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*DAVE COPPENTER...*

# Nether mind

The shocking truth about the victimization of the Dutch

BY MARIANNE (BARENDREGT) SCOTT

**I**t's an outrage, Doctor. I just can't go on," I sniffled as I stretched out on the couch. "I've been put down and humiliated. I get no respect. They're all prejudiced against me."

"Why don't you share your pain with me," replied my psychiatrist, a bit sleepily.

"Well," I continued, reaching for a tissue, "for aeons now, the Anglo-centred world has insulted me and my entire clan. They just don't recognize we're members of a noble ethnic group with traditions of upright, moral, even heroic behaviour. The prejudice has been so longstanding and intense, and the humiliation has destroyed so many psyches, that I know it must be a conspiracy. And all because I'm Dutch!"

Behind his desk, Dr. Vandenberg sat up a bit straighter.

"Go on, please. Tell me more."

"It all started with the word 'Dutch' itself," I said, dabbing my eyes. "'Dutch' shows prejudice and hate against our ancient people with a distinct culture. I'm sure it began when those egotisti-

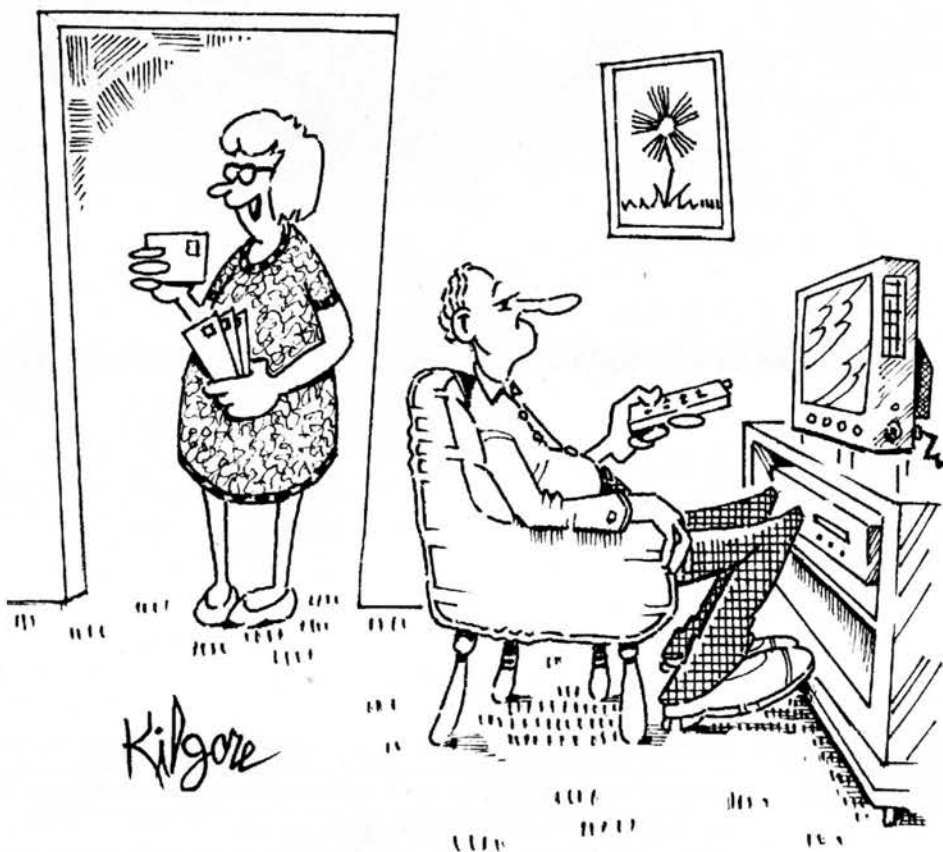
cal Brits began calling our people 'Dutch,' imposing a bastard form of the word 'Deutsch.'

"Can you believe those ignorant Englishers couldn't even tell those living in Deutschland — Germany, which became a nation barely a century ago — apart from us, the noble traders and farmers and seafarers from the

western lowlands who achieved nationhood centuries ago?"

"I never knew that," said Dr. Vandenberg thoughtfully.

"The Brits have always wanted to dominate the world," I went on after blowing my nose. "They're shot through with raj mentality. Let's face it, it was the Dutch who ruled the waves, not Britannia.



"Good news — the dentist wants to see you."

Dr. Vandenberg stopped in his tracks. "Now I know the source of my unhappiness," he said. "That xenophobic slander has also devastated me"

English historians always claim the Brits defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588. Not so. The Dutch Navy attacked the Spaniards and kept the Brits out of harm's way.

"And these same Englanders never acknowledge that the only armies that successfully invaded them since the Battle of Hastings were the bold and courageous Dutch. The Britishers were so jealous and spiteful they had to invent ethnic slanders to defame us."

I was getting into my stride. All my humiliations began pouring out. "It got really bad after I moved to Canada," I lamented.

"Canadians say they're tolerant but they've just prolonged the tradition of bias. People call our country 'Holland.' That's not its proper name. That's like calling Canada 'Ontario' or 'Saskatchewan.' We're called the Netherlands, although even that reeks of injustice. You've just heard me say it. The best I can do with those 'th' tongue twisters is, 'ze nedderlands.'"

**'Y**ou're absolutely right!" exclaimed Dr. Vandenberg, now becoming animated.

"Have you ever realized, Doc-

tor," I croaked, "that those English speakers use the word 'Dutch' as a racial slur?"

"'Dutch courage' is acquired from drinking liquor. You know as well as I do that the Dutch are a sober lot. I'll bet this smear was invented by those boozers from northern Britain, those inventors of Scotch, needing to assign the blame elsewhere.

"And they insult our tribe by asking about my 'Dutch uncle' and implying his was a nasty character. They slyly mention 'Dutch treat' and abuse our national character by implying that



## STITCHES AROUND-THE-WORLD SAILING ADVENTURE

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A few spaces are still available for certain parts of the voyage, including Australia to Singapore, Singapore to the Maldives, the Seychelles and the Mediterranean.

For further information, please call 1-800-668-7412.





*"Is there NOTHING without a corporate logo?"*<sup>9</sup>

Netherlanders are miserly and stingy. The Dutch aren't miserly. We're frugal, careful. We save for a rainy day. We're not a charge to the public purse. We expect to retire without handouts.

"That's why one former Dutch citizen, Bill VanderZalm, got 'in Dutch' when selling his Vancouver Fantasy Gardens. He was only saving for his retirement fund, supplementing his meagre government pension. British Columbians were just too tied to their deep-seated racism to understand his noble gesture."

Dr. VandeBerg jumped up. "The women's liberation movement also slanders us," he barked enthusiastically. "In the guise of building independence by paying their own way, women are actually heaping scorn on an innocent

minority by 'going Dutch.'"

Both the doctor and I began pacing the office.

"You don't know the worst of it," I cried out. "To be a Dutch immigrant is to experience cultural genocide. After I came here, all those unilingual signs in the stores cried out for a Dutch translation. No law protected *my* minority language rights.

"At school and at work, people only spoke English and insisted I give up my ancient tribal language. When I spoke my tongue, they called it 'double Dutch,' insinuating that what their limited minds couldn't understand was nonsense.

"People asked if I'd used silver skates to go to school. They hinted that Dutch children sucked their thumbs so much

that this single digit is able to keep water from penetrating a dike. They said it was my fault all those elms were dying."

Dr. VandeBerg stopped in his tracks. "Now I know the source of my unhappiness," he said, pulling out his hanky. "I've suffered similar abuse. That xenophobic slander has also devastated me. The same mental cruelty has separated me from my traditions and caused me unending humiliation."

The dykes have broken. Dr. VandeBerg and I are taking action — to be

thus victimized cries out for redress. We're asking Prime Minister Chrétien to apologize publicly and the Canadian government to pay compensation to generations of exploited Dutch.

This money would be a start towards making up for the centuries of psychological violence we have had to endure. So that we can finally heal. But our demands are about principle, not money. We'll put the reparations in our RRSPs. Save for our old age. We must have closure. So we can get on with our lives. ●



#### WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST CLUE?

An unemployed man who bought a Ford Fiesta car for just £15 from a man in a pub admitted to Poole magistrates that he suspected it had been stolen. (Evening Echo)