

## CONCLUSION

The documents clearly show that the G7 emigrated for fear of a Russian invasion of their country. This was the main factor that pushed them to leave the Netherlands. There were also some demonstrable minor reasons, such as the perceived intrusion of the State into areas of life which were the responsibility of the church or the family, their Calvinistic pillar, and the indirect encouragement of the Prime Minister. Migrants that followed the G7 left for different reasons, although nobody left for one reason only. These ranged from a sense of adventure, to a desire for better prospects, to escape from a stifling social environment after serving in Indonesia, or to a desire for better housing. To emigrate was seen as a viable solution to a life situation that was lacking something substantial, a lack that had little prospect of being remedied in the near future.

The documents clearly show that the G7 did not leave for economic reasons. They all had secure, well paying jobs, and houses, although it is not known if they owned them. In fact, most Dutch migrants did not leave for economic reasons, although economic desires did play a role. It cannot be shown if granting independence to Indonesia was a factor, as this matter was never mentioned in contemporary documents.<sup>1</sup> Disgust at the supposed soft treatment given to Nazi collaborators, a part of this writers' oral tradition, is also never documented.<sup>2</sup>

The G7 were going somewhere whereas many migrants were leaving somewhere. This may be part of the reason why the former clearly spelled out their intentions before leaving, and the latter were always vague about their hopes and aspirations. Ultimately, the motivations and intentions of the migrant cannot be known, only indicated. Whether documented at the time or recollected in old age, they can never be a complete record or rank each factor in order of importance. The decision to emigrate, and then the choice of destination, is a personal decision for each migrant. Factors influencing his or her decision can be defined, but a given combination of

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<sup>1</sup> It was mentioned by the eldest son of vdLaan when I was collecting documents. It is also mentioned as a factor in the family history of Jim vd Molen.

<sup>2</sup> A newspaper clipping, probably from a Dutch paper with a column called *Televisie Nederland* and hand dated to Spring 1979, reports on a Dutch TV program transmitted the previous evening in which Eb Pinkster was interviewed. In this he claimed that a part reason for emigrating was that Nazi collaborators received more prestige in society than 'those wild boys' in the Resistance. The claim could be true yet never documented, or documented and not sighted for this study.

factors will not guarantee a decision. There were many individuals in Groningen in 1950 that would have had a similar life situation before the war, and similar experiences at the hand of the occupying forces, but few chose to emigrate. On the other hand, individuals with quite different life experiences chose to emigrate.

Whether being pushed or pulled, aspirant migrants retain that status until there is a receiving country, and Australia obliged. The intentions of the Australian government were to increase the population of the country, preferably with British migrants but otherwise with substitutes.<sup>3</sup> Once the migrants had arrived, they were given some cash and left to their own devices.<sup>4</sup> Those that had not made prior arrangements were housed in camps which were less than salubrious.<sup>5</sup>

Assimilation was less than initially aimed for because of successful sponsoring. Ever more migrants agreed with the G7 that a delightful place had been found, and ever more migrants established themselves in Kingston.<sup>6</sup> This increased the possibilities of inter-Dutch social transactions, both business and private. The gaining of critical mass in organisations catering to special interests precluded joining Australian organisations.<sup>7</sup> The sheer demand on the time of the migrants building new homes for

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<sup>3</sup> It was not just government policy, it was a desire in the community. "Cr Bylett said he appreciated the class of migrants that were coming - it was hoped to keep Australia white and we should do all we can to encourage the Dutch." Kingborough Council Minutes p.443. ref MCC 19/19, Archives Office of Tasmania. As a percentage of the total Tasmanian population, they remained but a tiny minority. L. Robson, *A Short History of Tasmania*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1985. p.170.

<sup>4</sup> Walker-Birckhead, *op.cit.*, p.7. Australians made some effort to welcome the new arrivals. An ecumenical Hobart Youth group, drawn from the Methodist, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches, organised an evening for New Australians on 23 June 1950. *The Mercury* reported an attendance of 300. *The Mercury*, Sat. 24 Jun 1950, p.4.

<sup>5</sup> W. Walker-Birckhead, *Paying our way: private and public meanings of migration* Australian Journal of Anthropology, April 1998. p.5.

<sup>6</sup> So many liked it here, that practically no-one left. W. Van der Mast, *Praktijk en patroon van recente Nederlandse groeps migraties. Met een suggestie voor een gewijzigde vorm van groeps migreren: Interlinked migratie*. Noordhoff NV, Groningen, 1963. p.82. He attributes the successful establishment of Kingston to the outstanding individuals involved, especially in comparison to the other eleven Dutch migrant communities he studied in Argentina, Brazil and France. p.424. Watt shows the number of Dutch born in Kingborough - 1947/3, in 1954/211, in 1961/419 - whereafter the number declined. M.G. Watt, Little Groningen: 'Some Aspects of Bilingualism and Acculturation among Dutch Immigrants in Kingborough, Tasmania'. Unpublished (B Ed) Thesis, Uni of Tas. Farmer notes that the establishment of the Reform (sic) Church and attractive proximity to the capital city were contributing factors. R.S.J. Farmer, 'The Geography of Migration in Tasmania, 1921 - 1961', Uni Tas 1968. p.255. At the same time large numbers of Tasmanian born continued to move to the mainland, up to 20 percent by 1954. There is, however, no suggestion of cause and effect. Robson, *op.cit.*, p.173

<sup>7</sup> Julian notes that religious affiliation is an important determinant of the degree and manner of interpersonal relationships. R. Julian, 'The Dutch in Tasmania: An Exploration of Ethnicity and Immigrant Adaptation', University of Tasmania, 1989. p.85. However, so is having the time and place, factors which were at a premium for the migrants. J H Elich, *De Omgekeerde Wereld: Nederlanders als Ethische Groep in Australië*, Rijksuniversiteit te Leiden, 1985, p.24.

themselves also limited interaction with locals.<sup>8</sup> The *Mededelingen Nederlandse Vereniging 'Abel Tasman'* was the newsletter of a club set up to give information to and maintain contact with Dutch settlers.<sup>9</sup> Like Little Groningen itself, it eased assimilation by offering support.<sup>10</sup> As an ethnic pillar, the Calvinists joined in social activities with ethnic Dutch nationals, but there were few activities based on national Dutch ethnicity, and the social organisation based on this was limited.<sup>11</sup>

The ever growing number of Dutch migrants to Kingston also increased the critical mass able to sustain some elements of the former way of life. The pressure from the newcomers forced the creation of the Reformed Church.<sup>12</sup> That same pressure forced a compromise such that the Church services were in English excepting for the sermon.<sup>13</sup> The desire to somehow, eventually, become Australian, always remained.<sup>14</sup> This was expressed in the protocol,<sup>15</sup> and also in response to the Anglican Church regarding burials.<sup>16</sup> The Dutch were aware that instituting their own Church would hinder assimilation, but were not prepared to compromise their standards for the sake of assimilation.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Van der Mast, *op.cit.*, p.95.

<sup>9</sup> M. Gilson, and J. Zubrzycki, *The Foreign Language Press in Australia, 1848 - 1964*. Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1967. p.39

<sup>10</sup> Watt, *op.cit.*, p.81.

<sup>11</sup> Van Wamel claims this is typical of Dutch migrants. A.L. Van Wamel, *Nederland mijn moeder, Australië mijn bruid*, Doctoral Thesis, Catholic University, Nijmegen, 1993, p.12. Julian agrees that the maintenance of specific cultural practices, values and beliefs requires a structural basis. Julian, *op.cit.*, p.39.

<sup>12</sup> This may be seen as the mobilization of ethnicity as discussed by Julian, (*op.cit.*, p.25 and 46) or a mobilization of religion only, but no conclusion can be safely reached without an examination of the documents generated at the time. The quote - 'In the beginning (1950) they went to the Methodist Church, where they found a lot of good in the positive orthodox preacher Rev. C. Dodd.' Kort Verslag van de Voorgeschiedenis der kerkstichting te Penguin en Ulverstone.- suggests it was not so simple. Similar documents concerning the Presbyterians and Dutch migrants in Kingston exist.

<sup>13</sup> Van der Mast, *op.cit.*, p.84.

<sup>14</sup> Kremer 'er was geen overweging voor om zich te isoleren van het Australische volk. Nee, zij wilden op deze manier niets anders dan het volk dienen in welks midden zij hun nieuwe levensbestaan gingen opbouwen.' J. Kremer, *Van Zorg en Zegen: De Gereformeerde Kerken en de Emigratie*, Annual Report, Christelijke Emigratie Centrale, Utrecht, December 1956. p. 15.

<sup>15</sup> The protocol claims a desire to become fully Australian as soon as possible. The criteria by which this should be judged is stated to be 'when all services are completely in English'. Protocol of the Institution of the Reformed Churches of Australia, Penguin, 13 October 1951. Also Protocol of the Reformed Church of Kingston, 24 February 1952.

<sup>16</sup> The Anglicans, after several burial services of Dutch migrants in their cemetery, offered a portion of their ground, this to be free from Anglican burial regulations. They felt able to make this offer because they were satisfied with the procedure followed by the Dutch. The offer was declined because, the Dutch said, we live among you and so we wish to be buried among you. Van der Mast, *op.cit.*, p.85.

<sup>17</sup> 'De leden van de Reformed Church zijn zich terdege er van bewust, dat hun kerkverband de assimilatie zal remmen, want men staat nu eenmaal voor de opgave Australiër te worden en gelijktijdig het beste, dat men uit Nederland meekreeg, te bewaren en uit te dragen. Want zonder dat laatste heeft men liever in het geheel geen assimilatie. *Trouw* 21 Nov 1953.

With respect to employment, there were about ten building companies based in Kingston within the first ten years. Most of these were owned, in whole or part, by Dutch migrants.<sup>18</sup> The ABC then had about 100 employees, mostly non-Dutch. Employees on the Hobart Olympic pool job came from 13 countries, and on the Australian Broadcasting Commission transmission tower erection on Mount Wellington, only two of seven workers were Dutch.<sup>19</sup> The ABC sponsored people to come to Tasmania if they were desirous of leaving the Netherlands, but not to have some undefined hold over them. Reg Doedens started his own business within nine months of arriving.<sup>20</sup> Henk Sikkema listed his occupation as public servant, probate, since 22 March 1954, on his application for Naturalisation.<sup>21</sup> Jan Schuringa was employed as a draughtsman by the HEC within a year of arrival.<sup>22</sup>

Immigration and Naturalisation records<sup>23</sup> show when migrants actually arrived and when they applied to be naturalized - the gap is usually the shortest legally permitted and so tells of their commitment to their new life.<sup>24</sup> The process involved forsaking their beloved House of Orange-Nassau and swearing allegiance to Queen Elizabeth in order to qualify as citizens,<sup>25</sup> an oath not required of the native born.<sup>26</sup> At a function in Hobart on 17 October 1953, half of the 150 Dutch migrants present indicated they planned to naturalise as soon as possible.<sup>27</sup>

The G7 and the Dutch migrants who followed them achieved partial assimilation. This was enough for the historian Geoffrey Blainey.<sup>28</sup> Their Dutch national

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<sup>18</sup> Van der Mast, *op.cit.*, p.79. This confirms that the ABC did not intend to retain the emigrants it sponsored. It did not claim any type of ownership on migrants or create a structure to keep them and sustain a previous way of life. Van der Mast, *op.cit.*, p.79.

<sup>19</sup> *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 11 Feb 1959, p.12.

<sup>20</sup> Verbal response

<sup>21</sup> Effectively 30 months after arriving. In private correspondence he claims he took this position so that he could attend university, and was the first Dutch migrant so to attend.

<sup>22</sup> Detail from Application for Naturalisation.

<sup>23</sup> Available from the National Archives of Australia.

<sup>24</sup> Hempel claims a speedy naturalisation and integration rate for Dutch migrants in Queensland. J. Hempel, *Dutch Migrants in Queensland*, Australian National University, Canberra, 1960, pp. 2 and 13.

<sup>25</sup> Not an easy process - see Laning family letters.

<sup>26</sup> D. Horne, *The Lucky Country*, Penguin, Harmondsworth, 1964. p.86.

<sup>27</sup> *Mededelingen Nederlandse Vereniging 'Abel Tasman'* G. Rhee (redactie) Issue 21, Nov/Dec 1953. In 1981 it was determined that more than 90% of Dutch migrants were naturalized. Julian, *op.cit.*, p.108. In contrast, Dutch migrants to Brazil and Argentina were not interested in Naturalisation. Van der Mast, *op.cit.*, pp.264 and 318.

<sup>28</sup> Success, he claimed, was measured by 'largely conformed to Australian ways.' J. Lack and J. Templeton, *Bold Experiment*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1995, p.219.

ethnicity faded but did not disappear. A new, Australian ethnicity largely took the vacated space, although there was doubt as to what that meant.<sup>29</sup> The Calvinist ethnicity remained a distinctive feature because it was the core of their lives.

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<sup>29</sup> In 1956 Sir Richard Boyer suggested that Australians might become assimilated to the migrants because they had no definition of Australian. Lack, *op.cit.*, p.16. The old definition of 'British, democratic and Christian' no longer applied. *ibid.*, p.70.