced by WA men. The German policy was to protect the image of the SS, an aim of Seyss-Inquart and Rauter. They knew that WA members were unpopular among the Dutch. Thus, the German authorities tolerated or even encouraged WA attacks on Jewish groups in the streets, bars and restaurants in the end of 1940 and beginning of 1941. 565

On October 31st of 1940, the occupation regime in The Hague issued guidelines to the police regarding their behavior towards the WA men. These rules stated that the Reichskommissariat approved the WA and therefore allowed the WA members to march without permission. Only in cases where they gathered with over hundred men did they need to ask permission. The WA could ask for police assistance, but the assistance should not be too overwhelming because that would create the image of policemen capturing the WA. WA members were prohibited from acting too independently without orders—something the WA men had too frequently done. The WA men were not allowed to carry weapons; however, they could not be arrested if they violated this rule. The WA members were protected in another way as well. If bystanders threw objects at the WA men or insulted them by calling them “traitors,” these people had to be arrested immediately by the police. Moreover, if WA members happened to respond independently to insults, the police were not allowed to intervene. And if no police were present, WA members could take measures against protesters themselves. Thus, the Nazi regime hoped, on the one hand, to control and, on the other, to appease local WA members. 566

These were the guidelines on paper, but what happened on the street? How the policemen reacted to the autonomous WA men depended on the location. Whenever citizens in Haarlem daubed NSB clubhouses or residences of NSB members with anti-NSB slogans, the police took care of the cleaning. 567 The police offered assistance when communists attacked NSB men. The police still did not permit the NSB total freedom to act, as the following incident reveals.

On a late Sunday afternoon, February 2nd 1941, a WA member left his house in civilian clothes. He heard people’s exclamations: “There stands another dirty fascist; we will

565 De Jong, Het Koninkrijk IV, 877-879.
566 Richtlijnen HSSPF, Den Haag, January 27th, 1941; Archief Leiden, Slats; Utrechts archive, toegangsnummer 10007-3, file 19821, November 2nd, 1940, instructions of inspecteur-generaal, and January 27th, 1941; Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 174.
567 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 848 and 850, February, April 1941.
chop him into pieces.”568 According to the testimonies of this WA member, a crowd of over 100 people was standing behind him and slowly surrounded him. His brother tried to get assistance. First, he went to other WA members and thereafter to the police. While his fellow WA members delivered the support he had asked for, the man was less positive about the activities of the police. According to this WA man, the police tried to arrest him several times and helped the menacing crowd instead of him. During the violent confrontation the man himself was hit on the head and a bystander was wounded as well. After the WA man was wounded, he grabbed his pistol and threatened to shoot. At that moment a police officer arrested the WA man because WA members were not authorized to carry weapons. The WA man was not punished; however, the incident came to naught.569 This incident shows the police, on the one hand, trying to control the WA and, on the other, failing to sanction the WA for illegal actions.

The same soft approach is evident from the police actions against NU-NSB confrontations. In June of 1941, NU members were banned from selling their newspapers. NSB members took advantage of this measure and occupied the NU places without permission. The police remarked on their behavior, and the NSB retreated. However, the NSB audaciously added the remark that the NSB simply needed shadowy places to sell their papers. The NSB apparently wanted to have the last word.570 The police in Utrecht also complained about independent actions of the WA. In reaction to this complaint, the WA leader Zondervan reprimanded his rank and file about their independent and disobedient behavior.571

In Amsterdam the violent actions of the WA got out of hand on February 11th, 1941. WA men marched through the streets of Amsterdam into the Jewish neighborhood. The local Jewish fighting group was prepared and reacted violently against the marching WA men. This fight ended with a fatally injured WA man, Hendrik Koot, who died a few days later. The situation escalated on February 19th, 1941. First, there was an incident in a Jewish ice cream shop called Koco. The Jewish owners of the place were tired of the constant

568 “Daar staat nog zoo’n vuile fascist, we zullen hem in stukken hakken”; NIOD, WA, February 2nd, 1941, Leiden.
569 NIOD, WA, February 2nd, 1941, Leiden.
570 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 850, June 23rd, 1941.
571 Letter of Zondervan, April 1941, Utrecht, RAL, Archief Slats. Sometimes there still were confrontations between the NSB and police, Utrechts Archief, archive 1007-3, file 19821, February 1941 and incidents of mistreatment reported by NSB members, February 1941.
attacks of the WA men. Therefore they decided to prepare a counterattack. They arranged some liquid acid in a bucket. Hence, when a group of uniformed men stepped into the shop the owners threw this bucket into the intruders’ faces. Unfortunately for the shop owners, these men were not WA men but German policemen. The Germans were not amused by this violent act and arrested a group of young Jewish men. Different groups of opponents showed their discontent with the arrests by staging a large strike in Amsterdam and in several surrounding places: the *Februaristaking* (February Strike). Historians still debate about the exact role of the communists in the organization of the 1941 *Februaristaking*.572

In the first year of the occupation, WA members openly expressed their support for the German military. While the NSB propaganda was evidently pro-German and pro-Hitler, NSB members showed their support also on the streets. Individual German soldiers returned the WA support. German officials supported the WA members when they faced troubles, for instance on February 17th 1941, when someone stabbed a WA man with a knife in front of the Central Station in Amsterdam. A German officer quickly brought a bandage to the wounded WA man.573 In bars, WA members sat next to German soldiers.574 WA members called NSDAP members “comrades.”575 Thus, it is not surprising that the WA celebrated the birthday of Hitler in April 1941.576 By this act, the WA expressed its support for Hitler and Nazi Germany openly.

Whereas the German occupation administration tolerated most of the violent street activities of the WA, they sometimes restrained the WA’s independent performances. The Germans preferred to set the agenda instead of following local radicalism. One can see this mechanism at work in the reactions to violent WA activities. In the coastal village Noordwijk aan Zee, WA members independently started the Aryanization of hotels. This act represented insubordination to orders of both the German occupation regime and the WA itself; the headquarters of the WA had explicitly ordered its members not to initiate

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573 NIOD, file 1083, WA, February 17th, 1941, Amsterdam.

574 WA members complained about the lack of support of the German *Wehrmacht* by the NU in February 1941; NIOD, WA, file 1085, February 8th, 1941.

575 NIOD, WA, file 1085, June 1941.

576 NIOD, WA, file 1094, April 1941.
independent acts against the Jews.\textsuperscript{577} And in the summer of 1941, the situation got out of hand in Zandvoort, another coastal village. This village had a high level of National Socialist inhabitants.\textsuperscript{578} Members of the WA and the NJS suspected the mayor of opposition and violently entered his residence; they smashed his windows and abused the mayor. The Germans disapproved of this headstrong action and arrested 21 WA men and NJS boys.\textsuperscript{579} Thus, the WA members were not allowed to act too independently when in conflict with German policy.

The first phase was a phase in which NSB members as well as their opponents battled on the streets. While the WA openly used violent methods and roamed through the streets, their opponents also showed their discontent publically and often, however, not as violently as the WA men.

\textit{Second phase, mid-’41 till early ’43: heyday of National Socialism}

Unrest in the Netherlands increased in the course of 1941.\textsuperscript{580} In 1941 and 1942 violent incidents frequently occurred, reported from both NSB and anti-NSB sides to the police.\textsuperscript{581} There are many reports of NSB members mistreating people on the streets and smashing windows.\textsuperscript{582} When a civilian in Haarlem openly showed his support for the royal family by placing an orange flower in front of his window, he received hostile reactions from NSB members. And when people in the same city dared to turn their backs to an NSB procession, they could be violently turned around again by NSB members.\textsuperscript{583}

Members of the WA were the most prominent, violent NSB men. From August 8\textsuperscript{th} 1941, all male NSB members between the ages of 18 and 40 were supposed to join the WA.

577 NIOD, WA, file 1085, May 1941, Noordwijk aan Zee.
578 Due to the fact that many villagers were not strongly attached to any of the Dutch socio-political and religious groups and therefore more likely to support a political outsider party like the NSB.
580 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd , 221-223.
581 Roest and Scheren, Oorlog in de stad. Amsterdam 1939-1941 (Amsterdam 1998); Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 625, June-November 1941; 626, January- August 1942.
582 Utrecht NSB members behaved provocatively in the first days of February; Utrecht Archief, 1007-3, file? 19821, February 1941.
583 Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 569, June 29/30th, 1941.; Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 626, March 29th, 1941. On other occasions, the NSB summoned bystanders to move along and not to watch the parade; Haarlem gemeentepolitie, 626, April 27th, 1941.
There were no official measures but locally some NSB leaders threatened NSB men who refused to join the WA with punishment. However, these efforts failed to lead to massive support among NSB members for the WA. They did not want to be personally active in the WA. Thus, members did not widely support the most violent organization of the NSB; they even evaded the compulsory membership.

In July 1941 4,000 NSB men were aligned with the WA. In 1941, in the small town of Leiden, 56 men were members of the WA, a number that grew to 118 in March 1942. And in March 1942, the WA in Amsterdam and its surrounding area consisted of 1670 members.

The reasons for joining the WA may have depended on local leaders. Comments in WA reports also suggest that membership rates were dependent on the local leaders: a better leader was supposed to produce a higher level of WA members. This corresponds to previous research on the NSB as an organization on the local level.

In the meantime, the WA increased its privileged position. WA men in villages near The Hague were deployed to protect NSB members spreading propaganda on the streets. When these active WA or NSB members encountered problems, the WA men attacked bystanders and opponents.

The WA was especially active in larger cities. In the beginning of 1941, the WA men in Utrecht, for example, did not shy away from provocative and violent actions. At a Saturday WA march through the city, WA men hit bystanders with truncheons. Because the violent actions were often not mentioned in newspapers, people knew about the violent behavior of WA members mainly through rumors or by witnessing the actions. Thus, people in the larger cities were more likely to be confronted with the violence than inhabitants of small villages. However, WA men were also – to a lesser extent – active in creating disturbances in villages and smaller cities. Occasionally, WA men went with special “bike-
tours” to the countryside. The aims of these tours were mainly to show everyone the presence of the WA in the public sphere.

The WA clashed with the political organization of the NSB, partly due to a more general competition over manpower and resources among different National Socialist organizations. The NSB leadership expressed its discontent with the openly violent actions of the WA. In a small Catholic place in ‘t Gooi, the NSB complained about the performances of the WA in May 1942 because, according to the NSB, it already was difficult to establish a decent image in this place. According to the NSB, the WA destroyed the image of the NSB here. Perhaps this was also the case in earlier years.

Despite its criticism of the violent activities of WA men, NSB members acted provocatively towards any possibly anti-NSB behavior too. Apparently, local members acted independently of orders from their leaders; we have seen this undisciplined behavior in the previous chapter as well. On the birthday of Queen Wilhelmina in 1941, NSB members preemptively decorated the NU house with anti-Semitic propaganda. There were also many smaller incidents, “pinpricks,” of NSB members responding hostilely towards people who expressed anti-NSB feelings.

In the course of 1941 and 1942 the situation for the anti-NSB groups changed. In July 1941, NU members were banned from selling their paper. And in December 1941, the German occupation administration forbade all political organizations except National Socialist ones; so the NSB became the only legal party organization. The latter ban was mainly a political decision, to utilize solely the NSB, and less a result of disorder in the streets. So, the NU was banned by the German administration. The resistance became more and more a

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592 PG, September 11th, 1941, WA-men of Arnhem to Utrecht; De Zwarte Soldaat, July 4th, 1941.
593 NSB, WA, file 1087, Utrecht, October 24th, 1941; Amsterdam, December 5th, 1941; NSB, WA, file 1089, Amsterdam, June 1st, 1942.
594 NH Archive, Laren, May 16th, 1942.
595 Heemstede gemeentepolitie, August 31st, 1941, 49.
596 On December 14th, 1942 – on the day of the celebration of the eleven-year existence of the NSB- an NSB member reported that a woman had insulted him because of the NSB flag decorating his house. The NSB man demanded an apology, which he received after mediation of the police; Heemstede gemeentepolitie, December 14th, 1942, 66. In Utrecht, a 13-year-old boy whistled an anti-NSB song, whereupon a uniformed NSB member pushed him off his bicycle; Utrecht Archief, 1007-3, file 1982, February 1941. And a 23-year-old teacher was thrown into the canal when he whistled an anti-NSB song. Afterwards, the NSB complained to the police office about being insulted; Utrecht Archief, 1007-3, file 1982, February 1941.
597 Ten Have, De Nederlandse Unie; Heemstede gemeentepolitie, July 3rd, 1941, 47.
598 Romijn, Burgemeesters in Oorlogstijd.
collection of various underground groups, who had to decide to use violent or nonviolent means of resistance.

Thus, during this period of National Socialist dominance, opponents of National Socialism expressed their feelings less openly than in the period before. While they had smashed windows of ten to twenty NSB houses every week in early 1941, their expressions of discontent now remained indoors. When the NSB celebrated its eleven-year jubilee, the opponents stayed quiet.\(^\text{599}\) Only a few opponents openly opposed the NSB.

The street was one of the main theatres of discontent in the first year of the German occupation. After mid-1941, some people still used this theatre to express their opinions. Opponents of the NSB and Nazi Germany expressed their discontent by showing their support for the royal family. The celebration of the birthday of Queen Wilhelmina, on August 31\(^\text{600}\), brought outbursts of discontent throughout the country. The two following incidents are described in internal WA reports. An incident in Rijnsburg, a village near the city of Leiden, exemplifies the development of pro-monarchy manifestations leading to a violent response from WA members. This orthodox Protestant village celebrated the birthday of the Queen. The villagers decorated a tree in the village center with the royal color orange. In addition, almost all the residents decorated their houses with orange flowers and in many cases with pictures of the Queen as well. These actions provoked conflicts with the local National Socialists. Members of the WA informed the German political police, the Sicherheitsdienst (SD). The WA members reacted independently as well. Members from neighboring towns gathered in Rijnsburg. In the evening, the WA members tore down all the orange decorations. They performed these actions during the night when villagers of Rijnsburg were not allowed to be on the streets. Afterwards, the SD arrested approximately 30 villagers, who had demonstrated support for the Queen, to set an example. WA men assisted the SD men in the proceedings. In this case the expressions of discontent towards the National Socialists were not directly aimed at NSB members or Germans, and the opponents of the occupation did not use any violence. They peacefully expressed their feelings of support for the royal family. However, the WA and the SD reacted harshly.\(^\text{601}\)

\(^{599}\) Damsma and Schumacher, ‘De strijd om de straat’.  
\(^{600}\) Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 275.  
\(^{601}\) NA, CABR, file 70873; NIOD, WA, file 1086, September 1st, 1941; De Jong, Het Koninkrijk V, 163.
During another incident the WA men reacted boldly when two WA men attacked a man who had made an unwelcome remark. One WA man slapped him in the face and added: “we have nothing to do with the police, we are the bosses. When I come back later and you still have those mugs, I will slap all your teeth out of your mouth.”602 Another NSB-member reacted independently and violently to an insult by passing bystanders. He hit the man who had insulted him in the face and complained afterwards that the police were of no use at all. He declared that it was useless to report insults to the police because they were ignorant and would not believe NSB members.603 Again, the action of the opponent was rather innocent, an unwelcome remark, but the reaction of the WA men pretty harsh.

Bars were another theatre of discontent. In the town of Hilversum, a confrontation unfolded in a local pub. Groups of four or five WA members patrolled through the city, in order to prevent people from showing their allegiance to the Dutch royal family. The WA members visited houses with orange floral decorations and urged them – successfully – to remove these flowers. Afterwards, in the evening, the WA members visited a local pub. The WA members installed themselves at the bar. One WA member, Haverkate, loudly ordered many beers and added that the beers should come fast because the WA had no time to wait. The bar owner asked them to quiet down, provoking a brusque reaction from Haverkate. People in the bar responded to this aggressive exclamation. Haverkate was not amused by the attention and warned everyone that “he did not want to be stared at.” He urged the bar owner to leave and added to the staring public: “As long as you are not National Socialists, you are all apes.” The bar owner and his helper asked the WA members to depart. Meanwhile, other patrons of the bar started throwing stuff at the WA men. One WA member, Van der Zee, threw a glass at some other patrons. It was the beginning of a fight where glasses flew through the bar. In the end, the police had to bring the quarrel to an end. The WA men marched out of the bar. The WA organization disapproved of the impudent and rough manners of the WA men. Therefore, the WA suspended Haverkate and Van der Zee for three weeks.604

602 “Met de politie hebben wij niets te maken, wij zijn de baas, als ik straks terugkom en jullie hebben nog van die tronies dan zal ik je al je tanden uit je mond slaan”; Haarlem gemeentepolitie, dagrapport, November 3rd, 1940.
603 NIOD, afweerdienst 1279, October 1940.
604 NIOD, WA, file 1086, Hilversum, September 12th, 1941.
In 1942 the activities of the WA in the public sphere slowed down. WA members went to other (German) National Socialist institutions and to the front. During that period the NSB experienced success on the national and local levels in the Netherlands. December 1941, when Mussert was appointed head of the Dutch National Socialist State, marked the beginning of the heyday of National Socialism and its influence on the local level. However, WA men did not disappear from the streets. WA members still patrolled and marched through the cities and initiated activities. The Archbishop of Haarlem refused to bury an NSB woman in a Catholic cemetery. In reaction, WA members cut a hole in the cemetery fence and organized the funeral themselves in cooperation with other Dutch and German National Socialist organizations. Afterwards, the WA marched triumphantly through a nearby village. Shortly afterward, opponents desecrated the grave with orange carrots, the color of the royal family.

The heyday of National Socialism was also the starting point of increasing collaboration of individual NSB members with the Nazi exclusivist policies. In addition to fomenting local riots, individual NSB members participated in a form of violence with more serious consequences: the extermination of internal and external “enemies.” Individual members were increasingly recruited for violent tasks by German organizations from 1941 onwards. The Germans were unable to secure order and deport all the Dutch Jews by themselves; they lacked the personnel and knowledge of Dutch language and society. In this task the Dutch National Socialists brought their exclusivist ideology into practice.

NSB members were recruited for the Dutch police forces. In the first year of the occupation, the National Socialists formed a minority within the Dutch police. With German pressure, from 1941 onwards more and more National Socialists were appointed to the Dutch police force. The police force became increasingly nazified, and the National Socialists filled positions at the highest levels of command.

NSB members were also recruited for organizations that organized the extermination of the Jews. The German authorities in The Hague formulated a series of increasingly significant directives.

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605 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 322, 350-351.
606 NIOD, WA, file 1095, Amsterdam 1942.
608 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 430. In July 1942, an NSB police chief was appointed in Leiden. He reorganized the police in a hierarchic manner; Archief Leiden, Inventaris van het politie-archief, xxiii.
restrictive anti-Jewish regulations. The NSB leadership supported these measures openly.\footnote{Jacques Presser, Ondergang. De vervolging en verdelging van het Nederlandsse Jodendom. 1940-1945I (Den Haag 1965) 148-150, 213, 220, 236-239; De Daad, June 12th, 1942; Het Werken Volk, May 13th, 1942.} In addition to offering ideological support in its party propaganda, the NSB cooperated in implementing the measures. NSB members were overrepresented in the confiscation of Jewish businesses. In August 1941, when the occupier mandated that all Dutch Jews bring their money to the pseudo- “bank” Lippmann, Rosenthal & Co (Liro), this bank was soon filled with NSB employees. Later on, NSB members who had fought on the Eastern Front easily obtained a job at the Liro.\footnote{Damsma and Schumacher, Hier woont een NSB’er, 89-100.} In the spring of 1942 the German authorities summoned all Jews to report all their valuables. The Germans established a special organization: the Hausraterfassungsstelle. Once more, NSB members were overrepresented in this organization.

The mass deportation of Jews started in 1942. The German occupation regime had delegated this operation to Dutch institutions. One of the main institutions was the Gewestelijke Arbeidsbureau (Regional Employment Department, GAB) in Amsterdam. Pressured by the Germans, the GAB recruited many NSB members to its staff. In the first months of 1942, one out of eight employees was an NSB member, and this ratio doubled within two years. Their job of labor mediation was heavily politicized.\footnote{A.J.H. Bauer, De openbare arbeidsbemiddeling gedurende den bezettingstijd (1940-1945) (Amsterdam 1948) 58, 104-105; Presser, OndergangI, 198-199.} One of their duties was to refer Jews to doctors for examinations, and NSB doctors were recruited for this task. They soon became known for approving the transport of all Jews to the “work” camps in the East.

The NSB in Amsterdam –the city in Holland with the largest Jewish community – favorably commented on the deportations in its local newspaper:

“The Jewish question is gradually but radically resolved by the German government, by removing the Jews from our homeland. [...] The movement [NSB] agrees with this solution in principle.”\footnote{De Daad, September 1942.}

In Amsterdam, the first police institution to round up the Jews was the police battalion of officer Tulp, a specialized pro-National Socialist division. An NSB flag hung from its
building. About five percent of the regular police force consisted of NSB members. Together with the police, the Tulp battalion rounded up Jewish people from their homes. The members of this battalion were the most active in the forced evacuation, rounding up Jewish people five nights a week. Thus, individual NSB members actively contributed to the persecution of the Jews.

Third phase from 1943 onwards: war

On January 13th, 1943, Nazi Germany declared “total war.” As Romijn argues: Nazification became subordinate to the German warfare. The tasks of the WA narrowed as the active members were summoned to the Waffen-SS. In February 1943, at the funeral of the murdered pro-NSB general Seyffardt, the WA was disappointed. The National Socialist “auxiliary police”—not the WA—were given the job of protecting high NSB officials. In WA reports officials complained about the activities of WA men for the German Wehrmacht. Instead of marching along with the NSB, the men worked for the Wehrmacht, which decreased their time spent at WA meetings, loosened the ties with the WA and strengthened those with the Wehrmacht.

At that time, the WA was not as large as the NSB leadership would have wished. In 1943, 8,000 men were part of the WA nationally, two thousand short of Mussert’s goal of 10,000. At the time, 767 WA men resided in Amsterdam and 1750 in Utrecht. These numbers suggest that a minority of the NSB men at that moment belonged to the WA. This low number is also due to the fact that many NSB members could claim exemption from the WA. All NSB officials, for example, were exempted from WA duty. Because of the high

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613 Meershoek, Dienaren van het gezag, 151-155.
615 Romijn, Burgemeesters in oorlogstijd, 397, 465.
616 Many of whom also belonged to the WA, but under the supervision of Rauter; NIOD, WA, file 1091, March 13th, 1943.
617 NIOD, WA, file 1096, Amsterdam, January 12th, 1943; Utrecht, January 29th, 1943.
618 De Jong, Het Koninkrijk IV, 585.
619 Vos, Ledenverloop, 35, 64. In Leiden, approximately 162 (out of 1222) NSB members were WA members in July 1944. At the same time, in Amsterdam the WA decreased to 522 (out of 12790 NSB members); NIOD, file 123, 1957; file 123, 1941, file 123, 1948.
number of NSB officials, this exemption caused a decrease of the WA potential. Besides, as mentioned before, the WA had expelled many members who were not active enough.

Finally, some of the WA men enlisted in the German army.

The German army preyed on the Dutch National Socialists to enlarge its troops. The German authorities wished to recruit NSB members for military service on the Eastern Front. Once more, Mussert hoped to increase his party’s influence by helping the Germans achieve their goal. A separate army department was founded: the Vrijwilligerslegioen Nederland (Dutch Volunteer Legion). But when the Dutch volunteers arrived in Germany, they were absorbed into the Waffen-SS structure and the concept of a separate Dutch division was abandoned by the SS leadership. In total, approximately 25,000 volunteers were dispatched to the Eastern Front, of whom 10,000 were NSB members; thus one out of ten NSB members fought in the Waffen SS.  

Fighting on the front was a tough war experience for the volunteers, thousands of whom died.  

Footage by NSB- and SS war correspondents was published in the national NSB newspaper Vova to inspire NSB members to pledge more personal involvement in the overall war effort. Reading about NSB members fighting for the National Socialist New Order on the front against Bolshevism, NSB members at home would (the organization hoped) consider at least selling some papers in the street. Violence, military violence in this case, a central element of the NSB organization, thus became both a real experience and a propaganda tool.

The German authorities recruited not only for the war against external enemies, but also for the fight against internal enemies. In February 1943, the Germans decided to deploy another group of willing collaborators. Rauter had established the Vrijwillige Hulppolitie (Volunteer Auxiliary Police), hoping in this way to bring the WA men under his supervision instead of that of the NSB. Only applications from NSB members were taken seriously. For this reason, the institution was filled with NSB members. In Amsterdam, at least 126 WA members worked in this police corps. Starting in February 1943, they rounded up 1,000

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622 Meershoek, Dienaren van het gezag, 287; Croes and Tammes, ‘Gif laten wij niet voortbestaan’, 263, 265, 269, 273.
Jews every week, plundering the Jews’ possessions in the process. The policemen often mistreated the Jews they arrested. In order to control this behavior, Germans supervised the Dutch collaborators from April onwards, until the dissolution of the police force in June 1943, when the mass deportations were over.\footnote{Damsma and Schumacher, \textit{Hier woont een NSB'er}.}

In many capacities NSB members acted as accomplices to the Germans: in the deportations and robbery; in the administration; in the pseudo-bank Liro; and in the raids. And in all these organizations, they looted valuable articles for their own use.\footnote{Gerard Aalders, \textit{Roof. De Ontvreemding van joods bezit tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog} (Den Haag 1999) 136-137; Presser, \textit{Ondergang}, II 210; De Duivell, \textit{De Duivell}, January 16th, 1942. On the exploitative nature of the Nazi empire; De Haan, ‘Imperialism, Colonialism and Genocide’, 315.} Not that the German authorities approved of this behavior, on the contrary. In the sample of NSB members, I came across several examples of NSB members who were punished for their behavior and were imprisoned or sent to camps. One female NSB member was imprisoned because she insulted a German officer. One of these punished members stole, while in other cases the infraction is not evident.\footnote{CABR files 86395, 64311, 4825, 20109, 18330; Clasina Jacoba Schnabel.}

The Dutch and German National Socialists encountered growing opposition. From 1943 onwards, violent resistance groups became increasingly active. From that moment on, the National Socialists had to fear violent actions aimed at themselves. Violent resistance groups killed at least 33 NSB members (that we know of).\footnote{NIOD, WA, file 1088, January 29th, 1943.} For instance, on January 29, 1943, the NSB mayor of Haarlem was attacked. Opponents had tried to kill him with a hand grenade; however, the attempt was unsuccessful.\footnote{Heemstede gemeentepolitie, January 29th, 1943, 73.} Sometimes, the actions of NSB members provoked violent responses. On the same day as the attack on the Haarlem NSB mayor, a WA march through the center of Amsterdam led, in addition to the usual turning of bystanders, to a shot taken at the WA men. A WA man and a German \textit{Waffen-SS} man aggressively arrested the attacker and brought him to the police office.\footnote{In January 1944, many possessions of NSB members were destroyed; NA, January 1944.}

The attacks on NSB members and their properties continued and intensified in 1944.\footnote{In January 1944, many possessions of NSB members were destroyed; NA, January 1944.} Whereas violent attacks on NSB members were rare in the first years of the occupation, monthly one or two NSB members were attacked in the Netherlands in 1943.
1944 the frequency grew to one or two attacks per week.\textsuperscript{630} Thus, violence became a regularly used method of resistance to the Nazi occupation and National Socialist violence, and a sort of internal war developed. In this third phase, both the resistance and the NSB radicalized, using violence against each other.

**Landwacht**

From 1943 onwards, the NSB members had reason to fear attacks on their persons as well as to worry about the situation on the military front. In 1944, D-Day – the Allied invasion in Normandy – discouraged many members. The attack on Adolf Hitler in July 1944 hurt NSB morale as well.\textsuperscript{631} Under the circumstances, the NSB leadership had to think about how to react to these violent resistance actions.

NSB’s leader Anton Mussert increasingly aimed at having his own strong arm: an NSB police force. This long-standing desire was reinforced by the attacks of resistance fighters on prominent NSB members in 1943. On March 15, 1943, Mussert finally established the *Landwacht*.\textsuperscript{632} One of the reasons was the exodus of the WA to the Eastern Front. However, this first *Landwacht* division had a short existence. When every man with the capacity to fight was called up to the war, these *Landwacht* members were eventually sent to the German front. Therefore, the name of the former *Landwacht* was changed into *Landstorm*: thus the ones who fought at the front were no longer *Landwacht* members, but *Landstorm* members. In the Netherlands, a new *Landwacht* was established in November 1943. This organization had to serve its original aims of an internal police force, and new members were recruited.\textsuperscript{633}

In the same year, the NSB had spread a pamphlet with the message that this new *Landwacht* was established for “defense against internal and external enemies.”\textsuperscript{634} According to a police officer, the *Landwacht* had to “protect the NSB and law-abiding people in the

\textsuperscript{630} Meershoek, ‘Onder nationaalsocialistisch bewind’; Jack Kooistra and Albert Overhoek, *Recht op wraak. Liquidaties in Nederland 1940-1945* (Leeuwarden 2009). On June 8th 1944, an NSB confectioner was attacked and died later from his injuries; Heemstede gemeentepolitie, June 8th-16th, 1944, 99; HSSPF, August 1944.

\textsuperscript{631} HSSPF, August 1944.

\textsuperscript{632} National Archives NA, April 4th, 1944.

\textsuperscript{633} National Archives NA, April 4th, 1944.

\textsuperscript{634} Politiearchief Haarlem, file 4521, 1943.
Netherlands, to combat political assassins and saboteurs.” The members of the Landwacht were allowed to ask people to identify themselves, arrest people, search homes and carry and use weapons.635 Armed with these privileges, members of the Landwacht arrested people and confiscated goods.636 In order to fulfill their duties, the Landwacht borrowed materiel from the German Wehrmacht soldiers.637

Mussert entitled all male NSB members to sign up for the Landwacht.638 The men who worked at the Voluntary Police Corps (not more than 1000 National Socialist police men) were integrated into the Landwacht.639 In total 1200 served officially in the Landwacht and 9000 volunteered.640

The Landwacht members were quite unpopular among the general public. Often people preferred German soldiers to Landwacht members.641 People who were confronted with Landwacht members expressed their feelings of discontent within limits. A letter from a bar owner in Haarlem described in detail a visit of the Landwacht. In June 1944, the bar owner received a visit from eight Landwacht members, who confiscated liquor, tobacco and food. The Landwacht members came in the middle of the night and woke up his little baby.642 In the summer of 1944 some people still dared to defy orders from the Landwacht. A man in Haarlem refused to identify himself as commanded by a Landwacht member. However, in the presence of a superior officer of the Landwacht the man finally ceased his opposition.643 These examples demonstrate the brutality and greed of Landwacht members and the limited acts of opposition to the Landwacht in Haarlem. It is likely that Landwacht members acted similarly in other places as well.

635 “Landwacht is ter beveiliging van de NSB en ordelevende bevolking in Nld, ter bestrijding van politieke moordenaars en saboteurs, voedselvoorziening, mag mensen vragen om te identificeren, arresteren, doorzoeken woningen, wapengebruik”; letter police commander in Rotterdam, April 5th, 1944; Politiearchief Haarlem, file 4522., Members of the Landwacht used gunfire; Politiearchief Haarlem, file 4522, July-August 1944.
636 Politiearchief Haarlem, file 4522, July-August 1944.
637 Politiearchief Haarlem, file 4522, April 19th, 1944.
638 March 17th, 1943, Gemeentepolitie Heemstede, 77.
639 However, policemen were discouraged from joining the Landwacht; Heemstede gemeentepolitie 1943, April 15th, 78.
640 De Jong, Het Koninkrijk Xa, 56.
641 National Archives NA, July 27th, 1944; Van der Boom, We leven nog. According to De Jong the masses were irritated by the Landstorm, which had a military task (and were often mistaken as German soldiers). However, the Landwacht, which had a police task, was perceived rather differently; De Jong, Het Koninkrijk VII, file 1248-1259.
642 Politiearchief Haarlem, file 4522, June 22th, 1944.
643 Politiearchief Haarlem, file 4522, July-August 1944, June 23rd, 1944.
The Landwacht members faced violent opposition as well. Approximately 70 Landwacht members were killed.\textsuperscript{644}

In September 1944 Nazi Germany experienced an alleged defeat. After that, the warrants of the Landwacht members increased because all NSB men were ordered to align themselves with the Landwacht. The “self-protecting” force fought against “political criminals and saboteurs” with greater resources, although they still were not allowed to act independently and had to hand over their prisoners to the police within 24 hours. And they were allowed to enter houses only with police permission. They could shoot at a suspect but only when he was trying to escape or when he pointed his gun at the Landwacht member.\textsuperscript{645} This final phase between the Germans’ imagined defeat and their real defeat in May 1945 will be discussed in chapter 5.

Phases of violence

Male NSB members participated in different forms and levels of violence. Initially, the WA was the main, active violent organization. Immediately after the German Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, they put on their uniforms, came together and marched through the streets.

What becomes clear from the WA provocations is twofold: first, the interconnection of the WA with the German occupation regime. After initial German restraint, the WA assisted German institutions with their struggle against Dutch resistance from early 1941 onwards. Second, the WA acted brutally in the public sphere. They did not refrain from using violence and thereby provoked Dutch civilians. Third, this study also reveals something about the actions and decisions of the police in different places: the frictions, indecisions and sometimes even randomness of decisions of the police to act during confrontations with the NSB.

In the first year of the occupation the WA men were, especially in cities, visible on the streets. During their marches the WA men often harassed Jews, bystanders and political opponents. In the counterattacks of NSB opponents, the main battleground was the street, where NSB papers and NU papers were sold. Both sides provoked each other. With Jews and bystanders a different pattern occurred. Often a minor insulting look or comment could

\begin{footnotes}
\item[644] Kooistra and Oosthoek, Recht op wraak, 75.
\item[645] Archief Leiden, Slats, Sept 18th, 1944, HSSPF.
\end{footnotes}
lead to an aggressive reaction. The attacks on Jews did not need any triggering; the majority of these actions were initiated by WA members on their own impulse. The first arrests of Jews led to an upheaval of discontent by communists and other opponents of National Socialism: the February Strike. From that moment onwards, the Germans reacted harshly against any sign of opposition. The first phase of street battles ended.

The decrease of street battles was also due to internal factors within the WA. Towards the end of 1941, the WA lost some of its influence and visibility. Due to several factors the level of WA activities decreased. When the Germans invaded the Soviet Union, the WA men were recruited to fight on the Eastern Front. The German occupation regime needed reliable manpower in the Netherlands as well. WA members were an attractive “nursery” for the police. In addition to the latter, the WA had to compete with other NSB organizations for personnel and resources. Due to these changes, the violence shifted to other organizations, including the police. National Socialists were increasingly active in the police force. A high percentage of the police who participated in the raids on Jews were National Socialists; almost all participants of the special police squad dedicated to find hiding Jews were NSB members.

While the NSB organization supported the deportations in their anti-Semitic propaganda, individual NSB members participated in a wide range of activities, including the robbery and deportation of the Dutch Jews. Individual NSB members became active in a whole range of institutions founded by the German occupation regime. The most numerous and active collaborators were members of the NSB.

Violence became even more prominent from 1943 onwards. Violence against and by National Socialists intensified. Because other methods of resistance and political activities were forbidden, violence became an increasingly attractive method of showing one’s dislike of the political situation. People are more likely to support violence if other instruments of change are ineffective. And this was in fact the situation faced by many of the opponents of National Socialism. Because desperate circumstances call for desperate measures, violence

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became an increasingly attractive method during the German occupation.\textsuperscript{649} Hence, the minor acts of rebellion and resistance developed into more radical methods aimed at higher-ranking members of the NSB and of the occupation regime. The German authorities from their side responded violently to these attacks.

Dutch National Socialist violence was further increased with the establishment of the internal NSB police force, the \textit{Landwacht}. The remaining WA men, as well as other male NSB members were recruited for this organization. The \textit{Landwacht} became the most visible Dutch National Socialist organization during the occupation. It was the most hated one as well.\textsuperscript{650} NSB members believed that their time had finally come. However, they were confronted with negative reactions from the Dutch population and were even not always appreciated by the German authorities.


\textsuperscript{650} Rosenhaft, \textit{Beating the Fascists}; Swett, \textit{Neighbors and Enemies}; Thomas Kühne, \textit{Kameradschaft}.  

140