

A Difficult Relationship of Unequal Relatives: The Dutch NSB and Nazi Germany, 1933–1940

Until its recent reappearance in the guise of neo-fascism, European fascism had appeared to many as a transitory political phenomenon that was limited to a brief, albeit fateful, appearance on the modern historical scene. This conclusion contrasted strikingly with the attitude of fascism's contemporaries in the 1920s and 1930s. For them — whether militants, sympathizers, or opponents — fascism was a serious challenge to liberal democracy and Marxist socialism. The fascists themselves, of course, fully endorsed the idea that they represented an international, revolutionary vanguard, which would save European civilization from the forces of decadent bourgeois liberalism and the hordes of Marxist Bolshevism.¹

As self-styled components of an international and revolutionary phenomenon, individual fascist movements deliberately attempted to use the experiences of their 'sister' parties to advance their own cause. This was particularly true if the neighbouring movement had already succeeded in establishing a national fascist regime. The following analysis of the relations between the Dutch *Nationaal Socialistische Beweging* (NSB) and the German Nazis in the 1930s is a case study that demonstrates vividly the illusionary promises and inherent contradictions of fascist internationalism.

From its beginnings the NSB looked upon itself as an integral part of the coming fascist revolution in Europe. Although like all fascist movements, the NSB was fiercely nationalistic, the party presented no original ideology of its own; all of its programme was adapted, or better copied, from the Italian fascists and the German Nazis. Since the party wanted to win a mass following in order to destroy the specifically Dutch form of democratic

pluralism, the political system of *verzuiling*² it was understandable that the NSB looked with interest and envy upon the two fascist movements which had succeeded in destroying democracy and making the transition from movement phase to power phase. The Dutch fascists were convinced the *Kampfzeit* experiences of the German and Italian fascists embodied important lessons for movements still struggling to attain a mass following. Equally significant, the policies of Mussolini's and Hitler's regimes provided the NSB with concrete models of functioning 'national socialist' societies, which, the party's leaders hoped, would generate additional support for the fascists in Holland.

In some important ways the NSB was initially a rather atypical fascist organization. The party was, for example, far less *Führer*-oriented than the German Nazis. The group's founder and national chairman, Adriaan Anton Mussert, bore the title *leider*, but his stature as a charismatic *Führer* was decidedly limited. Indeed, the NSB did not officially adopt the *Führerprinzip* as its organizational principle until 1936.³

It should be noted that in contrast to later scholars, the Dutch fascists saw no incompatibilities let alone contradictions between the German and Italian versions of fascism. The NSB used fascism and national socialism interchangeably. As far as the party was concerned, in Holland the system of *verzuiling* needed to be swept away in order to create a true Dutch *Volksgemeinschaft*. Nevertheless, it is true that the NSB's founders, who included, in addition to Mussert, his long-time associate and virtual co-founder of the movement, C. van Geelkerken, and the NSB's organizational and propaganda chief, F.E. Farwerck, leaned toward the Italian rather than the German version of fascism. Neither the leaders nor most of the members seemed to have shown much interest in the Nazis' racial doctrines, and Mussert had not even read Hitler's *Mein Kampf* when he founded the party in 1930. Moreover, like the Italian fascists, the NSB did not initially exclude Jews from its membership ranks.⁴

However, there was also what for want of a better term might be called a *völkische* wing of the NSB, although until the middle of the decade it remained a distinct minority among the movement's members and leaders. The *völkische* group emphasized *Germanentümmelei* and antisemitism, policies the group's adherents saw increasingly implemented in Nazi Germany. It should also be noted that the line between the *völkische* and the Italianate

wing was not rigidly drawn. Farwerck, who shared Mussert's lack of antisemitic feelings, was also a *Germanentümmler*, encouraging the NSB to use the old Dutch names for the months of the year instead of the Latinate ones.⁵

The *völkische* wing's influence increased significantly as the NSB failed to gain a mass following in Holland. The party reached the high point of its popularity in the provincial elections of 1935, obtaining 7 per cent of the national vote and becoming the fifth largest party in the country, a significant achievement in a political landscape that was dominated by a multiplicity of parties. Mussert was convinced that the NSB's relative success in the *Provinciale Staten* elections represented his movement's 'September, 1930': like the Nazis, the NSB was now on its way to becoming the largest political group in Holland. But instead of the 10 per cent to 12 per cent of the popular vote which Mussert had expected in the May 1937 national elections, his movement's share of the vote fell dramatically to 4 per cent.⁶

Frustrated by his inability to break into the intact *zuilen* of Dutch political life, Mussert moved closer to the *völkische* group. In November, 1936 he welcomed into the NSB's top ranks Martin Marinus Rost van Tonningen, the man who quickly became the most articulate spokesman for the NSB's *völkische* wing. Rost came to fascism through his admiration of 'Austro-Nazism', the virulently racist and antisemitic variety of political extremism that had also been Adolf Hitler's political seedbed. Once inside the NSB, Rost, who always put loyalty to Hitler ahead of loyalty to Mussert, and who prided himself on his good relations with high-ranking German Nazi leaders, worked hard to align the NSB completely alongside the German Nazis. Privately Mussert later regretted taking the ruthless and fanatic infighter into the inner circles of the movement, and Rost was never fully accepted by the NSB's old guard, but for reasons which will become clear in a moment, publicly the *leider* did not denounce either Rost or his vision of Dutch fascism.⁷

The two wings differed not only on ideological priorities, but also on the movement's campaign tactics. Mussert and the old guard preferred what they regarded as the high road — after all, *fatsoenlijk* (decent) was the *leider's* favourite adjective — while Rost and the *völkische* wing insisted that the NSB needed to adopt the hard-hitting, in-your-face, big lie, mudslinging political campaign style made infamous in the Weimar Republic by

Joseph Goebbels and his newspaper *Der Angriff*. In his own paper, the *Nationale Dagblad*, Rost promptly put into practice what he preached for the entire movement.⁸

The NSB's declining political fortunes and the growing influence of Rost and his allies led to an overall decline in the party's membership and the resignation of several prominent leaders. Rumours in the German press that Mussert had lost control of his party turned out to be false,⁹ but there was no doubt that Mussert's willingness to follow Rost and the *völkische* wing increasingly identified his movement with the central ideas of German Nazism. Like Rost, the old guard and especially Mussert himself became convinced that the NSB's failure to achieve the expected breakthrough in Holland was the result of a conspiracy by the NSB's political enemies: Marxists, Jews, and Catholics. Since the Nazis had faced the same phalanx of opponents and overcome it, the NSB would follow in the NSDAP's footsteps.

That decision in turn confirmed the attacks of the party's political opponents. In the last years of the decade the NSB increasingly became an ideological and organizational copy of the German Nazis, a development that marginalized the party even further in Holland. In the final analysis a decision that the NSB thought would benefit its political fortunes actually became a major factor in its political downfall.¹⁰

Despite its ever closer alignment with the Third Reich, the NSB always rejected accusations that it acted as a Dutch tail wagged by the German dog. As 'each decent opponent' knew, wrote the party's newspaper, the NSB represented 'Dutch, swastika-free [*hakenkruis-vrije*] national socialism', which had no organizational or financial ties to the German Nazis.¹¹ That was true only for the financial aspects. On the German side, ignoring a directive by Rudolf Hess in his capacity as deputy *Führer* for party operations prohibiting all Nazi party agencies from maintaining any ties to 'related movements' (*verwandte Bewegungen*) in foreign countries, a plethora of Nazi party and government offices ranging from Alfred Rosenberg's Foreign Policy Office to Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry maintained contacts with members and leaders of fascist organizations in Germany's neighbouring countries, including the NSB. The NSB, for its part, acknowledged privately in August 1936 that 'recently there has been closer cooperation between [the NSB] and the NSDAP'.¹²

An important reason for the NSB's delight at the Nazis' cooperative attitude was that for some time the NSB and the NSDAP were a rather one-sided admiration society. While Mussert 'used words of unstinting praise for the accomplishments of the Third Reich',¹³ the NSB did not have a particularly good image in the eyes of most German officials.¹⁴ It was precisely for this reason that the NSB's leaders were anxious to establish contact with leading Nazis after Hitler's movement came to power. An early point man was the NSB's leader in the Southern Dutch province of Limburg, Count M.V.E.H.J.M. de Marchant et d'Ansembourg. The Dutch nobleman not only had close family ties among the German landed aristocracy, but until 1935 he maintained dual German and Dutch citizenship. In addition, he had fought in World War I on the German side, which in the Nazis' eyes made him a member of the 'front generation'. He used his frequent travels in Germany to explain the NSB's position and significance to the leaders and sympathizers of the Third Reich.¹⁵

From the *leider's* perspective, Rost's many contacts with German officials even before he joined the NSB were a decided asset. In the early 1930s, while working for the League of Nations in Vienna, Rost established close ties with a number of Austrian Nazis. After the Nazis came to power in Germany, Rost worked assiduously to cultivate contacts among them. In fact, before he joined the NSB in August 1936, Rost's relations with Nazi figures were far more numerous and intense than his connections with the fascist scene in Holland. True to his *völkische* convictions, Rost was particularly anxious to receive the blessings of Heinrich Himmler and the SS. In this endeavour, he certainly succeeded: For Himmler Rost was 'his oldest confidant in the Netherlands'.¹⁶

Ironically, the man with the least effective contacts with the new German rulers was the NSB's *leider* himself. Mussert was anxious to remedy this situation, and he used both d'Ansembourg and Rost to pave the way. Still, it was not until 1936 that he was able to realize his ambition to be received by the top Nazi leaders. Meeting Hitler as well as a number of other Nazi dignitaries, including Ribbentrop, Goebbels, and Göring, for Mussert the visits to Berlin in November 1936 and April 1939 were highpoints of his political career. The NSB's *leider* came back as a believer who had seen the future, and it worked.

Unfortunately for Mussert, the Germans were still not very impressed with him. They took little public note of the visits, and Mussert was unable to shake his image as an unprepossessing leader.¹⁷

The NSB and the German Nazis never did become a mutual admiration society; the awe was always one-sided. What, precisely, did the Mussert movement admire in the Nazi record? The party press formulated the answer in simplistic and global terms. 'What Hitler did for all Germans we want to do for our people.'¹⁸ Concretely, this meant applying the lessons of the NSDAP's *Kampfzeit* to the NSB's own campaign to establish itself as a formidable force in Dutch politics, and, after the Nazi *Machtergreifung*, using the Nazis' policies to show the Dutch voters the benefits of a fascist regime.

As a young fascist organization struggling for recognition, the NSB was especially interested in developing its own version of the fascist political style. Scholars continue to argue over the typological significance of a specifically fascist style of political campaigning, but there is no doubt that the fascists themselves saw their display of uniforms, flags, insignias, and stern-faced guards at rallies as an essential part of their road to political success. As far as the NSB was concerned, the German Nazis were masters of this; they had developed a fascist style model that could and should be copied and applied to the NSB's campaigns in Holland.¹⁹

Everything in the NSB from uniforms to the organization looked at first glance like an uncomfortable copy of the Nazis. To an outside observer there was no difference between the style of an NSB rally and that of an NSDAP gathering, except that the Nazis were better at para-military politics than the peaceable Dutch. And the NSB's stylistic aping was not limited to the outward trappings of Nazi rallies. NSB officials also sent a steady stream of requests to Nazi agencies asking them to send propaganda material which could be translated into Dutch and used as part of the NSB's campaign literature.²⁰

It is not surprising that the German sister party's highly successful *Kampfzeit* style of politics would become a model for the NSB, but the situation was considerably different after the Nazis came to power. Now the Nazi style was an unabashed totalitarianism that included state and party-sponsored terror as well as the Nazis' attempt to create a system of involuntary, all-

encompassing politicization of German society. The NSB had always insisted that it rejected totalitarianism; its own power phase would permit a large degree of corporate organizational autonomy in Dutch public and private life.

Some NSB leaders did have second thoughts about the gigantomania of the Nazis' style of political mobilization after 1933,²¹ but for the most part the Dutch fascists retained their admiration for this aspect of Nazism. For all its trumpeted desire to create a specifically Dutch form of fascism, stylistically the Nazis remained the much-admired model for the NSB. The party's leaders insisted Hitler's dictatorship was really a *Führer-demokratie*, and the Nazis' staged plebiscites were expressions of real popular will which contrasted favourably with the spectacle of sordid and narrow interest bartering that characterized campaigns of the Dutch political parties. Especially the annual Nazi party congresses in Nuremberg evoked increasingly loud public and private accolades from the Dutch party leaders. D'Ansembourg and Rost, who beginning in 1936, routinely visited the party congresses as guests of honour of various Nazi agencies, described the *Reichsparteitage* as embodying the power of the fascist style: they showed the ability of the 'idea' to mould the individual so that he willingly subordinated his self-interest to the needs of a greater whole.²²

As the contours of Hitler's rule became clearer, the NSB continued to find much that it admired among the Nazis' early policies. The Nazis had revived the German economy, restored the nation's sovereignty, and built a *Volksgemeinschaft* by overcoming class and interest antagonisms. Equally important, they had moved forcefully against institutions and groups that stood in the way of the fascist new age. Communists, socialists, liberals, and Jews could no longer poison the political atmosphere. The Nazis had not only jailed many political opponents, but destroyed the organizations that had enabled these *Volksfeinde* to prevent the establishment of a true *Volksgemeinschaft*.²³

As far as the NSB was concerned, the Nazis' concrete policies to 'get the German economy moving again', ranked among the most important 'positive' aspects of the Nazi regime. The NSB's founder, an engineer by profession, was always more interested in questions of economic policy than in issues of abstract ideology; sixteen of the twenty-one points in the party's initial pro-

gramme dealt with economic issues. At the same time, much like the Nazis' twenty-five points, the NSB's programme fell short in presenting a coherent set of concrete economic proposals. Mussert expected words like 'national socialism' and 'corporatism' to speak for themselves. In terms of specific demands, the NSB insisted only that a vigorous economy was necessary to enable the Netherlands to pursue its role as an imperial power — which for the NSB always meant above all maintaining Holland's colonial empire in Asia — and that the country needed to maintain good economic relations with Germany. The latter demand was hardly innovative, since traditionally the two nations were each other's most important trading partners.²⁴

Attempting to exploit the devastating effects of the Depression in Holland (where it came later than in Germany) for its own political ends, Mussert's movement emphasized particularly those Nazi economic policies which seemed to address similar problems prevailing at the same time in Holland. The party never tired of pointing out that while in the Netherlands unemployment grew steadily worse, in Nazi Germany a fascist regime had not only made a solution to the problem a first priority, but had by 1938 effectively eliminated unemployment. Instead of having a surplus of labour, the Third Reich was anxious to recruit foreign workers, especially from Holland, for its factories and farms. That Hitler's regime had allocated 'really gigantic expenditures for armaments' did not concern the Dutch fascists; in fact in another context it would praise these as well.²⁵

In the 1930s the agricultural sector still employed some 20 per cent of the Dutch workforce, and the country's farmers suffered severe hardships during the Depression. The NSB, which was anxious to attract a rural following (but generally unsuccessful in doing so), lost no time in praising Nazi activism in attacking the problems of agriculture. The party lauded specific pieces of Nazi legislation, such as the *Erbhofgesetz*,²⁶ but even more welcome, especially to leaders of the *völkische* wing like F.J. Roskam and Rost van Tonningen, was the Nazis' overall emphasis on *Blut und Boden*. For these elements in the NSB the Nazis had succeeded in establishing a rural *Volksgemeinschaft*, one in which every component from agricultural labourers to large estate owners formed part of an economic and social family. 'The German farmers' honour has been restored', wrote Rost in his *Nationale Dagblad*.²⁷

The NSB also sponsored numerous tours to Germany by delegations of Dutch farmers. According to the NSB press, such groups invariably came back convinced that the Nazis' agricultural policies and the virtues of farm life in the Third Reich had been maligned in the Dutch mainstream papers. The comment, 'What a country! We had to go there. And we will no longer believe what is written or said about it [the Third Reich] in The Netherlands', was typical of such reports.²⁸

Like the Nazis, the Dutch fascists exhibited an ambivalent attitude toward modernism. While singing the praises of *Blut und Boden* policies, the NSB also lauded the *Autobahnen* as wonders of futuristic technology, and the Nazis' tax policies as models of progressive economic planning. Mussert, the engineer, particularly admired the Nazis' public works programmes, and Rost, whose professional background was in banking and finance, contrasted the Colijn government's insistence on supply-side economics and remaining on the gold standard with the Nazis' flexible and essentially Keynesian policies which in his view represented fiscal National Socialism in action.²⁹

Almost drowned out by the chorus of admirers for the Nazis' economic policies, a few voices expressed uneasiness about both the aims and the methods of the Nazis. Confronted with the evidence of the Nazis' dictatorial methods to achieve the *Gleichschaltung* of German society, Mussert himself naïvely insisted Dutch corporatism would be instituted without force. Other leaders not only attempted to distance themselves from the Nazis, but criticized the German model. According to an intra-office memorandum circulated at NSB headquarters, 'The Netherlands are not Germany', and attempts to institute, 'a copy [*afleksesl*] of Darré-Görring theories [would be] inappropriate for The Netherlands [and] for the N.S.B. worthless and dangerous.'³⁰

The NSB postulated a close relationship between the Nazis' economic policies and the social and welfare measures in the Third Reich. The Nazis were in the process of creating a society in which no one suffered hunger or deprivation, common criminality had been markedly reduced, and class antagonisms virtually eliminated. Only malcontents and members of the former privileged classes opposed this evolution and they either went into exile or were silenced. Needless to say, this was a highly unrealistic picture of life in Nazi Germany. Once again,

the NSB projected its ideal of a National Socialist society onto the Third Reich, hoping and expecting to reap political benefits in Holland from this vision.³¹

The NSB singled out a number of institutions and programmes that it claimed had been instrumental in eliminating class antagonisms and creating a genuine *Volksgemeinschaft* in Nazi Germany. Foremost among these was the German Labour Front (DAF) and its various programmes, notably Strength Through Joy (KdF). The NSB presented the DAF as an organization which had squared the circle: it simultaneously represented the true interests of workers and the interests of the nation as a whole. Without resorting to strikes or other forms of conflict between labour and management, the DAF provided more real benefits to Germany's workers than free labour unions ever had. In this portrayal, too, the domestic Dutch political situation was a key element. Unable to break into the *zuil* of blue collar workers in Holland on the strength of its own appeals, the NSB used the seeming accomplishments of corporatism across the border to persuade members of the Dutch Catholic and Socialist labour unions to follow the banner of fascism.

Not surprisingly, the Nazi regime's welfare policies and youth programmes impressed the NSB's propagandists. Here, again, the wish to see a society without antagonisms coloured the NSB's perception of the Third Reich. Programmes like the National Socialist Welfare Organization (NSV) and the Winter Help Organization (WHW) were portrayed as nation-wide, voluntary efforts to help those in need. Ignoring evidence that the NSV used racial criteria in its distribution of benefits and that the WHW's activities were inter alia a form of hidden taxation, the NSB's leaders readily accepted Goebbels's explanation that all Nazi welfare programmes rested upon purely voluntary donations of work and money.³²

The Hitler Youth (HJ) with its image of energetic, healthy, purposeful young people clearly fitted the general fascist cult of youth. The HJ also contrasted strikingly with the NSB's picture of boys and girls in Holland, who were either controlled (and set against each other) by political and confessional youth organizations, or unemployed or simply hanging around with nothing to do. But the *non plus ultra* of Nazi social engineering was the Reich Labour Service (RAD). Here was an organization that simultaneously levelled social differences in Nazi Germany, pro-

vided its charges with a physical fitness programme, and helped to improve the nation's infrastructure.³³

At least initially the NSB was more sceptical about the Nazis' cultural and artistic policies. Book burnings clearly made many of the party's activists uneasy;³⁴ such actions were not 'decent' (*fatsoenlijk*). But the leaders hastened to assure their followers that in Germany such actions were necessary because they were the only method by which a liberal, individually-oriented culture could be replaced by a truly national culture. After all, the Dutch fascists pointed out, the authors whose works had been thrown into the flames had either been proponents of cultural liberalism, active opponents of the Nazi party, or, at a minimum, had insulted the front generation. Such arguments also led the NSB leaders to laud the infamous *Entartete Kunst* exhibition as a clear demonstration of the 'connection between the degeneration of art and the atmosphere [created by] Bolshevism and Jewry'.³⁵

As the true character of the Third Reich became obvious to most observers, the NSB's picture of Nazi Germany rapidly turned into a propagandistic liability rather than the asset it was intended to be. While the Dutch fascists portrayed a country which under the leadership of the Nazis had overcome the divisive *verzuling* and replaced it with a conflict-free *Volksgemeinschaft*, for the average Dutchman Nazi Germany evoked images of concentration camps, persecution of the churches, and anti-Jewish pogroms. The NSB's political opponents effectively used this — true — picture of the Third Reich to demonstrate what the Dutch people could expect if the NSB came to power in Holland.

The NSB in turn pursued a two-pronged tactic to cope with such attacks. On the one hand the Dutch fascists denied that when they came to power in the Netherlands they would employ the forms of state terror associated with the Third Reich. At the same time they defended the Nazi system of repression, hesitatingly at first but in time increasingly enthusiastically, as necessary responses in Germany to the threats posed by the Nazis' foreign and domestic enemies.

The pattern began almost immediately after the *Machtergreifung*. The NSB welcomed the Nazis' persecution of Communists and other political opponents. Like most European fascists the NSB defined the 'Bolshevik' threat in very broad strokes. Not only the Moscow-oriented Communists, but Social Democrats and Liberals were part of the 'Bolshevik danger'.

They and the political ideologies they represented were heirs to the French Revolution, the event which according to the fascists put in motion developments that, unless reversed, would inevitably end in the Bolshevization of Europe and eventually the world.³⁶

With this Manichaeic picture as an axiom, the NSB readily accepted the Nazis' explanation of the February 1933 Reichstag fire as deliberately set by the Communists to signal the beginning of the Bolshevik revolution in Germany. Consequently, the subsequent rounding up of the German Communists and Socialists and other political opposition figures became in the NSB's eyes a timely and legitimate step to save the new regime. Indeed, the NSB went further: The Nazis' terror against the Communists was a measure that had saved Western Europe from Bolshevism just in the nick of time. Mussert and some other NSB leaders did criticize the execution of the obviously mentally deranged Marinus van der Lubbe (who alone was actually responsible for setting the fire), but except for this detail the party press had nothing but praise for the Nazis' strongarm tactics.³⁷

The so-called Röhm affair, however, presented the NSB with more formidable difficulties. This purge of the Stormtroopers' (SA) leadership had a far different effect upon foreign fascists than it did upon either Nazi party activists or the people of Germany. Most Germans, it appears, were sympathetic toward the purge, including the use of state terror. They seemed to accept readily the Nazi regime's official explanation that Röhm and his associates were not only morally depraved, but actively plotting to overthrow Hitler's government.³⁸

In sharp contrast, many foreign fascists had a far more favourable image of the SA and its leaders. For them the Stormtroopers personified the 'socialist', 'idealist', and 'revolutionary' side of Nazism. Ernst Röhm, the leader of the SA, deliberately reinforced this image in numerous speeches, and so, inadvertently, did the Nazi government which distributed thousands of copies of Röhm's programmatic addresses as propaganda material abroad. One of Röhm's most outspoken 'national socialist' addresses, his speech to the Berlin diplomatic corps in April 1934, was still part of the collection of the NSB's central library in 1940.³⁹

For this reason, then, the Röhm affair put the NSB on the defensive in two ways: not only did the purge demonstrate

the arbitrary and vicious nature of the Nazi regime (after all, the executions of the SA leaders and several innocent bystanders were only 'legalized' after they had been carried out), but it also seemed to signal the end of the 'socialist' phase of Nazism. Privately, many NSB activists were shocked and dismayed by the Röhm affair, and d'Ansembourg noted that the purge was a serious setback for the NSB's efforts to attract new followers. Mussert found the murder of the wife of General Kurt von Schleicher particularly offensive. He called it, 'extraordinarily un-fascist, indeed revolting'. Only Rost accepted seemingly without question that the purge had been necessary to eliminate irresponsibly radical elements from the Nazi movement.⁴⁰

While the Röhm affair presented the NSB with a major, albeit temporary, public relations problem, the Nazi persecution of the Christian churches was an issue that bedevilled the Dutch fascists throughout the decade. The Netherlands in the 1930s was a society in which organized religion played a pervasive and influential role in virtually all facets of social life, from politics to education. Especially political Catholicism, which led the opposition to the NSB, used the German *Kirchenkampf* as a constant campaign theme against the Dutch fascists.⁴¹

The NSB certainly recognized the implications of the tensions between church and state in Germany for Dutch politics,⁴² and attempted to mount a counter-offensive. It took a variety of forms, ranging from attempts to explain that specifically German circumstances had led to church-state friction in the Third Reich to denials that there were any conflicts. The party also insisted that under an NSB regime in Holland organized religious life would flourish. In an attempt to turn the tables against its Dutch Catholic opponents, Mussert's movement pointed out that the primary reason for conflicts between Nazis and Catholics before 1933 had been the Centre Party's opposition to the Nazis. After the *Machtergreifung* some Catholics continued to criticize the regime, although under the terms of the Concordat between the Vatican and the Third Reich the Church had promised to stay out of politics. If Catholicism had maintained its neutrality, or, even better, had supported the Nazis, all would have been well. The implication, of course, was that if the Roman Catholic State Party (RKSP), the political arm of Dutch Catholicism, learned from the mistakes of its German sister party, there would be no need for any conflicts with any future NSB regime.⁴³

A contrasting and contradictory picture described Nazi Germany as a sort of religious paradise. Liberated from the anti-religious influences of Communists and Social Democrats as well as from the pernicious role of political Catholicism, the Third Reich was experiencing a 'powerful religious revival', a development that the Nazi leaders, themselves religious men, according to the NSB, warmly welcomed. If any difficulties between church and state remained, they were the result of futile and unfortunate efforts by individual Catholic clerics to continue playing a political role in the new Germany, or, on the Protestant side, of intra-church disagreements over theology. In the latter case Nazi state and party officials had even attempted to mediate the difficulties, although admittedly without much success.⁴⁴

This portrayal of Nazi Germany's religious life was not very convincing. Even the Nazi leaders realized that the *Kirchenkampf* presented them with a major public relations problem in the Netherlands. Their answer was to mount a concerted media campaign. Two ostensibly independent press agencies — the Dutch Christian Press Bureau (NCP) and *Pro Deo et Patria* — produced a steady stream of glowing reports about church life in Germany for inclusion in NSB papers as well as the Dutch Protestant and Catholic provincial press. Until April 1937 *Pro Deo et Patria* was headed by Father Anselmus Vriens, a Dutch priest residing in Berlin. At that time he was succeeded by Father Leonhard, a German clergyman who had lived for many years in The Netherlands, and *Pro Deo et Patria* became the Dutch Catholic Correspondence Agency in Berlin (Nederlandsch Katholiek Correspondentie Bureau te Berlijn). Closely associated with the NCP was v.d. Vaart Smit, a Nazi fellow-travelling pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church. Actually, both agencies were subsidiaries of the German Propaganda Ministry, and all of the articles were censored by Goebbels's officials prior to their release.⁴⁵

Especially *Pro Deo et Patria*, whose target audience was Dutch Catholics, faced increasingly formidable obstacles in presenting a favourable picture of church-state relations in Nazi Germany. In April 1935, after the heavily Catholic Saar area had voted to return to Germany, Nazi state and party offices began a series of vicious attacks upon members of the Catholic clergy. The campaign culminated in a number of show trials against members of monastic orders; the defendants were accused of

violating the currency laws or engaging in homosexual acts. The Catholic Church reacted vigorously. High-ranking officials outside of Germany sharply criticized the regime, and in 1937 the Papal encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge* made the Pope's concerns public as well.⁴⁶

The NSB coped with the deteriorating relationship between church and state in Germany as best it could. The Dutch fascists eagerly accepted that the reports emanating from the NCP and *Pro Deo et Patria* were eye-witness reports by independent observers. Rost's newspaper, the *Nationale Dagblad*, appealed to *Pro Deo et Patria* to supply it with an ever increasing flow of information on the German *Kirchenkampf*. Not surprisingly, these accounts followed the guidelines laid down by Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry: monasteries were cesspools of immorality in which monks violated minors in their charge and enriched themselves through currency smuggling. To provide even more immediacy to the Nazi picture of church-state relations in Germany, the *Nationale Dagblad* also sponsored a lecture tour of Holland by Father Leonhard. Leonhard, who was apparently an effective speaker, was able to fill large halls, including the Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and the German legation described the entire tour as 'a great success for the NSB.'⁴⁷

In spite of these efforts, the widespread reporting of the Nazis' terror by the Dutch mainstream press created an increasingly negative image of the Third Reich in the Netherlands which in turn materially helped to destroy whatever appeal indigenous Dutch fascism might have had. The NSB leaders recognized this as well. While publicly persisting in presenting a favourable highly distorted picture of church-state relations in Nazi Germany, privately they urged their Nazi comrades to moderate their policies. Notably d'Ansembourg urged the German Nazis to cease or at least soften their attack upon the churches, pointing out the disastrous effects which the German *Kirchenkampf* had upon the NSB's recruiting efforts in Holland. Both Mussert and d'Ansembourg also tried — unsuccessfully — to open various channels to try to get the Vatican, including the Pope himself, to order the Dutch Catholic leaders to cease their campaign against the NSB.⁴⁸

But the domestic policy issue that was probably decisive in marginalizing the NSB in Dutch politics was the movement's growing acceptance of the Nazis' antisemitic and anti-Masonic

ideology and policies. As noted earlier, the NSB was founded as an organization without any animus against Jews or freemasons. In the early 1930s the party had some 150 Jewish members, and the party's long-time organizational and later propaganda leader F.E. Farwerck was himself a high-ranking mason. As late as November 1937 the German legation in The Hague complained that Mussert, while now endorsing antisemitism, was still silent on the Masonic question. By 1938, however, the NSB had become an organization in which attacks upon Jews and freemasons were pervasive and increasingly vicious.⁴⁹

The NSB's *völkische* wing readily accepted the Nazis' claim that Freemasonry was merely a front for the machinations of international Jewry, but Mussert's change of heart was more politically motivated. As in the case of his evolving antisemitism, attacks upon his party by prominent freemasons as well as the Nazis' 'evidence' that masons were organizing international efforts against fascists in all countries seemed to have convinced the *leider* that he had underestimated the political threat of Freemasonry. After a visit to the Nazis' *Freimaurermuseum* on the occasion of his 1936 visit to Berlin, he commented in his diary, 'very interesting what all they have collected there [*zeer interessant wat daar alles bijeengebracht is*].'⁵⁰

The NSB's 'conversion' to antisemitism was partly a function of the leaders' 'enlightenment' about the role of Jews in Freemasonry, and partly a *Trotzreaktion* against the activism of some Dutch Jewish leaders in the political battles against fascism in Holland. This development was certainly welcomed by the minority of the movement's militants that had always been anti-semitic. Party headquarters in Utrecht received numerous letters from individual members expressing their agreement with the Nazis' ideas on race and antisemitism; such sentiments were particularly prevalent among the activists in the Amsterdam locale.⁵¹ Events in Germany after the Nazis came to power obviously encouraged these elements, and some potential members who had earlier not joined the NSB because of its 'philosemitic' attitudes, were now attracted to the Dutch fascists.

Attacks on the NSB's lack of an antisemitic platform by the Nazis added to the pressure from some of the party's activists. Julius Streicher's *Stürmer* and the *Weltdienst*, an antisemitic propaganda news-service with close ties to the SS, sharply criticized the Dutch fascists for their failure to make antisemitism

part of their ideology. The NSB's reaction to these attacks was equivocal and defensive. On the one hand the leadership argued that German criticism might actually benefit the movement, since it provided clear evidence that Mussert's group was not a mere copy of the NSDAP. On the other hand, the NSB identified its own cause so closely with the success of German fascism, that it was always uneasy about German criticism in any form, and especially on an issue which the Nazis clearly regarded as central to National Socialism.⁵²

Fear of offending the Nazis, pressure from the *völkische* wing, and increasing attacks on the NSB by Jewish leaders in Holland had the effect of increasing antisemitic sentiments among the NSB's leaders and members. The party's leaders emphasized the last factor, insisting they had to defend themselves against the 'Jewish offensive'. The party pointed particularly to what it saw as the influence of German-Jewish refugees in Holland. The NSB's leaders attempted to convince the party's followers and potential voters (and presumably they believed it themselves) that as part of their declared political war on European and Dutch fascism 'the Jews' had singled out the NSB as a particular target in Holland.⁵³

For much of 1933 and 1934 the NSB's old guard still resisted endorsing antisemitism wholeheartedly, but this changed in the aftermath of the Dutch elections of 1935. In response to the party's somewhat surprising success the country's non-fascist political groups mounted a concerted effort to halt the further advance of the NSB. Mussert and his associates in turn interpreted these political counter-measures as part of a Jewish-led attack against the party; the multi-partisan organization Unity Through Democracy (Eenheid door Democratie) became, in the eyes of the NSB a 'Jewish association'.⁵⁴ The NSB's increasingly strident antisemitic stand, which was coupled with growing praise of the Nazis' measures against the Jews in Germany, led many moderates to turn their backs on the party. In the aftermath of the NSB's electoral success in the spring of 1935, the party's membership rose to 47,000, but during the next two years some 10,000 activists left the NSB and recruitment of new members fell to less than 50 per cent of what it had been in 1935. As a consequence Mussert's movement became a much smaller, more radicalized group that was now especially attractive to elements who demanded a strong antisemitic stand.⁵⁵

The co-optation of Rost van Tonningen into the top ranks of the NSB's leadership intensified the party's antisemitism. Rost's newspaper, *Nationale Dagblad*, became the outlet for increasingly vicious attacks on the Dutch Jews and laudatory accounts of the Nazis' anti-Jewish measures. (Incidentally, a large number of the articles on the 'Jewish question' that appeared in the *Nationale Dagblad* were supplied directly by the *Aufklärungsausschuss Hamburg-Bremen*, another ostensibly independent press agency that was actually controlled by Goebbels's Propaganda Ministry.)⁵⁶

Mussert and the old guard followed at a somewhat slower pace; in June 1938 German observers noted that the party chairman's speech at the NSB's annual congress still contained no 'unequivocally antisemitic line'.⁵⁷ For the *leider* the disastrous outcome of the 1937 Dutch national elections (the NSB's share of the vote fell from 7.9 per cent in 1935 to 4.22 per cent) seems to have been the decisive factor in leading him to embrace fully the antisemitic line. Mussert, too, now became convinced that the Jews were responsible for the NSB's failure to attract a mass following. The NSB's path to antisemitism culminated in Mussert's infamous speech of October 1938 to several hundred NSB activists at the Amsterdam RAI hall. Here Mussert all but endorsed the Nazis' Manichaeic vision of the Jews as the personification of eternal evil. On this occasion even *Der Stürmer* was pleased with Mussert's performance.⁵⁸

By the time of the November 1938 *Reichskristallnacht* pogrom in Germany the views of the old guard and the NSB's *völkische* wing were virtually identical. In his comment for *Volk en Vaderland* Mussert described the violence that accompanied the 'Night of Crystal' as regrettable (*betreurenswaardig*), but he fully endorsed the Nazi explanation of the pogrom itself: it was a 'popular outburst' (*volksuitbarsting*) that followed the provocative murder of the German diplomat Ernst vom Rath, a murder for which international Jewry was responsible. Rost's *Nationale Dagblad* called the nationwide burnings and looting a form of 'popular rage' (*volkswoede*) that was an understandable reaction to the Jews' efforts to bring down the Nazi regime.⁵⁹

In the aftermath of the *Reichskristallnacht* Mussert even tried his hand at solving the 'Jewish question'. He proposed the creation of a Jewish homeland in what was then Dutch Guyana, off the coast of South America. Mussert's proposal (which

included a demand that Holland should be compensated for the loss of Guyana by some South African territory) was launched as a major propagandistic effort. *Volk en Vaderland* printed a special edition of 250,000 copies to spread the word. But the proposal was an ill-considered and futile gesture that was not taken seriously by either the leaders of the Jewish community or the Nazis. The *leider* was disappointed by the Germans' lack of interest (the NSB's leader had sent Rost, who was also enthusiastic about the plan, on a special mission to Berlin in order to lobby the Nazi authorities), but he chose to blame only the Jews for the failure of his project. Their lack of a positive response demonstrated that they were essentially unco-operative, and that the Nazis' methods of dealing with the 'Jewish question' were justified.⁶⁰

By the end of the decade the NSB's embracing of antisemitism had done much to destroy the party's credibility as an indigenous fascist movement. A combination of pressure from some elements among the rank-and-file, the desire for approval by the German Nazis, and the myth that Jewish opposition to the NSB had prevented the party from winning large-scale support in Holland led not only the NSB's *völkische* wing but also the old guard to see the 'Jews' as the force behind all opposition to the NSB and fascism. Mussert convinced himself that his old nemesis Bolshevik Russia was totally controlled by Jews and that spearheaded by Stalin 'the Jewish people are waging full-scale war against Germany and Italy'.⁶¹ The result was self-isolation of the movement in Holland and a reinforcing spiral: the party's martyr complex led to its radicalization, a development that reinforced the NSB's marginalization in Dutch political life, in turn contributing to yet further radicalization. The German minister in Den Haag was essentially correct when he warned his superiors that in Dutch politics 'the NSB is still not an influential, let alone decisive factor'.⁶²

All fascists were integral and relativistic nationalists: that is to say, they were convinced that a nation's greatness was the result of its ability to integrate or, more precisely, subordinate individual and group interests to the interests of the nation as a whole. Once integrated a nation would then be successful in the eternal struggle for national greatness. As we saw, the NSB admired the Third Reich because in the view of the Dutch

fascists Nazi Germany by creating a true *Volksgemeinschaft* had succeeded in achieving the highest level of integral nationalism.

The other side of the coin, relativistic nationalism, presented problems, however. Even fascist sympathizers recognized that the concept of relativistic nationalism and the notion of fascist states living side-by-side in harmony with each other contained an inherent contradiction that was 'not yet' worked out.⁶³ Since the rulers of the Third Reich gave ample and early evidence of their dynamic and aggressive foreign policy intentions, it might be expected that the Dutch fascists, regardless of their sympathies for the Nazis' domestic policies, would oppose Hitler's plans for the destruction of the European balance of power. This seemed all the more likely since the NSB had grandiose visions of its own for Holland's future on the international scene under NSB control. Secure in its control of the far-flung Dutch empire (sometimes the *leider* even dreamed that South Africa would be restored to Dutch control), the Netherlands would also play a major role in Europe as the country which would serve as a bridge between Germany and Great Britain. Surprisingly, perhaps, the NSB supported the Nazis' 'peaceful' revision of the European map. There were a number of reasons for this seemingly paradoxical attitude. To begin with, the NSB and particularly its *leider* profoundly distrusted the victors of World War I. Mussert felt France wanted to reduce the Netherlands to the status of a French satellite; he claimed this had already happened to Belgium. In addition, the NSB leader accused both Great Britain and France of having permitted Japan to achieve a position as a major regional power, enabling the Asian nation to threaten the Dutch East Indies.⁶⁴

Mussert reluctantly abandoned his vision of Holland's bridge function when it became obvious that Great Britain, despite its policy of appeasement, was not willing to reverse her World War I alliance with France in favour of an entente with Nazi Germany. Forced to choose between Great Britain and Germany, Mussert chose Germany although the NSB's old guard never entirely trusted the ultimate foreign policy designs of some Nazis. Plans for a 'Greater Germanic Reich' dominated by the SS might be welcomed by Rost and the *völkische* wing, but they were resolutely rejected by Mussert and the old guard. To the end of his life Mussert remained a Dutch patriot as he interpreted the term. He certainly did not want a Dutch *Anschluss*.⁶⁵

The NSB evaluated specific Nazi foreign policy moves on the basis of what the party considered to be the *Leitmotive* of Dutch foreign policy interests: the creation of a new fascist balance of power in Europe,⁶⁶ and the preservation of European colonial empires in general and the Dutch empire in particular. For the most part, the NSB enthusiastically supported Hitler's early foreign policy moves. The NSB welcomed the Nazi decision to leave the League of Nations, arguing that this decision weakened France's influence in Europe and restored Germany's national sovereignty. These were also the NSB's reasons for welcoming the return of the Saar to Germany, and Hitler's announcement that the Reich would no longer abide by the disarmament provisions of the Versailles Treaty.⁶⁷

For the NSB Mussolini's Ethiopian campaign was a major milestone on the road to aligning the party even more completely alongside the fascist powers. In foreign policy terms the NSB interpreted the Italian–Ethiopian conflict as a battle for the future of the European colonial empires. Mussert argued that any weakening of European imperialism hastened the breakdown of the international order and consequently benefited Bolshevik expansionism. For this reason he sharply criticized the French and British decision to impose sanctions against Italy in support of the Negus. For the NSB this represented a betrayal of the interests of the European peoples and their status as colonial powers. In sharp contrast, the Nazis' decision to support the Italian dictator served the interests of all the European peoples, and the NSB enthusiastically welcomed the German–Italian realignment as a first step toward the formation of a fascist axis.⁶⁸

In addition, the NSB also used the Ethiopian crisis for its domestic propaganda. Long critical of the Colijn government's reluctance to increase the Netherlands' military spending, Mussert contrasted the Italian dictator's use of military force and the Nazis' massive rearmament programme with the Dutch cabinet's failure to maintain a strong military establishment.

Like all imperialists, Mussert and his followers saw no contradiction between maintaining European colonial empires overseas and insisting upon the right of national self-determination for the white peoples of Europe. The NSB supported the Germans' right of self-determination both as a principle and because the party argued a strengthened fascist Reich was Europe's best defence against the growing threat of Bolshevism. The anti-Communist

theme appeared particularly credible after the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations and when it supported the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War. As a result, the Dutch fascists enthusiastically praised the Nazis' 'revision' of the Versailles settlement from the remilitarization of the Rhineland to the annexation of the Sudetenland.⁶⁹

Somewhat surprising in the list of accolades for Nazi foreign policy moves was the NSB's support for the *Anschluss* of Austria in March 1938. The clerico-fascist regimes of Engelbert Dollfuss and Kurt von Schuschnigg, which had enjoyed Mussolini's support for many years, hardly fit the label of Bolshevik and democratic bridgeheads. At the same time, Austria's resistance to the *Anschluss* seemed to belie the thesis of general co-operation among fascist and national socialist regimes. The NSB could nevertheless justify the German annexation because it saw the Austrian case through the prism of Dutch domestic politics. First Rost and later Mussert and the old guard convinced themselves that the government of Kurt von Schuschnigg was an Austrian version of a typical regime of oppressive political Catholicism. Austria's Catholic leaders had achieved in their country what the RKSP hoped to do in The Netherlands.⁷⁰

Seen in this light the Austrian Nazis and the leaders of the Third Reich became freedom fighters fulfilling the dream of national self-determination against the determined opposition of a tyrannical, clerical regime. In fact, the NSB handed out praise on all sides. Mussolini's decision to drop his former protégé was a clear example of the far-sightedness typical of fascist statesmen. But the Dutch fascists also lauded the leaders of Austrian Catholicism for their eventual acceptance of Hitler's rule over his homeland. It did not take a great deal of imagination to recognize the Dutch analogy: the leaders of the RKSP and Holland's Catholic hierarchy should do likewise. As for the Austrian people, according to the NSB, German intervention had spared them the fate of Spain, since the Schuschnigg regime had been determined to lead Austria into civil war.⁷¹

Such convoluted logic was not necessary in the case of the Sudeten question. Long before the 1938 Munich Crisis, the NSB had viewed Czechoslovakia with deep suspicion. A successful democracy that maintained good relations with the Western Allies and the Soviet Union, the CSR represented all that the NSB disliked about the post-Versailles political system. Especi-

ally Rost's *Nationale Dagblad* had long complained about the 'red terror' directed against the Sudeten Germans. (Many of the *ND*'s reports on Czechoslovakia were written by Prince Karl-Anton von Rohan, an Austrian fascist and *Heimwehr* leader with whom Rost had become acquainted while he was working in Vienna. Ironically, the Nazis and especially Ribbentrop did not trust the Austrian aristocrat.) Reports on the supposed links between the Czechoslovak government and Stalinist Russia filled the pages of the *Nationale Dagblad* months before the Sudeten issue dominated reports in the German press. Typical of *ND*'s coverage were stories on 'Prague's Marxist policies' and characterization of the Czechoslovak government 'which is so friendly toward the red Russian rulers [*die zo sympathiek staat tegenover de roode Russische heerschers*]'. For Mussert and the NSB's old guard national self-determination was the more important issue. After the *Anschluss* the *leider* pointed out that now only the 3.5 million Sudeten Germans remained unliberated. It came as no surprise, then, that Mussert celebrated the results of the Munich Conference as 'the victory of justice and peace over injustice and war'.⁷²

The principle of national self-determination could obviously not justify Hitler's destruction of what remained of Czechoslovakia only a few months after the German dictator had agreed to guarantee its territorial integrity. The transformation of the Czech part of Czechoslovakia into the new German Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia clearly violated the Czech's right to their own country. Similarly, fascist anti-Communism could not explain the Nazi-Soviet Pact in August 1939. And it is true, the NSB's old guard was uneasy and defensive about both of these Nazi foreign policy moves. Mussert supported the establishment of the Nazi Protectorate, and for good measure he added that the Czechs had denied the right of self-determination to the Slovaks, but he complained that with the creation of the Protectorate the Germans had deserted their high moral ground. Typically, Rost had fewer qualms. As far as Czechoslovakia was concerned, he continued to harp on the anti-Communist theme. The CSR had not ceased playing its role as a Bolshevik bridgehead even after Munich, and the Nazis' destruction of Czechoslovakia was the only way of severing the Prague-Moscow link.⁷³ This line of reasoning would not work, of course, for the Berlin-Moscow link, and it is not surprising that supporting and justifying the

Nazi–Soviet Pact presented particular difficulties for the NSB. The alliance between what the party had always described as irreconcilable worlds of good and evil was a shock to the Dutch fascists, as, indeed, it was to most Nazis. Nevertheless, by this time the NSB's leaders were so committed to their own alliance with the Nazis that they had to follow even this road. Mussert himself lamely reinvented a version of the encirclement theory popular in imperial Germany: by threatening the national existence of the Third Reich, Great Britain and France had forced Nazi Germany to seek a tactical alliance with the Soviet Union, the only great power that was not participating in the effort to isolate and encircle Germany. (Even the *leider* recognized that this argument was exceedingly weak; the piece in *Volk en Vaderland* defending the Nazi–Soviet Pact was not included in the official collection of his articles and speeches from the 1930s, which the NSB published in 1941, well before the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union.)⁷⁴

The NSB's difficulties with the Nazi–Soviet Pact were symptomatic of the party's utter failure to recognize the true nature of Nazi foreign policy. This is particularly remarkable since the Dutch fascists had had to recognize two years earlier that their Nazi friends were of no help when it came to one of the NSB's foremost priorities, defending the Dutch colonies against Japan. The *leider* criticized the Versailles settlement for driving Germany out of Asia, and in view of the Reich's traditional alliance with China that argument had some validity from Mussert's perspective. But here, too, Hitler proved disappointing. Much to the chagrin of the NSB (as well as the German professional diplomats in the Foreign Office) the German dictator abandoned the Reich's friendship with China and turned toward Japan instead. The NSB's goal of fascist European unity against Japan was clearly not one shared by the Nazis. Nevertheless, it was not until his trial after World War II that Mussert admitted he had clearly misjudged the aggressive intentions of his German allies.⁷⁵

On the eve of World War II the NSB occupied a marginalized position in Dutch politics. In the eyes of the overwhelming majority of the Dutch people the NSB, increasingly dominated by its *völkische* wing, had in the few short years since its founding evolved from a political force that was attractive to a sizable

portion of the Dutch electorate to a group that all but a small band of true believers saw as a pale copy of a foreign and thoroughly un-Dutch original. For most of his countrymen, as a German agent noted, Mussert had become 'the Dutch Henlein'.⁷⁶

The evolution of the NSB's relationship toward Nazi Germany was a major factor in this development. For some time before and after the Nazi *Machtergreifung* most leaders and activists of the NSB were convinced the Nazi party and later the Third Reich provided not only a model for a future NSB regime, but that the party's identification with Nazi Germany would be a political asset in its own struggle to give fascism a mass base in Holland. The results of the April 1935 elections seemed to confirm the NSB's expectations,⁷⁷ but the party's further history demonstrated that Mussert and his allies were acting on completely false premisses.

The unexpected disaster of the May 1937 elections was both cause and effect of the NSB's political downfall. On the one hand its praise of Nazi Germany undoubtedly alienated many of the party's original activists as well as potential voters and thus contributed to the NSB's poor showing. At the same time, what remained of the party's supporters was by now so committed to identifying the cause of Dutch fascism with that of Nazi Germany that even the old guard in the NSB felt they could only continue their defence of what was going on the other side of the border.⁷⁸ As the decline continued Mussert, in April 1939 consoled himself with the completely unrealistic analogy that the Nazis had come to power less than five years after their electoral nadir (the NSDAP had obtained 2.6 per cent of the popular vote in the May 1928 German elections). By comparison, the NSB was ahead; it received 3.89 per cent of the Dutch popular vote in May 1937.

There was some criticism within the NSB of this strategy of identification, but on the eve of World War II the party's leaders — both old guard and *völkische* — had become convinced that only their association with Nazi Germany could overcome the 'Jewish-Bolshevik-Catholic conspiracy' that was preventing the NSB's message from reaching the Dutch voters. Ironically, even some of those who had recognized the ineffectiveness of the NSB's strategy turned to the Germans in the hope that the Nazis would help them establish a new Dutch fascist party that would be more successful than Mussert's creation.⁷⁹ For the small group

of fanatically convinced and now completely isolated Dutch National Socialists, Nazi Germany remained a god that had not failed.⁸⁰

Notes

1. For the fascists' own view of their role as the sole effective bulwark against Bolshevism, see, for example, the address entitled 'European Solidarity' by the Dutch fascist leader A.A. Mussert. (*Volk en Vaderland* [hereafter: *Vova*], 15 May 1936.) See also the favourable comment on this speech by the German minister in Den Haag, Count Zech, to Foreign Office (hereafter: AA), 15 May 1936, Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes (hereafter: PA/AA), R 102892. Interestingly, the more recent studies of fascism as a generic phenomenon take the fascists' claim that they represented a unique revolutionary force quite seriously. See, for example, Roger Griffin, *The Nature of Fascism* (New York 1991); Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism 1914–1945* (Madison 1995); Ze'ev Sternhell, *The Birth of Fascist Ideology*, trans. David Maisel (Princeton, NJ 1996); and Rainer Zitelmann, *Hitler: Selbstverständnis eines Revolutionärs* (Hamburg 1987).

2. Arend Lijphart, *Verzuling, pacificatie en kentering in de Nederlandse politiek*, 3rd edn (Amsterdam 1979) (English edn: *The Politics of Accommodation*, 2nd edn [Berkeley 1975]), remains the best analysis of this peculiarly Dutch form of political pluralism.

3. On the NSB's organizational structure, see Hermann v.d. Wuster and Ronald E. Smit, 'Dynamics of the Dutch National Socialist Movement (the NSB) 1931–35' in Stein U. Larsen et al., eds, *Who Were the Fascists?* (Oslo 1980), 538–40. For Mussert's modest qualities as a political leader see R. Havenaar, *Verrader voor het Vaderland: Een biografische schets van Anton Adriaan Mussert* (The Hague 1978); and Hermann W. von der Dunk and Horst Lademacher, eds, *Auf dem Weg zum modernen Parteistaat: Zur Entstehung, Organisation und Struktur politischer Parteien in Deutschland und den Niederlanden* (Melsungen 1986). The Germans, too, recognized Mussert's lack of charismatic qualities. See German consulate Rotterdam to German legation Den Haag, 17 October 1935, PA/AA, Gesand. Den Haag, Pol. 4, Bd. 3.

4. For Mussert's ideological positions see his own retrospective account, 'Gedachten welke mede uitgangspunten vormden voor mijn handelingen', October 1945, Mussert-Archief (hereafter: Mussert-Arch.), 5j (Rijksinstituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie [hereafter: RIOD]); Ronald Havenaar, *De NSB tussen nationalisme en 'volkse' solidariteit* (Den Haag 1983), 131; and Konrad Kwiet, 'Zur Geschichte der Mussert-Bewegung', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte*, 18 (1970), 175. The NSB's lack of an antisemitic platform led the *Stürmer*, the Nazis' most vicious antisemitic mouthpiece, to attack the Dutch party as a 'forgery' of National Socialism. See the issue of 1 March 1934.

5. On Farwerck's campaign see his letter to A. Dam, 5 September 1936, NSB-Archief (hereafter: NSB-Arch.), 12b (RIOD); and Jan Meyers, *Mussert: Een politiek leven* (Amsterdam 1984), 194.

6. *Vova*, 16 April and 28 May 1937. See also Meyers, *Mussert*, 86 and 89; Dunk, *Weg, 277*; and Gerhard Hirschfeld, *Nazi Rule and Dutch Collaboration: The*

Netherlands Under German Occupation, 1940–1945 (New York 1988), 252.

7. See Rost to J.A.H. van de Does, 16 May 1934, and to Mussert, 22 October 1941, in Meinoud Marinus Rost van Tonningen, *Correspondentie van Mr M.M. Rost van Tonningen*, ed. E. Fraenkel-Verkade and A.J. van der Leeuw (Den Haag 1967), I: 266 and 717; Mussert, 'Zwölf Jahre aus der Vogelperspektive', 11 December 1943, 9–10, NS 26/678 (Bundesarchiv [hereafter: BA]). See also E. Fraenkel-Verkade, 'Inleiding', in Rost, *Correspondentie*, I: 37–8, 80, and 319 n.5; and Anthonius Anne de Jonge, *Crisis en Critiek der Democratie* (Assen 1968), 222, 229–31.

8. Rost to Mussert, 4 January 1939, and to head of the Groningse Jeugdstorm, 26 February 1939, in Rost, *Corr.*, I: 346, 349. For intra-party criticism of the *Nationale Dagblad* (hereafter: *ND*) see d'Ansembourg to Geelkerken, 15 July 1939, NSB-Arch., 252b.

9. See *Völkischer Beobachter* (hereafter: *VB*), 6, 11, and 29 June 1937; and *Vova's* denial of the rumours, 25 June and 9 July 1935.

10. On the NSB's political decline after 1935, see, in addition to the works cited earlier, G.A. Kooy, *Het Echec van een 'volkse' Beweging: Nazificatie en Denazificatie in Nederland, 1931–1945* (Assen 1964), 78.

11. The two quotations are from *Vova*, 19 January 1935 and 15 July 1933 resp. See also *Vova*, 24 March 1934; and Farwerck to F.E.H. Groenman, 12 April 1933, NSB-Arch., 1c.

12. See NSDAP, Auslandsorganisation to Auslandspressebüro, 12 February 1935, PA/AA, Pol.Abt.II, Po 29 Ni, Bd. 4; and German legation Den Haag to AA, 29 August 1936, PA/AA, R 102892 (Mikrofiche [hereafter *Mf.*]: 5048). See also Kwiet, 'Mussert', 183–4; and Gabriele Hoffmann, *NS-Propaganda in den Niederlanden: Organisation und Lenkung der Publizistik unter deutscher Besatzung, 1940–45* (Munich 1972).

13. German legation Den Haag to AA, 15 May 1936, PA/AA, R 102892.

14. See the evaluations by Ebert to Rosenberg, 22 July 1937, NS 8/216 (BA); and AA to Reichsministerium des Innern, 5 November 1934, PA/AA, Pol. Abt. II, Po 29 Ni, Bd. 3.

15. See d'Ansembourg's reports to Mussert 3 November and 21 December 1933, and his letter to *Der Mittag*, 22 May 1934, NSB-Arch., 249a and 249; and Likus (Büro Ribbentrop), 'Aufzeichnung', 25 May 1940, PA/AA, Akten UStS. Luther, Bd. 45.

16. Rost to Mussert, 26 August and 22 October 1941, in Rost, *Corr.*, I: 692 and 715; and Fraenkel-Verkade, 'Inleiding Rost', 25ff. The quotation is *ibid.*, 78.

17. On Mussert's briefing by Rost for the *leider's* forthcoming visit to Berlin, see Fraenkel-Verkade, 'Inleiding Rost', 51–3; and Rost to Mussert, 28 August 1936, in Rost, *Corr.*, I: 321–2. See also Papen to Hitler, 15 September 1936, R 43 II/1462 (BA). On Mussert's visit to Berlin see his diary and other documentation in Mussert-Arch., 3g and NSB-Arch.-L, 6b; Meyers, *Mussert*, 127, 137–8, and 311–14; and Hirschfeld, *Dutch*, 260. On Hitler's opinion of Mussert see Kwiet, 'Mussert', 183–4; and Albert Speer, *Erinnerungen* (Berlin 1969), 136.

18. *Vova*, 4 November 1933 and 18 March 1938.

19. Farwerck to de Jager Meezembrock, 18 February 1936, NSB-Arch., 10d. On the importance of the fascist 'style', see Ernst Nolte, *Der Faschismus in seiner Epoche: Die Action française, der italienische Faschismus, der Nationalsozialismus*, 2nd edn (Munich 1965), 138; and George L. Mosse, 'Political Style and Political

Theory — Totalitarian Democracy Revisited', in Nathan Rotenstreich, ed., *Totalitarian Democracy and After: International Colloquium in Memory of Jacob L. Talmon . . . 1982* (Jerusalem 1984), 169.

20. Farwerck to v.d. Hoeven, 14 December 1933 and to NSDAP, Reichsschulungsamt 22 August 1934, NSB-Arch., 2d and 5c. See also the documentation in NSB-Arch.-L, 6 and German consulate Rotterdam to AA, 12 January 1935, PA/AA, Gesand. Den Haag, Pol. 4, Bd. 3; and Dunk, e.g. 277–8.

21. See Propaganda leider Den Haag to Farwerck, 26 June 1934, NSB-Arch.-P, 5a; NSB, Afdeling III, 'Onderwerp voor de komende week', 11 January 1936ff., NSB-Arch., 251d. See also Fraenkel-Verkade, 'Inleiding Rost', 133.

22. *Vova*, 11 August and 15 September 1934, 25 September 1936, and 10 September 1937; *ND*, 14 August and 7 September 1937; d'Ansembourg to Mussert, 11 and 14 September 1936, NSB-Arch., 251d; and Rost to Mussert, 13 September 1936, in Rost, *Corr.*, I: 331.

23. Wuster and Smit, 'Dynamics', 528–30.

24. For a fuller discussion of the NSB's economic ideas See Havenaar, *NSB*, 70–3; and Meyers, *Mussert*, 303. On the party's refusal to be specific about its economic plans see Farwerck to R.H.V. van Lavvick, 11 December 1933, NSB-Arch.-P, 2d.

25. *ND*, 23 January 1937 (quotation). See also the material for the *kernvergadering van vorming*, 4 March 1939, NSB-Arch., 74c.

26. *Vova*, 27 May 1933; and Rost's diary, 15 March 1934, in Rost, *Corr.*, I: 297. On the Nazis' agricultural policies, see J.E. Farquharson, *The Plough and the Swastika: The NSDAP and Agriculture in Germany, 1928–1945* (London 1976); and Gustavo Corni and Horst Gies, *Brot, Butter, Kanonen: Die Ernährungswirtschaft in Deutschland unter der Diktatur Hitlers* (Berlin 1997).

27. *ND*, 27 November 1936. See also Havenaar, *NSB*, 107.

28. *ND*, 23 July 1937. For German reports on the NSB's positive reaction to the Nazis' agricultural policies see Stapoleitstelle Osnabrück, 'Bericht', 30 April 1934, PA/AA; Pol.Abt. II, Po 29 Ni, Bd. 2; and German consulate Den Haag, 'Bericht über den Landtag der NSB', 12 October 1934, *ibid.*, Bd. 5.

29. *ND*, 23 January and 11 May 1937. See also 'Onderwerp voor de komende week', 15 May 1936.

30. The quotation is from the marginalia by van Houten, n.d., on a document entitled 'Onderwerp Agrarisch Programma', NSB-Arch., 49b.

31. *ND*, 5 July 1937. See also, *Vova*, 2 April 1937; and Mussert's speeches, 10 May 1936 and 15 April 1939, NSB-Arch.-L, 5a and 7d. On the persistence of class antagonisms see, especially, Timothy W. Mason, *Sozialpolitik im Dritten Reich* (Opladen 1977); and, remarkably, NSB, Hoofd Afd. III to kringleider Berlin, 30 April 1937, NSB-Arch., 13d.

32. See the draft of an NSB brochure by A. v.d. Oord, 31 August 1934, NSB-Arch.-P, 5c; *Vova*, 2 March 1935, 13 August 1937, and 9 September and 16 December 1938; *ND*, 12 and 15 June, and 18 October 1937; and the NSB's 'theoretical organ', *Houzee* (no. 35, 31 August 1935).

33. Drucker to Mussert, 10 October 1936, and Mussert's diary entries, 15–22 November 1936, NSB-Arch.-L, 5a and 6b; *Vova*, 24 June 1933, 31 July 1936, and 3 September 1937; and *ND*, 16 October 1937. See also Fraenkel-Verkade, 'Inleiding Rost', 135.

34. *Vova*, 17 November 1934; and *ND*, 28 May 1937.

35. *Vova*, 4 December 1936; and *ND*, 1 October 1937.
36. Among the German Nazis especially Alfred Rosenberg's, *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich 1930), fixated on this theme. See also George L. Mosse, 'Fascism and the French Revolution', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 24 (January 1989), 10–12.
37. See *Vova*, 4 March, and 1 and 22 April 1933; *ND*, 27 September 1937; Mussert's notes for his speeches, 14 April–4 May 1937, NSB-Arch.-L, 5a; and the materials compiled by the NSB's Afdeling Organisatie en Propaganda, 12 January 1934, NSB-Arch-P, 3a. See also Meyers, *Mussert*, 75.
38. Ian Kershaw, 'The Führer Image and Political Integration', in Gerhard Hirschfeld and Lothar Kettenacker, eds, *Der 'Führerstaat': Mythos und Realität* (Stuttgart 1991), 143; and his more detailed, *Der Hitler-Mythos: Volksmeinung und Propaganda im Dritten Reich* (Stuttgart 1980).
39. See the list of books in the NSB's central library, NSB-Arch., 43e. For Röhm's speech see Ernst Röhm, *Die nationalsozialistische Revolution und die SA* (Berlin 1934). On Röhm's social revolutionary ideas, which were hardly as clear-cut as his foreign admirers pretended; see Heinz Höhne, *Mordsache Röhm — Hitlers Durchbruch zur Alleinherrschaft 1933–1934* (Hamburg 1984), 95, 168, 310; and Hans-Günter Richardi, *Geheimakte Gerlich/Bell: Röhm's Pläne für ein Reich ohne Hitler* (Munich 1993).
40. *Vova*, 14 July 1934; German consulate Heerlen to German legation Den Haag, 21 March 1935, PA/AA, Gesand. Den Haag, Pol 4, Bd. 3; and Rost's diary entry 28 July 1934, in Rost, *Corr.*, I: 303. The Germans also recognized the negative effect of the Röhm affair on Dutch public opinion. See Stapoleitstelle Osnabrück to Gestapo Berlin, 15 July 1934, PA/AA, Pol.Abt.II, Po 5 Ni, Bd. 2.
41. In May, 1936 the Dutch bishops issued a pastoral letter reiterating their conviction that 'the Church would to a large extent be prevented from doing its beneficial work if the National Socialist Movement became politically dominant in our Fatherland.' The bishops consequently denied the Church's sacraments to anyone who supported the NSB 'in a significant way'. As a result, noted Count Zech, 'a considerable number of members left the NSB'. See German legation Den Haag to AA, 25 and 29 May 1936, PA/AA, R 102892.
42. The propaganda leader of the NSB's Groningen district pointed out that even in April, 1935 many potential voters were scared away from the party by news about the persecution of the churches and the Jews in the Third Reich. See Propaganda Afdeling Groningen to Farwerck, 19 April 1935, NSB-Arch., 7d.
43. See d'Ansembourg's letters to his uncle, to Monsignor Poels, and to the abbot of the monastery Maria Laach, 9 April 1934, 11 June 1933, and 26 June 1934, NSB-Arch., 249c; and Farwerck to H.G. Kengen, and M.B. v.d. Hoeven, 19 March 1934 and 30 August 1935, NSB-Arch., 4b. See also, C.B. Hylkema, *Het Nederlandsch fascisme: Wat het is, wat het leert, hoe het geworden is* (Utrecht 1934); and Dunk, *Weg*, 278.
44. *Vova*, 6 May 1933, 2 June 1934, 3 September 1937, and 18 February 1938; and *ND*, 6 and 14 November 1936, and 16 February, 5 April, 21 May, 23 July, and 9 August 1937. See also d'Ansembourg to Freiherr von Nagel, NSB-Arch., 251c; and Farwerck to J. Levelt, 23 April 1935, NSB-Arch., 7d.
45. On *Pro Deo et Patria*, see v. Amstel, 'Katholisches Pressebüro "Deo et Patria"' (hereafter: Amstel, 'Deo'), 3 May 1938, PA/AA, Presseabt., Ni 4, Bd. 4, Fach 155, Pak. 326; on the *NCP* see Niederländisches Pressebüro to AA, 24 April

1938, *ibid.* On the relations between the Dutch Protestants and Nazi Germany see Vaart Smit's own highly-coloured account, *Kerkstrijd* (Amsterdam 1935); and the far more scholarly treatment, Ger van Roon, *Protestants Nederland en Duitsland, 1933–1940* (Utrecht 1973), 240ff.

46. On the persecution of the Catholic clergy in Germany see Ulrich von Hehl, *Kirche und Nationalsozialismus im Erzbistum Köln 1933–1945* (Mainz 1977); Heinz-Albert Raem, 'Entstehung, Inhalt und Auswirkungen der Enzyklika "Mit Brennender Sorge" vom 14. März 1937 in ihrem historischen Kontext' (Diss. University of Bonn 1977); and Hans Günter Hockerts, *Die Sittlichkeitsprozesse gegen die katholische Ordensangehörige und Priester 1936/1937* (Mainz 1971).

47. *Vova*, 6 July 1935, and 6 August 1937; *ND*, 3 May, 9 June, 23 and 27 September, and 11 October 1937. On Leonhard's speaking tour, see German legation Den Haag to AA, 20 October 1937, PA/AA, R 102886, and *ND*, 18 October 1937; and on the *ND*'s request for more articles on the German *Kirchenkampf*, see Amstel, 'Deo'.

48. D'Ansembourg to Dr Paul, 14 September 1934, and the Farwerck, 2 May 1935, NSB-Arch., 249d and 250c; and Gestapa Berlin, 'Auslandsdienstbericht', 27 August 1936, PA/AA, Pol.Abt. II, Po 29 Ni, Bd. 1. See also the documentation in NSB-Arch.-L, 6; and Kwiet, 'Mussert', 175.

49. See Farwerck to N. v.d. Schalle-Olivier, 2 April 1935; and Mussert to Streicher, 19 January 1940, NSB-Arch., 7d, and NSB-Arch.-L, 15a. For German complaints on the NSB's attitude, see Gestapa Berlin to AA, 22 August 1935, PA/AA, Gesand. Den Haag, Pol 4, Bd. 3; and German legation Den Haag to AA, 13 November 1937, *ibid.*

50. Mussert's diary entry, 19 November 1936, NSB-Arch.-L, 6b. See also *ND*, 21 July 1937.

51. A.L.M. v.d. Lande to Farwerck, 2 October 1933, Farwerck to redactie *De Daad*, 9 October 1933, H.J. Tielemans to hoofkwartier NSB, 30 September 1935, and Gew. prop. insp. Arnhem to Farwerck, 27 December 1935, NSB-Arch., 2b, 9c, and 10b; and d'Ansembourg to J.L.D. Le Haan, 12 December 1935, *ibid.*, 251a. See also Havenaar, *NSB*, 107.

52. On Nazi criticism of the NSB's lack of antisemitism and the party's complaints about such attacks, see Paul Wurm to v. Thadden, 28 February 1944, PA/AA, Inl. II B; and the documentation in NSB-Arch, 9c.

53. *Vova*, 12 December 1933, 15 June 1935, and 18 November 1935; Mussert, '12 Jahre aus der Vogelperspektive', 4–5; and Mussert's speech, ca. February 1936, NSB-Arch.-L, 7d. See also Meyers, *Mussert*, 100.

54. C. de Wilde to Mussert, 2 March 1936, NSB-Arch., 11a; and L. Lindeman, ed., *Het Nationalisme van de N.S.B.: een documentatie over het tijdvak einde 1931-zomer 1939*, 3rd edn (Leiden 1939), 340. See also Dunk, *Weg*, 278.

55. Meyers, *Mussert*, 124, 147; Gestapa Berlin, 'Judenfrage in Holland', 20 July 1935, PA/AA, Presseabt. P 20, Bd. 6; Stapoleitstelle Osnabrück to Gestapa Berlin, 15 July 1934, PA/AA, Pol.Abt.II, Po 5 Ni, Bd. 2; and Kring Gooi Noord to Farwerck, 20 September 1935, NSB-Arch., 9c. On the NSB's membership patterns see Herman v.d. Wusten, 'The Low Countries', in Detlef Mühlberger, ed., *The Social Basis of European Fascist Movements* (London 1987), 225–6.

56. See for example, *ND*, 7 July and 4 October 1937 for the connection between the paper and the Aufklärungsausschuss see Hassenöhr, 'Bericht über die Möglichkeiten der Auslandsbeeinflussung', 10 January 1939, 23, PA/AA,

Dienststelle Ribbentrop, 14/1. The list of articles sent to the *ND* is in Aufklärungsausschuss Hamburg–Bremen to Propaganda Ministry, 25 May 1938, Aufklärungsausschuss Hamburg–Bremen Papers, Nr. 9, Bd. 2 (Staatsarchiv Hansestadt Hamburg [hereafter: StAHH]). See also the broadsheet ‘De jood’ (NSB-Arch., 51a) used by the party in the 1937 election campaign.

57. German legation Den Haag to AA, 14 June 1938, PA/AA, R 27210.

58. The NSB issued the speech as a separate pamphlet (*Mussert’s Standpunt*, NSB-Arch., 51c). See also Fraenkel-Verkade, ‘Inleiding Rost’, 53–5; and Meyers, *Mussert*, 138–9. On the German reaction see German legation Den Haag to AA, 26 October 1938, PA/AA, Gesand. Den Haag, Pol 4, Bd. 4; and *Der Stürmer*, 16 (December 1938).

59. *Vova*, 18 November 1938; and *ND*, 10 and 12 November 1938. See also Fraenkel-Verkade, ‘Inleiding Rost’, 55.

60. *Vova*, 25 November 1938; and Lindeman, *Nationalisme*, 344–53. On the Guyana Plan see the documentation and Rost’s expense account for his journey to Berlin, NSB-Arch.-L, 12 and 7f, res. See also Meyers, *Mussert*, 141; and Hirschfeld, *Dutch*, 257.

61. *Vova*, 18 November 1938.

62. German legation Den Haag to AA, 14 June 1938, PA/AA, R 27210. Such a realistic assessment was not shared by other Nazi officials. See AA, ‘Die Judenfrage als Faktor der Aussenpolitik im Jahre 1938’, 25 January 1939, PA/AA, Presseabt. P 20, Bd. 7, which, contrary to fact, described antisemitism in the Netherlands as ‘im starken Zunehmen’.

63. Thierry Maulnier, *Au delà du nationalisme* (Paris 1938), 31.

64. Horst Lademacher, ‘Die Niederlande und Belgien in der Aussenpolitik des Dritten Reiches, 1933–1939’, in Manfred Funke, ed., *Hitler, Deutschland und die Mächte: Materialien zur Aussenpolitik des Dritten Reiches* (Düsseldorf 1978), 654–6; *ND*, 21 May 1937; and Lindeman, ed., *Nationalisme*, 264–5.

65. During his 1936 visit to Germany the *leider* told one of his hosts, Oberstarbeitsführer Müller-Brandenburg, that he, Mussert, ‘so ein klein bischen Angst gegenüber Deutschland selbst nicht loswerden könne.’ Müller-Brandenburg to AA, 17 November 1936, PA/AA, Gesand. Den Haag, Pol 4, Bd. 3. See also Mussert’s diary entries, 18 November 1936, 9 June and 21 August 1940, NSB-Arch.-L, 6b and Mussert-Arch., 3e; Likus, ‘Aufzeichnung’, 25 May 1940, PA/AA, Akten UStS. Luther, Bd. 45; Kwiet, ‘Mussert’, 182; and Meyers, *Mussert*, 129.

66. The NSB tried to draw a distinction between the ‘imperialist’ ambitions of men like Hugenberg and Hitler’s aim to create a true balance of power based upon fascist principles. See *Vova*, 1 April 1933.

67. *Vova*, 21 October 1933 and 23 March 1935. See also the report of the Stapoleitsettle Düsseldorf, 5 April 1935, on the NSB’s attitude toward German rearmament, PA/AA, Pol.Abt.II, Po 5 Ni, Bd. 3.

68. Lindeman, ed., *Nationalisme*, 79 and 83ff. For a slightly different interpretation of Mussert’s naïveté see Havenaar, *NSB*, 113.

69. *Vova*, 14 March and 14 August 1936; and *ND*, 10 December 1936 and 31 July 1937. See also Mussert’s speech in Utrecht, 10 May 1936, NSB-Arch.-L, 7b.

70. *Vova*, 5 January 1935, and *ND*, 11 May, and 12 and 23 July 1937. In true Goebbels style the *ND*’s 11 May 1937 issue labelled the RKSP a ‘staatsgreep-partij’ (Putsch party).

71. *Vova*, 18 March 1938; *ND*, 24 August 1937; Lindeman, ed., *Nationalisme*, 162; and Mussert's notes for his speech, 1 October 1938, NSB-Arch., 11f. For Rost's effusive reports on the 'new' Austria see *ND*, 15 November 1938; and Fraenkel-Verkade, 'Inleiding Rost', 29.

72. *Vova*, 9 December 1933, and 18 March and 7 October 1938; and *ND*, 21 May and 2 July 1937. On the Nazis' view of Rohan see Luther to Dr Paul Schmidt, 27 October 1941, PA/AA, Akten UStS. Luther, Bd. 8.

73. *ND*, 9 March 1939ff; and Lindeman, ed., *Nationalisme*, 260.

74. See the documentation in NSB-Arch., 51d.

75. See Mussert's statement during his post-war trial, 28 November 1945, Mussert-Arch., 3g. For the NSB's criticism of the Anti-Comintern Pact see *ND*, 26 November 1936. For a German report on the unpopularity of the German-Japanese rapprochement see DNB-Vertreter, 'Bericht', 27 November 1936, PA/AA, Dienststelle Ribbentrop, VB/1/1, Teil 1. See also Mussert to Jonggrip, 16 September 1936, NSB-Arch.-L, 13j; and Mussert, 'Gedachten', 10. The French fascist Jacques Doriot, equally concerned about France's control of Indo-China and the maintenance of European influence in Asia, echoed Mussert's criticism of Hitler's alignment with Japan. See Robert Soucy, *French Fascism: The Second Wave, 1933-1939* (New Haven, CT 1995), 254.

76. See the report of an unnamed German agent to Likus, 12 April 1939, PA/AA, Dienststelle Ribbentrop, 3/1, Teil 1; and German consulate Amsterdam to German legation Den Haag, 9 June 1938, PA/AA, Gesand. Den Haag, Pol 4 Bd. 4.

77. See Gew. Comm. Limburg-Noord-Brabant to Mussert, 6 February 1935; and Woudenberg to Geelkerken, 3 May 1937, NSB-Arch., 7a and 13e.

78. D'Ansembourg to Geelkerken, 29 December 1938, NSB-Arch., 252b.

79. Van Duyl, who left the NSB in 1937, approached Dr Johanssen, the head of the Aufklärungsausschuss, with just such a suggestion. See Willem Huybers to Johanssen, 27 October 1938, Aufklärungsausschuss Hamburg-Bremen Papers, Nr. 9, Bd. 2.

80. Kooy, *Échec*, 85-6 and 223; and Dunk, *Weg*, 277.

Dietrich Orlow

is Professor of History at Boston University, USA. His most recent publications include the 4th edition of *A History of Modern Germany, 1871-Present* (Prentice Hall, 1998) and the forthcoming monograph, *Common Destiny: A Comparative History of the Dutch, French, and German Social Democratic Parties, 1945-1969* (Berghan Books). He is at present working on a book-length study of the relations between the German Nazis and the Dutch and French Fascists in the years 1933 to 1939.