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During the First World War, both belligerent power blocs waged economic war against each other. Just as the two opposing systems of trenches on the battlegrounds of the Western Front were separated from each other by a contested strip of *no man's land*, so the neutrals contiguous to Germany (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, and the Netherlands) formed an economic no-man's land, where both sides sought to achieve dominance in order to further their war aims and thwart those of their opponents.

My paper deals with Allied attempts to win the battle for the Dutch no-man's land in the *first* phase of the economic war, before the game-changing twin event of German unrestricted submarine warfare and American belligerence in the first quarter of 1917. In this first phase, Allied economic strategy towards the Netherlands was determined near-exclusively by the British Government. In trying to win the economic war, it enacted a number of different strategies. Most well-known is its attempts to block overseas imports, but this was by no means the limit of British involvement in the economic struggle. It attempted to interfere with Dutch native produce as well, restrict German access to money markets and communication abilities, whilst at the same time trying to capture markets the Germans abandoned and increasing its own trade with the neutrals.

In trying to accomplish all of these goals, however, its movements were restricted by their need to be somewhat circumspect with the Dutch, who they depended on for credit facilities, and who they could not drive into German arms. Moreover, its economic strategies were not part of a unified whole, and often clashed, sometimes with disastrous results.