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Children, Youth and Schooling Disruption in the Netherlands During World War II.

Education is one of the prime formative experiences in the lives of children and adolescents. What, however, if conditions of war disrupt this experience? Annette Richardson reviews the schooling disruption in the Netherlands during World War II.

INTRODUCTION

Schooling during a child's formative years is central to the historical human experience and wields an important societal component. In this preliminary overview the schooling experience of children and youth in the Netherlands during World War II will be examined within the context of the Schooling Disruption Model. This Model emerged from extensive archival research, personal interviews, government and ministry of education reports, secondary articles and books, diaries and Internet sources. The accumulated evidence indicates that schooling is affected deleteriously as soon as a conflict commences and deteriorates to the point of cessation as the conflict is prolonged. The Schooling Disruption Model findings that recently have been published in historical and educational literature is a pattern that has permeated twentieth century history of education but has only recently become a new field of inquiry.¹

As Appendix A indicates, some of the salient points of schooling disruption are as follows: one, schools are used for the conflict's purpose whether for billeting troops, as military hospitals or as transit depots. Two, teachers are removed and replaced by collaborators. Three, the oppressor

1 See Annette Richardson, 'Anatomy of Schooling Disruption', *International Journal of Educational Policy, Research and Practice* 2000, and Idem, 'Conflict and the Disruption of the Schooling Odyssey of Africa's Children' in: Malinda S. Smith ed., *Options for Africa: Governance, Development and Culture* (Philadelphia 2000).

changes the curriculum to conform to his ideological stance. Four, deprivations result in a paucity of teaching tools that hinder effectiveness of schooling. Five, deportations, whether for labour or combat purposes, wreak irrevocable devastation on the lives of children and youth. Fifth and finally, the cumulative effect of all these factors contribute to the disruption of schooling which in many conflict situations continue for years.² These major points have minor variables according to the geographic, economic and political persuasion of the conflict.

The World War I Alsace Lorraine educational experience, World War II experiences in occupied countries, and the more recent conflicts in Afghanistan, Burma, Nigeria, and Somalia, to name a few, are some examples that indicate that a schooling disruption pattern is applicable. This research topic is not restricted to renegade dictators as the World War II experience in the Netherlands attests.

Two connecting questions will be posed in this paper. One asks 'What happened to the various levels of 'schooling' during World War II in the Occupied Netherlands?' The answer to this question will answer the second question which is 'Does the Schooling Disruption Model correspond to the Netherlands World War II schooling experience?'

Terminology

Conflict, especially if it is prolonged, disrupts 'schooling' which in this paper will be used as a verb. It therefore is defined as the formal element of attending school, which consists of a non-random, structured and time-bound program with certified teachers, a recognized prescribed curriculum, evaluations and exams, all in a formal educational environment. In other words, schooling is the formal educational scholastic process that children and youth receive from pre- kindergarten to the end of their first post secondary program. For purposes of this discussion, children and youth are considered to be individuals between the ages of five and twenty-four who are registered in a formal school program. The distinction of schooling from education is significant: education is a lifelong process which continues long after formal schooling has ceased and can be obtained outside a formal setting through life experiences. Schooling disruption in the Netherlands during World War II and its effect on children and youth, rather than education, is the focus of this paper.

2 Due to the brevity of this article the family factor will be omitted.

Invasion 1940

During World War II the Netherlands was occupied, from May 10, 1940 to May 5, 1945, by the German Nazis, (hereafter Occupiers). No one was fully prepared, mentally, morally nor academically, when the Germans invaded the Netherlands.³ The relatively quick capitulation on May 15, 1940, after the Germans unconscionably destroyed Rotterdam and threatened more terror, was deemed expedient by the unprepared Netherlands government.

Hitler appointed the Catholic, Austrian born lawyer Arthur Seyss-Inquart, (1892-1946) a minister without portfolio in his cabinet, to govern the Netherlands.⁴ Also known as the Austrian quisling Seyss-Inquart had been described by Hitler as 'extraordinarily clever, as supple as an eel'.⁵ On May 29, 1940 Seyss-Inquart was formally installed as *Reichskommissar für die niederlandische Gebiete* (State Commissioner for the Netherlands Territory), but excluding the Netherlands Indies. Seyss-Inquart's mandate gave him responsibility for total powers of the Crown, the supervision of the Netherlands' civil administration, all the Netherlands' agencies then in existence, as well as governing through his four *Generalkommissars* (General Commissioners).

In his inaugural speech Seyss-Inquart claimed that Germany had no imperial designs in mind whatsoever for the Netherlands. He stated that 'we will neither oppress this land and its people imperialistically nor will we impose on them our political convictions. We will bring this about in no other way - only through our deportment and example'.⁶ The initial civility of the Germans surprised the Netherlands populace.

3 See R. D. Kollwijn, 'The Dutch Universities Under Nazi Domination' in: Thorsten Sellin ed., *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* Vol. 245 Special Edition, N.W. Posthumus ed., 'The Netherlands During German Occupation' (May 1946) 118.

4 Seyss-Inquart was appointed by Hitler and in the unique position of being accountable directly to him. They met eight times from 1940 to 1942 and only three times after 1942. (De Jong), 4-1: 62. Canadian troops captured him. He was tried at Nuremberg, found guilty of crimes against humanity, sentenced to death and executed in 1946. See H.J. Neumann, *Arthur Seyss-Inquart* (Styria 1970).

5 Norman Cameron and R.H. Stevens, translators, *Hitler's Table Talk 1941-1944: His Private Conversations*, (London 1953) 344.

6 *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, 10 volumes, (Nuremberg 1947-1949) II, 989.

I. PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

In 1940 the educational system in the Netherlands was rather complex and richly differentiated as illustrated in Appendix A: it mirrored the strongly pillarized society. Legislatively education was governed by relatively old Acts that many educators and politicians believed did not require change because the system worked quite smoothly. The Primary School Act had been passed in 1920. The 1837 Secondary Act and the 1887 Higher Education Act completed the educational levels. The Ministry of Education had been established only in 1918.⁷ Schooling in the Netherlands was mandatory. Students wrote final examinations to advance to the next levels. Teacher training was in force and the curriculum was strictly executed. The population of the Netherlands at the time of the invasion was approximately 9 million. In 1940, some 2,500,000 children and youth ranging in age from the age of six to twenty-one were enrolled in the various stages and levels of the educational system.⁸

The post secondary system was composed of the vocational higher schools and the academic universities. The student population was an elite group largely derived from the upper classes of Netherlands' society. Post secondary educational institutions in 1940 were: the State Universities of Leiden, Groningen, and Utrecht, the Roman Catholic University of Nijmegen, the Municipal University of Amsterdam and the Free (Orthodox Calvinist) University of Amsterdam. The higher vocational institutions included Delft Technical School, the Agricultural School at Wageningen, the Netherlands School of Economics at Rotterdam and the Roman Catholic Tilburg School of Economics, Social Science and Law. In the 1938/39 academic year the student population in both the higher schools and the universities totalled 12,592 while in the 1939/40 academic year the registrations were significantly lower at 11,251.⁹

7 See Nan L. Dodde, *Geschiedenis van het Nederlandse schoolwezen* (Purmerend 1981) and Idem, *Het Nederlandse Onderwijs Verandert: Ontwikkelingen sinds 1800* (Muiderberg 1983) for detailed histories of the Netherlands' education system.

8 C. van Eden, 'The Education of Youth' in: Thorsten Sellin ed., *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 245, Special Edition, N.W. Posthumus ed., 'The Netherlands During German Occupation' (May 1946) 132.

9 Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Het Onderwijs in 1940* ('s-Gravenhage 1943) 30.

II. DISRUPTION OF PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

A. SCHOOLS

The Occupiers imposed adversarial changes on the elementary and secondary system the day they marched into the Netherlands. Schools were used immediately for military purposes; the Occupiers appropriated school buildings for their war effort. Educational institutions, especially large ecclesiastical boarding schools in the heavily Roman Catholic south were quickly evacuated to house troops. The Occupier's bureaucracy also inhabited schools. Emergency children's hospitals were housed in school buildings and many schools later served as Red Cross sites. Some schools became transportation depots whether for labour, Jews or students and teachers. In the later phase of the Occupation schools became food distribution centres. One school became a bordello for the Nazi officers.¹⁰

Consequently schools that remained open became severely overcrowded and eventually emergency schools had to be improvised. To continue holding classes, schools were established in any available space large enough to accommodate the large cluster of students. Schools were set up in various places: stables, garages, vestry rooms, lofts and cellars, farmers' sheds, living rooms, bakeries, workplace lunchrooms. Frequently schools were spread across up to six or seven different buildings. Schooling in many instances was conducted in two shifts. By 1943 some schools had been re-established up to ten times. As the Nazi war machinery and administration increased in size the loss of school buildings had become desperate. The smooth flow of the educational system was thus impeded and the children undoubtedly had some difficulty adjusting to these frequent changes. By 1943 all the schools in the Netherlands were being used for military purposes.¹¹

Destruction of Schools

Some schools could not be used for military purposes. Many school buildings had been partially destroyed rendering them unusable. For example, in Hengelo, Overijssel, an industrial town near the German bor-

10 L. F. Kleiterp, 'Het Lager en Voortgezet Onderwijs' in: *Onderdrukking en Verzet: Nederland in Oorlogstijd*, Vol. 3 (Arnhem 1955) 289.

11 G.A. van Poelje, 'Overheidsbemoeiingen met het onderwijs' in: *Onderdrukking en Verzet: Nederland in Oorlogstijd*, Vol. 3 (Arnhem 1955) 289.



Two British paratroopers enter the ruins of a *ULO* School near Arnhem (1944; Photo: *British Official Press*).

der, the *HBS Wilhelmina* School was closed in 1943 due to its proximity to heavy bombing. The school was within the Stork complex that erroneously had been perceived by the Allies as a weapons factory. The Allied aim was not only Stork but also the adjacent marshalling yards which bordered the school grounds. The Allies achieved their goal of destruction when in one episode 97 tons of bombs were dropped on Hengelo.¹² The devastation was horrendous. Accordingly, due to frequent interruptions the school was forced to hold classes in two other schools, the *Beukweg School* and the *Wilbert School*. There was a considerable distance between the former school and the latter two schools. *HBS Wilhelmina* School's two first year classes, two second year classes, two third year classes and the fourth and fifth year classes were divided into two separate categories.

The Netherlands had its measure of partially destroyed or destroyed schools. During World War II in the Netherlands some 484 schools had been destroyed partially: 359 elementary schools, eighty vocational schools

12 Henk van Baaren, '71 Marauders gooiden 97 tonnen bommen op Hengelo', *Oald Hengel* 19 no. 5 (October 1994) 107.

and forty-five secondary schools suffered extensive damage.¹³ Yet other school buildings were bombed and many were irreparably destroyed. At war's end some 315 schools in the Netherlands had been destroyed completely.¹⁴ Elementary schools, which were the most heavily used, physically experienced the most severe damage. This level lost 293 schools. Ten vocational schools and twelve secondary schools also were completely destroyed. The main building and library of Nijmegen University were set afire in 1945 by the retreating Occupiers. Similarly, the buildings of Wageningen's Agricultural School were so heavily bombed that it too was destroyed. School buildings obviously play an important role during conflict situations.

B. TEACHERS

Outgoing

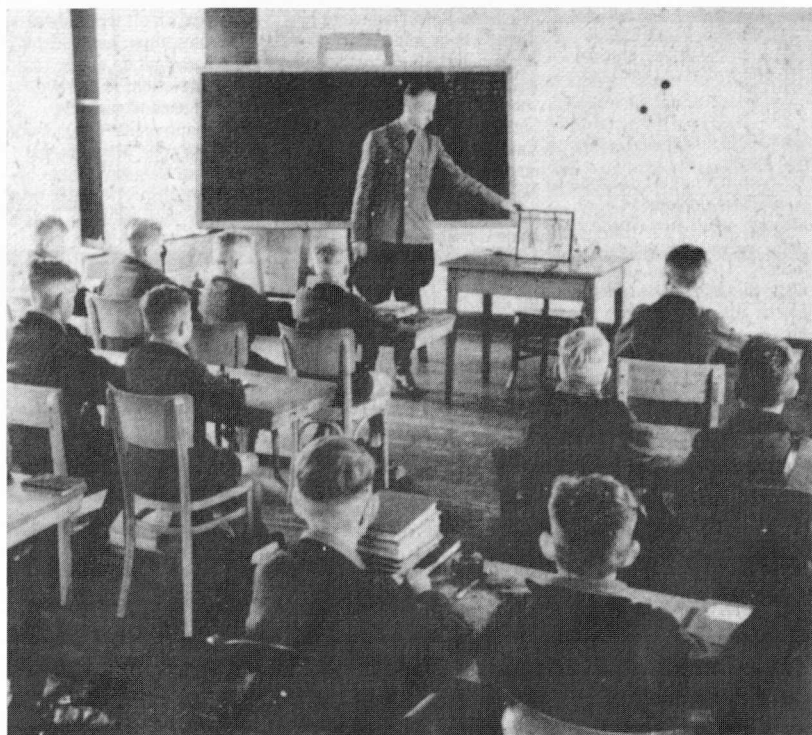
Teachers play a fundamental role in schooling disruption. Teachers are role models, they act *in loco parentis* and play a crucial integral role in the holistic development of the child. The bond that children and youth share with their teacher is of utmost importance to their psychological and cognitive development. As the German invasion progressed the emotional and pedagogical ties to their teacher quite often was the only normalcy children and youth could expect. Staffing the schools during conflict situations created crucial problems because the Occupiers made teachers prime targets for inclusion in the conflict, whether teachers agreed or disagreed with Nazi policies.

Seyss-Inquart and his minions removed teachers from their positions at all the educational levels by their interference with the appointments decree. As early as August 1940 Jews were denied their constitutional right to teach in schools and were summarily dismissed. On September 30, 1940 any new appointments of Jewish teachers were restricted except in Jewish schools. By November 1940 the Occupational Government had removed the majority of the Jewish professors from their secondary and post secondary level positions.¹⁵ Moreover, on January 9, 1942 a new decree

13 Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Het Onderwijs in Nederland verslag over de jaren 1944, 1945, en 1946* (1949) 50.

14 Ibidem, 50.

15 See Annette Richardson, 'Expurgating Jewish Faculty During the Netherlands' Nazi Occupation: 1940-1943', *World Studies in Education*, Volume 2, No 2, (2000).



A teacher appointed by the Occupational Government. Source: Ministry of Education, Netherlands. *Uitleg Extra* No.1, (25 April 1990) 20.

was issued which prevented teachers whom the Occupiers earlier had dismissed were restricted from obtaining teaching positions elsewhere in the Netherlands.¹⁶

A shortage of teaching professionals also affected the elementary and secondary educational system. This occurred because in 1942 the Occupational Government introduced compulsory labour service and reassigned teachers and principals to labour intensive work such as farming or construction. In early 1943 the Nazis decreed that approximately twenty percent of the total of the remaining male teachers were to be deported to Germany to work as labourers. However, only two percent of that particular labour quota was met.¹⁷ In anticipation of problems many professors were arrested by the Occupiers and held hostage at the *St. Michielsgestel* seminary to ensure that students would report for labour duty.

16 Van Poelje, 273.

17 Van Eden, 132.

Incoming

The result of removing all of these teachers was that an unknown teacher, often a non-professional loyal to the new regime and generally new to the community was appointed by the Occupiers to take over the classes. In many schools *Nationale Socialistische Bond* (National Socialist Bond, hereafter NSB) party members or those affiliated with the Occupational Government were appointed to teach in the primary and secondary schools, vocational schools and universities. These new teachers were required to bring in a culturally appropriate new curriculum, one that conformed to Nazi ideology. Consequently, within a few years after the German invasion many schools in the Netherlands had teachers who were not qualified to teach but who had the right connections.

Teacher training

Since the Germans were assured of the superiority of their educational system they believed it was their duty to introduce new teacher training methods. As the conflict progressed continued the Occupiers purposely aimed to 'Nazify' the teacher training school program. The Occupational Government's bureaucracy believed that it could infuse student teachers with Nazi ideology and that the elementary education level in turn would yield good Nazis. In 1941 student teachers were forced to study the components of Nazi Normal Schools. A new teacher training curriculum that included such courses as Nazi ideology and marching was introduced. These courses were to be of six months' duration, and without having completed these courses, the Occupiers would not allow new teachers to take up their positions.

C. CURRICULUM

The third step the Occupiers used was to implement considerable ideological change to the extant curriculum. The heavily pervasive Nazi ideology was distinguished through language change, propaganda, and textbook censorship, destruction of books, propaganda and a pronounced military emphasis.

Language

It did not take long for Berlin to impose the German language on the Netherlands' educational system. This was a very important goal and imperative for spreading Nazi ideology and creating a *Gross-Deutschland* or Pan-German state. Consequently, German language training was to commence in the VGLO schools of the eight year elementary school program. (See Appendix B) The secondary schools were also forced to include German language in the curriculum. A foreign language element traditionally was included at this level but the compulsory element greatly irritated most Netherlands. Many students came to hate the subject because it represented the Nazi regime. Students indicated their displeasure by purposely failing their German language examinations although the Occupiers reported to Berlin that results were satisfactory.

Textbooks

The Occupiers' propaganda and doctrine proclaimed through curriculum changes were manifested through textbooks which were an invaluable tool for the dissemination of Nazi ideology. In the Netherlands books that had been defaced with caricatures of Hitler were at first ordered to be destroyed by the Occupiers but they relented by merely tearing out the offensive pages.¹⁸ Textbooks were examined by several Department of Education advisory committees, created in 1942, for ideas the Nazis discouraged. Stricter controls were announced on March 25, 1942. All works that had pertained to Judaism as well as any Marxist, anti-German or anti National Socialist literature were forbidden and on September 16, 1942 all the works of Jewish authors were eliminated from the curriculum.¹⁹ Any reference to the Netherlands' Royal Family was censored and the photographs of living Royal Family members were removed.²⁰ Likely this was due to Hitler's rage that Queen Wilhelmina had escaped before his troops reached her palace. However, the Netherlands' textbooks had never been particularly anti-German: of the approximately 5,000 books that students surveyed in secondary education, only 155 were subjected to

18 Van Poelje, 262.

19 Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Het Onderwijs in 1942* ('s Gravenhage 1943) 13.

20 Kleiterp, 281.

censorship, and most of these were changed only slightly.²¹ Many school books, post secondary library books and public library books considered offensive to the Occupiers were destroyed. As early as 1933 Nazis in Berlin made bonfires out of books, depriving generations of students of source materials.

Propaganda

The Nazis also excessively used propaganda techniques to dehumanize their perceived 'enemy', in their case Jews, gypsies and homosexuals, to denigrate their opponents. The Occupational Government introduced a pamphlet entitled *Our Forebears* that it believed depicted the high cultural level the Germans the deemed they had reached. This pamphlet was meant to foster German racial pride in Netherlanders. The Occupiers made the pamphlet compulsory reading at the elementary level. An attempt also was made to locate a historical source that described Netherlanders as an offshoot of the Germanic world, and eligible for a daughterly relationship with Hitler's Reich.

Military emphasis

Another area where Nazis tried to convert students to their ideology was through curriculum changes. At the secondary level education changed during the Occupation with the implementation of German style physical education. Traditionally in the Netherlands gymnastic clubs had been a municipal rather than educationally oriented responsibility. The educational authorities in the Netherlands had only recently settled the question of physical education in the schools, which had become compulsory only as late as 1940. This subject naturally appealed to the Nazis but they wanted a more military, drill-like gymnastics program with which the Netherlands educrats disagreed.²²

D. DEPRIVATIONS

Historically during conflict situations, economic resources are diverted to the conflict's purposes. The prolonged Occupation engendered serious

21 Van Eden, 135.

22 The term 'educrats' is an amalgam of education and bureaucrat.

deprivations from lack of transportation, health-care services and a paucity of adequate clothing and food that contributed immensely to schooling disruption in the Netherlands and detrimentally affected school age children and youth.

School supplies

The scarcity of school supplies engendered many obstacles to the Netherlands' education system. During the first school year after the invasion the paper supply was sufficient as provisions were still on hand but as the Occupation progressed paper became increasingly scarce. As the war proceeded the paper shortage became acute and this provided a major impediment to teaching. Students' note books consisted of lower grade paper and were rationed; in many places students were forced to use slates. By 1943 foolscap was used and by 1944 paper was unavailable.

Stern measures also had to be taken in the publication of textbooks. School administrators throughout the Occupation years requested republishing of extant textbooks but in many instances the requests were denied, often for petty reasons.²³ Consequently, students were forced to use out-of-date and diverse editions making teaching a difficult task.

The paucity of teaching materials provided considerable hardships in teaching school children and youth.²⁴ Shortages contributed substantially to difficulty in teaching subjects such as needlework, physics, chemistry, and industrial training programs. Necessary supplies were rationed severely and most of the educational equipment was removed by the Occupiers for use in Germany. To further complicate matters the wooden desks and chairs were removed and used for firewood. At the elementary levels the scarcity of cutting scissors, pencils, pens, crayons, and science equipment occurred - rendering effective schooling impossible. Obviously the quality of schooling suffered.

23 Each wartime Ministry of Education report has sections on the textbook publication dilemma faced by the Netherlands' teachers. This topic is worthy of a separate investigation.

24 See 'Child Education', URL: <http://www.davison.k12.mi.us/academic/global.education-1.htm>, (1/29/99) 1 of 2.

Transportation

Transportation, or lack thereof, to school buildings creates considerable difficulties during conflict situations and contributes significantly to the disruption of schooling. Many children and youth in the Netherlands used public transportation such as buses or trains. The Occupiers, as early as 1940, confiscated public and private vehicles. Railway tracks were destroyed and fuel restrictions were implemented. By late 1940 the conveyances used to maintain school transportation were redirected for use in Germany or for repairs of the Occupiers' military machinery. Children and youth resorted to taking bicycles. But as the conflict progressed the Occupiers confiscated the majority of bicycles, which left the students no alternative but to walk. Unless they had a permit, students could easily be picked up off the street and deported. Continuous shelling of the main transportation routes, and damage from bombings also contributed to a dangerous journey to the school site.

Health

The blockade against Germany and the German Occupied countries resulted in a debilitating paucity of clothing, blankets and food. The detrimental diminished production of the Netherlands' economy was partly at fault but that was purposely directed by the Nazis. The lack of adequate clothing materials resulted in many children and youth attending school in bare feet. Before the April -May strike many students had already died of exhaustion and malnutrition.²⁵ The health situation from 1944 to 1945 became so severe that twenty percent of children from age four to thirteen were malnourished; the same percentage applied to children and youth from age fourteen to twenty.²⁶ In Utrecht malnutrition figures doubled, in Hilversum the numbers tripled and in Amsterdam and Rotterdam the figures tripled.²⁷ Seyss-Inquart's response to a call for a nation-wide railway

25 Kollwijn, 3 :127.

26 J. Breunis, 'The Food Supply' in: Thorsten Sellin ed., *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 245, Special Edition, N.W. Posthumus ed., 'The Netherlands During German Occupation' (May 1946).

27 C. Banning, 'Food Shortage and Public Health, First Half of 1945 in: Thorsten Sellin ed., *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 245, Special Edition, N.W. Posthumus ed., 'The Netherlands During German Occupation' (May 1946) 108.

strike by the Netherlands' government in exile in London in 1944 deprived the populace of food. Enough provisions to feed the country were available in trains which Seyss-Inquart purposely prevented from reaching the starving heavily populated west. Ultimately Seyss-Inquart was responsible for approximately 25,000 deaths due to malnutrition during the Hunger Winter of 1944-1945. By this time schooling had ceased in the Netherlands.

E. DISPLACEMENT

Geographical

Often during conflict situations thousands of children and youth 'are forcibly removed, abducted from their homes, orphanages, schools, or public streets.'²⁸ This also occurred in the Netherlands. The labour service imposed on the Netherlands populace by the Occupiers played a most significant role in the increasingly desolate educational picture. The Occupiers in 1942 quite actively pursued labour conscription to support their war machine. The first labour action from April to September 1942 netted the Nazi war effort more than a million and a half foreign workers.²⁹ Of this figure the Netherlands was forced to contribute 25,395 labourers.³⁰

The student population was seen as a solution to one of the most pressing problems Hitler faced; the need for labourers to work in his war economy. The second labour drive, held from August to December 1942 resulted in a huge increase to 98,000 deportations from the Netherlands.³¹ Of these numbers, approximately 8,000 were students.³²

The Occupational Government continually increased their quotas for even these numbers did not satisfy the Nazis in Germany. German military losses, especially in the Soviet Union, had been devastating and these losses created an immense replacement need.³³ To facilitate Albert Speer's increasingly higher labour quotas German soldiers carried out

28 'Massacre of the Innocents', *UN Chronicle* 35 4 (Alabama 1998) 1 of 3.

29 Edward Homze, *Foreign Labor in Nazi Germany* (Princeton 1967) 137.

30 Louis de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk Der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog*, Twelve volumes, ('s-Gravenhage 1974), 6-2: 779-782.

31 *International Military Tribunal* (Nuremberg 1947-1949) 27: 117.

32 'De Dreigende Deportatie', *De Geus Onder Studenten*, Extra Nummer (December 1942) 1.

33 Joseph Goebbels noted in his diary that 'a total of 952,141 (including 29,572 officers)' had been lost. Source: Louis Lochner ed., *The Goebbels Diaries 1942-1943* (New York 1948) 112.

simultaneous dragnet raids in many communities.³⁴ Many students were detrimentally affected by this drive for modern day slaves which came to those universities and vocational higher schools that had not yet closed. One such raid, on 6 February 1943, resulted in 221 students from Amsterdam, including 75 from the Free University, 250 from Delft, 130 from Utrecht, and 40 from Wageningen being forcibly removed from their desks, their laboratories, hospitals and libraries by the Nazis; they arrested the students and immediately deported them to Vught, a transit station where they would stay before going to the labour camps in Germany.³⁵ Female students too, were required to report for labour duty but they were not deported, their labour would take place in the Netherlands rather than in Germany.³⁶

In a semblance of his benevolence toward students Hitler had an Ordinance issued on March 11, 1943 that stipulated if a student signed a loyalty oath to him, the student could continue his program as long as the labour quota was fulfilled. Refusal to sign this meant the student would be considered unemployed and eligible to work in Germany. Ultimately by May 1943 less than twenty percent of Amsterdam's students, ten percent of Utrecht's students, twenty-five percent of Delft's students, seven percent of Groningen's students, ten percent of Rotterdam's students, ten percent of Wageningen's students, and only three students from Tilburg signed the loyalty declaration.³⁷ The 3800 students who had obeyed the summons and signed the declaration nonetheless were deported to Germany on May 5, 1943.³⁸

Hitler by this time was in a foul mood. His recall of the re-internment of the 200,00 demobilized Netherlands soldiers to bolster his labour force resulted in the retaliatory but entirely spontaneous April-May strike by the Netherlands' workers that had erupted at the Stork complex in Hengelo and resulted in the first nationwide active resistance act of the war.³⁹ Hitler consequently declared martial law to control the populace and any

34 See Homze.

35 Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogs Documentatie, (hereafter NIOD), NIOD, 791 Doc.II. See also De Jong, 6-2: 615.

36 NIOD, 791, Doc. II.

37 NIOD, 791, Doc. II.

38 NIOD, 199A.

39 C.B. Cornelissen and J. Slettenhaar, *In de schaduw van de adelaar*, (Enschede 1982) 235. P.J. Bouman, *De April-Mei Stakingen van 1943* ('s-Gravenhage 1950) is the classic work on the strike.

semblance of the so called German civility disappeared. The Occupiers had taken 'the iron fist right out of its velvet glove'.⁴⁰ After the brutal suppression of the strike, students easily became intimidated once the Occupational Government threatened their parents with reprisals. Many students believed that conscription to Germany was their only alternative. Of the 65,000 Netherlands deported in June and July of 1943, some 41,000 were students under the age of eighteen and at the war's end it is thought that approximately 80,000 Dutch students under age twenty-one were working in Germany; of this total only 4,200 had voluntarily reported to the Occupational Government.⁴¹

Jewish children and youth were not spared from deportation. In what has become known as the 'children's shipment,' in May 1943, some '[s]ixteen thousand children were loaded in the cars. Where children were under 4 years of age their mothers were sent along, and either the father or the mother with children of 4 to 16 years of age, but never both....About 105,000 Jews were deported from the Netherlands, and of those about 4,000 survived the war'.⁴²

In some secondary schools the Occupiers removed and took the whole Jewish male student population as labour conscripts to Germany. One particular raid had elicited some 425 Jewish students for deportation.⁴³ These boys, who had been removed from their school without notification to their families and deported suffered grievously in the camps. They had been sent to *Mauthausen*, a work camp built around a stone quarry where most prisoners were worked to death. Many of these students, accustomed to intellectual endeavours, were forced to work at manual labour up to ninety hours a week, sometimes in shifts that lasted up to thirty-six hours. The severe maltreatment to which they were subjected could only be tolerated for a short length of time. Some of the boys, still wet from a shower, were purposely thrown against the electrical fence around the quarry. In an indisputably courageous act of defiance, ten of the Jewish

40 Peter Calvocoressi and Guy Wint, *Total War* (Harmondsworth 1979) 266.

41 Van Eden, 139.

42 J.F. Krop, 'The Jews under the Nazi Regime', Thorsten Sellin ed., *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 245, Special Edition, N.W. Posthumus ed., 'The Netherlands During German Occupation' (May 1946) 28. See also, the classic work on this topic, J. Presser, *Ondergang. De Vervoging en Verdeling van het Nederlandse Jodendom: 1940-1945*. Two Volumes. ('s-Gravenhage 1965).

43 De Jong, 4-2: 892.

boys 'linked arms and voluntarily plunged to their deaths in the pit rather than submit any longer to the torture of their Austrian SS guards'.⁴⁴ These haunting instances are indicative of the stress and hopelessness the students must have felt under undeniably horrific circumstances. Undoubtedly the students suffered atrocious, inhumane treatment at a time in their lives when they should have been enjoying their youth.

SCHOOLING DISRUPTION

Absence

School absences during the Occupation period were the result of malnutrition, labour drives, lack of conveyances, and lack of clothing and shoes. Over a five year period the physiology of students changed and scarcity of new clothing often prevented school attendance. The Occupier imposed restrictions and racial policies against Jewish students who were not allowed to attend classes at public schools as of September 1941.⁴⁵ One can readily believe Van Baaren, who, in his reminiscences, indicated that all the Jewish children had slowly disappeared. The effect of all these measures by 1943 resulted in a very substantial reduction in student enrolment.

Before 1943 the absences at elementary schools were not alarming, but after this decisive year absences climbed sixfold.⁴⁶ In large part absences were due to war deprivations. Some students lacked adequate clothing and shoes and others were too malnourished and too ill to attend school. Yet other children and youth worked to supplement the family income. Some parents purposely kept their children home to help in the search for wood and food. In addition, the shortage of bicycle tires, continuous shelling of the main transportation routes, and damage from bombings also contributed to the rise in absences.

Several statistics indicate the severity of the absence rates. The lower junior level of secondary education schools on December 31, 1943 reported a seventy percent absence rate out of a total student enrolment of 1,172,336.⁴⁷ This left a significant number of students without their

44 Erik Hazelhoff Roelzema, *Soldier of Orange*, (London 1982) 214.

45 Ministry of Education, *Het Onderwijs in 1941* ('s-Gravenhage 1942) 27. See also A.M. Donner, 'Het Protestants-Christelijk Onderwijs' in: *Onderdrukking en Verzet: Nederland in Oorlogstijd* Vol. 3, (Arnhem 1955) 294.

46 Van Eden, 138.

47 Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Annual Report 1944, 1945, and 1946*, 224.

schooling. The Occupation also effectuated schooling absences at the post secondary level. The percentage of post secondary attendance of the entire eighteen to twenty-five year age group dropped from 14.5 per cent in 1940 to 1.2 per cent in 1943 to zero per cent in 1944.⁴⁸ A comparison of enrolments in the universities and vocational post secondary institutes, from 1940 to 1945 indicates that enrolment increased in the early years of the Occupation, as seen in Appendix C Tables 1 and 2. By enrolling in post secondary institutions students believed they could circumvent being called up for labour duty in Germany. Absences plummeted drastically by 1943. In the 1943/44 academic year only 1,046 students were enrolled at the universities and a paltry 136 students had registered at the vocational level. They were enrolled, but not necessarily attending.

Closure

At Leiden, which was officially closed from November 27, 1940 to April 30, 1941, students were allowed to write their exams but the University closed again on November 19, 1941.⁴⁹ In the Netherlands, Delft University, despite having students registered, closed as early as 1941 and remained so until World War II ended. Eventually, many non-collaborationist professors decided to cease giving university classes altogether. The Roman Catholic University of Nijmegen and the Free University of Amsterdam voluntarily closed their doors in response to the loyalty declaration; the first to do so. Groningen University's Law faculty refused to allow examinations. Those professors from the Amsterdam Municipal University who had not yet resigned, forwarded their resignations. After the April-May 1943 strike very few classes were held in the Netherlands, despite collaborationist attempts to keep the universities open. Consequently, schooling in the Netherlands was virtually at a standstill by mid 1943 and certainly completely so by 1944.

III CONCLUSION

The questions posed at the beginning of this paper asked if the Netherlands' wartime educational experience conformed to the Schooling Disruption

48 Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Annual Report 1944, 1945, and 1946*, 78.

49 Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Annual Report, 1944, 1945, and 1946*, 78-79.

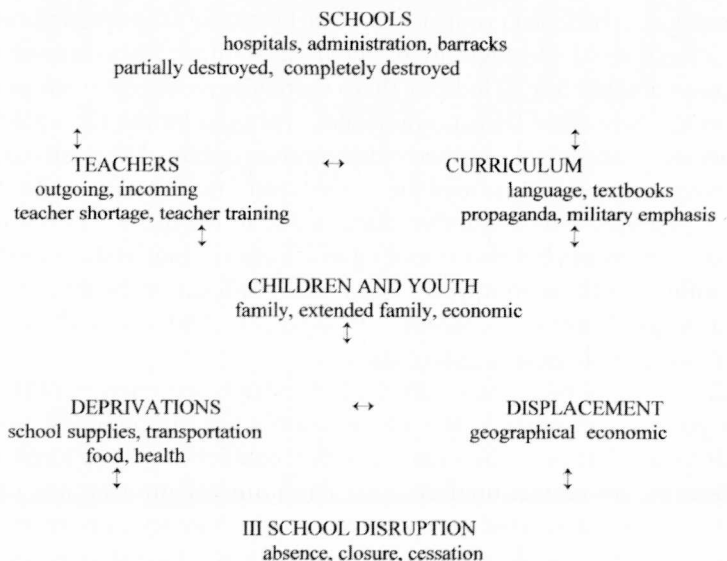
Model and whether the children and youth of the Netherlands were affected by schooling disruption during World War II. The material presented in this paper indicates that the answer is an unequivocal yes, absolutely, beyond a doubt to both questions. The Netherlands' experience with schooling disruption certainly corresponds to the Schooling Disruption Model. For the sake of brevity only some salient factors have been emphasized in this cursory overview. The steps that were taken by the Occupiers: use of school buildings, establishing an educational administrative body, interfering with appointment decrees, removing teachers from their positions, ethnic cleansing of a particular group, (in this case Jews), use of propaganda as an educational tool, ideologically oriented curriculum, deprivations and cessation of schooling all indicate that a particular *modus operandi*, as laid out in the Schooling Disruption Model, was used by the Occupiers to implement changes in the Netherlands' education system. The model clearly indicates that schools were used for the Occupiers' needs as opposed to that of the populace. The disruptive changes due to conflict affect not only children and youth but also schooling which is a vital societal component that influences the economy, politics, religion, education, health, law, the publishing industry and economics among others. And conversely schools are affected by all these societal changes.

The lesson to be learned from the Netherlands' experience is that not only government officials and administrators but the populace as well needs to be made aware how easily political conflict can create havoc and undermine an educational system. The political interference of an oppressor, invader, rebel group or counter-insurgency movement can undermine the schooling that is so crucial for the formative years of a nations' children and youth. Perhaps the answer to prevent schooling disruption in the future is to create a national policy that grants schools the same sanctuary as churches and hospitals in time of war and peace. Making schooling disruption due to political conflict a crime against humanity punishable by death might be a deterrent. Although it is unlikely that the Netherlands will be invaded again it might be a step in the right direction to debate this very serious topic and devise a contingency program. After all, few Netherlanders believed that Hitler would invade their country in 1940.

APPENDIX A SCHOOLING DISRUPTION MODEL

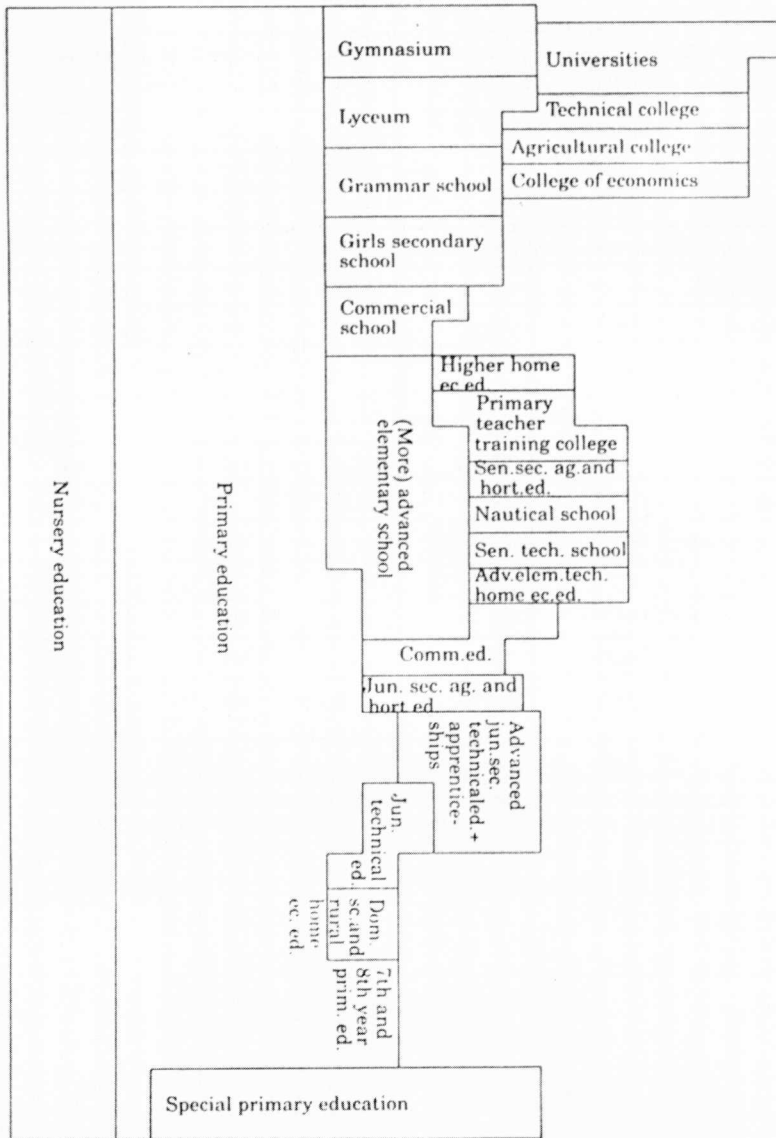
I. Pre-existing Conditions: organized education systems
schools, formal curriculum, exams, teacher training, ministry of education, teacher organizations,
parent organizations, compulsory attendance, education laws.

II. Disruptions of preexisting condition



Children, Youth and Schooling Disruption

APPENDIX B: STRUCTURE OF NETHERLANDS EDUCATION 1940



APPENDIX C:
POST SECONDARY ENROLMENT: 1940-1945.

UNIVERSITIES	1940/41	1941/42	1942/43	1943/1944	1944/45
Leiden	2410				
Utrecht	2905	3898	2506	350	
Groningen	1047	1351	1233	107	
Amsterdam	2786	3916	3095	589	
Free Amsterdam	714	1161	1217		523
Nijmegen	498	752	568		
TOTAL	9720	11078	8619	1046	523

VOCATIONAL	1940/41	1941/42	1942/43	1943/44	1944/45
Delft	2611	2882	2832		
Wageningen	669	829	701	136	
Rotterdam	827	1049	844		
Tilburg	330	422	400	324	
TOTAL	4437	5182	2228	460	
COMBINED TOTALS	14797	16260	13396	460	523

Source: Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Het Onderwijs in 1942*, [Education in 1942], 42, and Netherlands Ministry of Education, *Het Onderwijs in Nederland verslag over de jaren 1944, 1945, en 1946*, [Education in the Netherlands 1944, 1945, and 1945], 1949: 78.

Supplement

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Nieuw Nummer uit in Juli 2000

Nr. 149, Thema: Ideologie