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Reframing the Diplomat: Ernst van der Beugel and the Cold War Atlantic Community

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3. An Atlanticist European

While the previous chapter emphasized the post-war Marshall Plan *context* in which Ernst van der Beugel was active and the public-private linkages that developed during these years, this chapter will focus more specifically on the evolution of Van der Beugel's *ideas* during his career at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in particular with regards to the process of European integration and its relationship to transatlantic relations. It was during this period that the ideas that would drive him as an unofficial diplomat crystallized. At times they would also clash with formal government policy.

Whereas official representatives of the nation state are expected to execute the formal policy line set out by the government, as this chapter will also demonstrate, private actors have more freedom to act upon their personal convictions. As a consequence, in the absence of a clear policy line set out by a nation state these personal convictions can offer crucial insight into what unofficial diplomats pursue and represent. Consequently, by focusing on the development of Ernst van der Beugel's ideas during this period, we can also gain a better understanding of his role and position as an unofficial actor on the diplomatic playing field later on. At the same time, the personal convictions of official actors in the diplomatic realm do not necessarily square with formal policy. When we assess the private convictions of government representatives in relation to official policy a certain tension may reveal itself that provides insight into an important difference between official government representatives and private diplomats who are not bound by the same restrictions. As this chapter will demonstrate, this also applied to Ernst van der Beugel *and* Max Kohnstamm during the years in which they served as official government representatives. Eventually, both men threw off the yoke of formal administrative discipline by entering the transatlantic political-diplomatic arena in a private capacity.

As demonstrated by the previous chapters, Ernst van der Beugel came of age through his experiences of the 1930's, the Second World War and the reconstruction of Western Europe, all of which helped to determine his attitude towards international relations and the transatlantic relationship in particular. In addition, his participation in the Marshall Plan created a strong identification with the post-war period and the Americans with whom he worked closely together.[1] "We experienced for the first time that a large country showed leadership in extremely critical circumstances," Van der Beugel would recall decades later. This leadership and determination stood in stark contrast with the attitude of the major European countries. The appeasement at Munich in 1938 in particular had left a deep mark on Ernst van der Beugel, which would never really fade. One of the most basic lessons he took away from these experiences was that power relations were fundamental and, consequently,

[1] EvdB/Kersten Oral History Interview, file 61-66, EvdB, NAH, p.167: "Dat is heel sterk beïnvloed door het Marshallplan. En daardoor het heel regelmatige contact met de Amerikanen, met die fantastische generatie van, laat ik zeggen, Truman, Acheson."

"that an expansionistic totalitarian regime should be confronted from a position of strength."[2]

Central to the security of Western-Europe was also the question of Germany.[3] Since its unification in the 19th century, this country had severely rocked the European power balance; it had played a central role in two devastating world wars and it was now divided between the rivaling powers of East and West. How could Germany be peacefully bound to the West? What kind of structure could safely contain Germany *and* safeguard the balance of power in Europe at the same time? To Van der Beugel, the Second World War had demonstrated that the only way to safeguard the European power balance was to include the United States in this framework. When the European countries had failed, the United States stood up as the backup country that could restore the power equilibrium. Now, with a new threat rising in the East, war-wrecked Europe depended totally on the American military guarantee. "The idea that we were dealing with an existential threat was an indisputable fact to me", Van der Beugel maintained, "as was the idea that that threat could only be confronted with a total commitment of the United States in Europe" as well as "that NATO, with everything it encompassed, including its defense structure, was the best organization for this. And anything that threatened this (…) I opposed."[4] The idea that Europe's security in the context of the Cold War depended completely on the security guarantee of America's nuclear umbrella would be fundamental to Van der Beugel's vision of transatlantic relations and the development of his attitude towards European integration for the remainder of the Cold War. This conviction also determined the development of his attitude towards the process of European integration.

As a result of the direct link between the Marshall Plan and the American demand for European cooperation, combined with the institutional structures that consequently developed within the Dutch government apparatus, Ernst van der Beugel came to play a central role in Dutch policy circles concerned with European integration. During the 1950's in particular a march of events unrolled that would be fundamental for the evolution of Van der Beugel's views concerning European integration and its relationship to Atlantic cooperation. What is more, as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Ernst van der Beugel also found himself confronted with the power of private actors in transatlantic relations – a highly relevant experience in the context of New Diplomatic History which left a deep and lasting impression on him. After all, New Diplomatic History seeks to broaden its framework of analysis not just by recognizing the diplomatic roles of unofficial actors, but also by including the private ideas, activities and networks of formal government representatives in this broader context. When we do so, it becomes clear that the official and unofficial spheres of transatlantic diplomacy do not exist in isolation from each other, but are intimately connected.

[2] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 128, 166 (translation mine).
[3] See for instance: "De Amerikaanse invloed op de Europese samenwerking", *Rotterdammer*, 29 June, 1959.
[4] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 275 (translation mine).

Historical Context: the Netherlands and the Road to Rome

In the Netherlands, the acceptance of Marshall aid was part of a radical redefinition of Dutch foreign policy. The war and the German occupation had brought an end to the Dutch policy of neutrality. Between 1948 and 1952 a new vision on the position of the Netherlands in the world unfolded, characterized by an Atlanticist orientation in the security realm, based on a broad acceptance (though not on every point) of American hegemony, which was formalized by the signing of the North Atlantic Treaty in 1949. NATO would serve as the corner stone of Dutch security policy throughout the Cold War.[5] At the same time, as a logical consequence of the Dutch economy's heavy dependency on foreign trade, the Netherlands also moved towards an increasing participation in the process of continental European integration.[6] Next to the general trade liberalization through the OEEC, the economic rehabilitation of Germany and its integration in Western Europe were of the utmost importance to the Dutch.

Dirk Stikker, who served as Minister of Foreign Affairs between August 1948 and September 1952, was a passionate advocate of this approach.[7] As one of the first ministers of Foreign Affairs with a clear interest in economic affairs, he became a key promotor of the liberalization of European trade and finance.[8] Pressed by the United States to move the process of European integration forward, France had proposed the creation of a customs union together with Italy and the Benelux countries. The Dutch were very hesitant towards this continental initiative due to economic motives including fear of French protectionism. They preferred close cooperation with the United Kingdom, since the English shared Dutch views on free trade, the value of an open community and close cooperation with the United States. What's more, due to their economic dependence on the German hinterland, the Dutch strongly favored the integration of Germany in the new economic framework. By the end of 1950 the French walked away from the Fritalux discussions. As opposed to The Hague, Paris did not want to involve the United Kingdom, nor their German archenemy.[9] Despite the lack of progress in the OEEC, Stikker believed this organization still offered the best vehicle for his aims. Consequently, he set up a team of experts including Ernst van der Beugel and Max Kohnstamm to work out a 'Plan of Action' along these lines that became known as the 'Stikker Plan'. The resulting blueprint proposed a sectoral liberalization of trade in the OEEC zone combined with the establishment of a European integration fund to enable member states

[5] Duco Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld: de buitenlandse politiek van Nederland* (Houten: Spectrum, 2010), 149-151.
[6] Philip Everts, "Inleiding, traditie en verandering", In *Nederland in een veranderende Wereld: de toekomst van het buitenlands beleid*, ed. P.R. Baehr (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1991), 14.
[7] Jan Bank, "Overal een ondernemer: Dirk Uipko Stikker (1948-1952)" in De Nederlandse ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken in de twintigste eeuw", in *vijfde jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse buitenlandse politiek*, eds. Duco Hellema, Bert Zeeman and Bert van der Zwan (Den Haag: Sdu Uitgevers, 1990),193.
[8] Anjo Harryvan and Jan van der Harst, "'Een sneeuwveld in 1942': Vraaggesprek met drs. M. Kohnstamm", in *Voor Nederland en Europa: Politici en ambtenaren over het Nederlandse Europabeleid en de Europese integratie, 1945-1975*, eds. Harryvan et al. (Amsterdam: Boom, 2001), 88.
[9] See: Régine Perron, *The Stability of Europe: The Common Market: Towards European Integration of Industrial and Financial Markets? 1958-1968* (Paris: PU Paris-Sorbonne, 2004), 64; Anjo G. Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence: The Netherlands' European Policy during the Formative Years of the European Union, 1952-1973* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2009), 37; Willem Wansink, "De Groep van Tien: PvdA Ambtenaren en buitenlands beleid 1947-1952", file 7, Archief C.L. Patijn 1940-1998, NAH, p 72; EvdB/Kersten Oral History Interview, p. 132.

modernize industries faced with negative consequences from the proposed liberalization.[10] In May 1950, however, the Stikker Plan was overtaken by the more ambitious Schuman Plan.

This plan, designed by Jean Monnet and presented by the French Minister of Foreign Affairs Robert Schuman, called for the establishment of a European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) that would place the French and German production of coal and steel under a common High Authority.[11] It was this supranational element, the fact that the organization would *not* be intergovernmental in character like the OEEC – and as had been usual in multilateral organizations up till that moment – that made the Schuman plan revolutionary.[12] Other Western-European countries, including the Netherlands, were also invited to participate, but whereas the Schuman Plan was received with great enthusiasm in the United States, it was not met with overall enthusiasm in the Netherlands.[13] While Schuman had consulted Adenauer and the Americans – who had endorsed the plan – the Dutch had not been informed before its formal presentation at the press conference on May 9. To the Dutch, economic integration took primacy over political integration. While the Schuman Plan was economic in character, its purpose was clearly political.

Thus, the Netherlands had to come to grips with a new European reality and the Dutch cabinet was strongly divided on the issue. Sceptics like Prime Minister Drees and Finance Minister Lieftinck initially opposed the plan, while the Ministers of Economic Affairs and Agriculture, van den Brink and Mansholt, eagerly supported it. Foreign Minister Stikker took a middle position.[14] In April 1950 he had declared in a speech in Rome that "if we truly want to develop our European cooperation, we will need to voluntary give up some of our precious sovereignty, thereby accepting the possibility that on matters of common interest, decisions will be reached with less unanimity."[15] Even so, the proposed supranational character of the High Authority was a bridge too far for him. In his memoires Stikker explained that he doubted whether the system of the High Authority would be the best possible construction, because he was afraid it would put off the British Labor government. In addition, Stikker believed the community should focus on more sectors than coal and steel and he still hoped for an organization – more like the OEEC – that would attract more countries.[16] Even so, he

[10] A more complete summary of the Stikker Plan can be found in: Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, *Jaarboek van het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken 1949-50*, The Hague, 1950, pp. 36-38.
[11] Jean Monnet was a French political economist who served as an economic intermediary between France and her allies during World War I, after which he was appointed as the deputy Secretary General of the League of Nations. During the Second World War he was sent to the U.S. by the British Government to negotiate arms supplies for the British and the Free French and in 1944 he was asked to work out plans for France's post-war economic recovery. Monnet was a passionate advocate of European integration and would become one of the main founding fathers of European integration. For an in depth study on Monnet see: François Duchêne, *Jean Monnet: The First Statesman of Interdependence* (New York: Norton & Company, 1994).
[12] See: Mathieu Segers, *Reis naar het continent: Nederland en de Europese integratie - 1950 tot heden* (Amsterdam: Bakker, 2013),71-72.
[13] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 214.
[14] Ibid., 79-80.
[15] Quoted in: Stikker, *Memoires*, 164 (translation mine).
[16] Stikker, *Memoires*, 164. (translation mine).

came to the conclusion that the plan needed to be seen as a 'necessary evil'.[17] The opportunity to bind West Germany to Western Europe combined with American pressure to accept the plan prevailed. On April 18, 1951, the Netherlands somewhat reluctantly signed the treaty that would bind it to the 'little Europe' of the new European Coal and Steel Community consisting of France, Germany, Italy and the Benelux countries.

Political and Military Integration

1950 not only brought forth the Schuman Plan, but also the Korean War, which set in motion a whole series of new defense initiatives in the West. Korea consolidated the idea among many in Western Europe and in the United States that the Soviet Union was indeed a totalitarian regime with expansionistic ambitions, which created the feeling of "an acute threat."[18] Van der Beugel, interpreted the Korean War "as the beginning of truly expansionist Soviet politics, which went beyond the domination of Eastern Europe", more precisely as "the beginning of a planned Soviet expansion to the West."[19] The likelihood of a hot war in Western Europe was something Van der Beugel also discussed in correspondence with his father who lived in New York at the time.[20] In response to the Korean War, NATO was transformed into an operative military organization with an American commander and American troops stationed in Europe. Furthermore, the emphasis of American post-war reconstruction aid to Europe shifted from the economic to the military sphere, as mentioned in the preceding chapter.

The consolidation of the Cold War and the desire for a strong European defense also raised the question of West-German rearmament.[21] In September 1950, only five years after the end of the Second World War, the American Secretary of State Dean Acheson suggested to grant Western-Germany NATO membership in order to rearm the country within an Atlantic framework. A month later, French premier René Pleven proposed a plan, again designed by Jean Monnet, to create a supranational European army as part of a European Defense Community (EDC) in which West-German military units could be integrated without having to form a national army.[22] An additional French-Italian proposal furthermore called for the establishment of a European Political Community (EPC) designed to integrate the ECSC and the EDG within the framework of a supranational democratically organized political authority. Stikker opposed this proposal and advised the Dutch to reject it. He feared that it would relegate the Dutch priority of economic cooperation to a back burner. He also argued

[17] Segers, *Reis naar het Continent*, 80 (translation mine).
[18] Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld*, 147 (translation mine).
[19] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p.274-275 (translation mine).
[20] See for example: Th.M. van der Beugel to E.H. van der Beugel, March 1, 1951, box "Correspondentie met Vader" (hereafter 'CmV), AHB.
[21] See: EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 155; Stanley R. Sloan, *NATO, The European Union, and the Atlantic Community: The Transatlantic Bargain Challenged* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005),19; Hellema, *Nederland in de Wereld*, 147.
[22] Duchêne, *Jean Monnet*, 11-12, 226-235.

that as long as the EDC had not yet truly materialized, there did not yet exist a "community of values", which he considered necessary as a proper foundation for a political community.[23]

In September 1952, however, a new administration took office in the Netherlands. While Willem Drees remained prime minister, Dirk Stikker was replaced by two ministers of Foreign Affairs: Johan Willem Beyen and Joseph Luns. Both men were old acquaintances of Ernst van der Beugel.[24]

Although many expected a mere continuation of Stikker's policy under Beyen, who was given the European integration portfolio, the changing of the guard at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs heralded a major policy shift with respect to its European policy. As it turned out, Beyen did not oppose the idea of political integration as long as it went hand in hand with economic integration. Under the dictum 'no political integration without economic integration' Beyen proposed the creation of a 'tariff community', which should be understood as a first step towards a general Common Market, as a minimum requirement for Dutch participation in a European Political Community.[25] In doing so, Beyen also abandoned Stikker's sectoral approach. The realization of this plan, however, depended on the prior ratification of the EDC Treaty. Consequently, when in 1954 the Pleven plan was torpedoed by the Gaullists in the French Assemblée the establishment of a European Political Community linked to a Common Market seemed to be little more than a distant dream. Even so, an unexpected breakthrough was reached at the Messina Conference in June 1955, which eventually paved the way for the Rome Treaties, which would establish both EUROTOM and the Common Market.

The Group of Ten

During the early 1950s Van der Beugel enthusiastically embraced the idea of European integration as envisioned by the Schuman Plan. He did not only engage professionally in related debates through his work as a civil servant, but also tried to influence European policy as a civilian, active in the political arena. In 1951 he even joined a group of like-minded friends in pushing for a more thorough and pro-active European policy within the Dutch Labor Party, the *Partij van de Arbeid* (PvdA). He had joined the PvdA right after the party was established in 1946 as the result of a merger of three existing parties in which the social democrats soon got the upper hand. To Van der Beugel, whose father had been sympathetic to the social democratic cause, joining this new social-democratic party seemed like a logical step.[26]

[23] See: Marcel Ermers and John Kragt, "Tussen tradities en tractaten: Minister Beyen en de Europese integratie 1952-1956" (Unpublished MA-Thesis, History Department of the University of Nijmegen, August 1988) p. 24.
[24] Beyen was a friend of van der Beugel's father, and Luns was a friend from his student club (see chapter 1). EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 355: "Ik ken Beyen uit mijn jeugd, want hij was één van de intieme vrienden van mijn vader (…) Beyen heeft bijvoorbeeld ook op de begrafenis van mijn vader nog gesproken."
[25] Ibid., p 41.
[26] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, pp. 263-264.

One of the PvdA's key domestic goals was the attempt to break with the Dutch tradition of pillarization: the division of Dutch society along religious or ideological lines with each group having its own newspapers, broadcasting organizations, sports clubs, trade unions, schools and political parties – a desire referred to as the *doorbraak* (breakthrough) in Dutch. By the early 1950s, however, a sense of discontent started to kick in among Van der Beugel and some of his social-democratic friends about the accomplishments of the *doorbraak*. What's more, they were deeply disappointed by the PvdA's international agenda, in particular its reticent stance towards the process of European integration. To their dismay the two most Eurosceptic ministers of the Cabinet – Prime Minister Drees and Finance Minister Lieftinck – were both members of the Labor Party. In the fall of 1951 a group of young social democrats, including Ernst van der Beugel and Max Kohnstamm, decided to list their grievances in a letter to the party leadership. With elections coming up in the summer of 1952, they hoped to awaken the party from its complacent slumber. The first 'formal' meeting of the Group of Ten, as they came to be known, took place in the fall of 1951.

Next to Van der Beugel and Kohnstamm, the Group of Ten counted two more colleagues from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Conny Patijn and Jan Meijer, both worked at the International Organizations department. They regularly met with other young social democrats, most of whom worked for the government, at informal lunch get-togethers and in discussion groups where they talked about politics and current affairs.[27] Some of the group's members also met at the home of the devout pro-European PvdA minister of Agriculture, Sicco Mansholt. Jaap van der Lee, the Director of International Organizations at the Ministry of Agriculture, organized these meetings. He joined the Group of Ten together with Ivo Samkalden, who also worked at the Ministry of Agriculture. They were part of the young vanguard of the Dutch Labor party, "bound together by their shared aggravation about the myopic regionalism that dominated the foreign policy of the PvdA. They were the internationalists of the PvdA, as opposed to their predominantly nationally oriented fellow party members."[28] Once they decided to turn their frustration into a force for change within the Labor Party, they invited three more experienced party members to join their quest in an attempt to give it more weight: Peter Koets, the Editor in Chief of the social-democratic newspaper *Het Parool*, Director-General of the Statistics department of the Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS) Flip Idenburg and the eminent economist and director of the CBS, Jan Tinbergen – who , like Ernst van der Beugel, had also been involved in the development of the Stikker Plan.[29]

Aided by Van der Beugel and Kohnstamm, Conny Patijn drafted the first letter to the party leadership, which focused predominantly on the topic of European integration. Eventually two more topics which the Group desired to see on the PvdA's party program for

[27] Ibid., p. 264; Wansink, "De Groep van Tien", p. 48.
[28] Wansink, "De groep van Tien", p.10.
[29] Dr. Ph. Idenburg also happened to be Max Kohnstamm's cousin. He had helped van der Beugel to get his first job in The Hague right after the war.

the upcoming elections were added: Dutch policy towards Indonesia/New Guinea and the Dutch broadcasting system. With regards to European integration, the group called for an active political and military integration policy. They specified four elements in particular, which they considered 'important' for determining the right policy: 1) the relationship with the United States; 2) the German problem; 3) the role of England in the process of European integration and 4) the possibility of an Atlantic federation. It is worthwhile to take a closer look at these policy recommendations, because they serve as the starting point for the evolution of Ernst van der Beugel's views concerning these issues, which would eventually develop into a more cautious position as he began to perceive a potentially dangerous tension between certain forms of European integration and its relationship to the broader transatlantic framework.

Firstly, with regards to the transatlantic relationship, the authors specifically believed that, despite their deep respect and gratitude for America's post-war leadership, the European countries should be able to influence American politics. "In order to exercise influence on the most vital decisions Europe must be so closely integrated that it is able to speak with one voice," they wrote. "This does not mean, however, that we cherish the illusion that Europe could function as a third block which could be neutral in the battle between the greatest powers. No neutrality is possible as long as the Soviet Union continues its current course." European cooperation had to take place within an Atlantic framework as an equal talking partner in order to co-determine the course to be taken. "A common European military and foreign policy, managed from one point and speaking with one voice is the only thing that can guarantee a decisive influence on decisive moments in Washington," they concluded.

Secondly, they argued that the magnitude of the German problem and the fact that it could only be solved on a supra-German level made it necessary to give far-reaching powers to European institutions and a form of cooperation "far beyond a military treaty relationship." In addition, they stated that it would be a mistake to wait for England to join a federal European project because England would "never want to go far enough in the direction of such radical solutions as will be necessary on the European continent. In the decisive years that lay in front of us, no leadership is to be expected from England." Last but not least, they argued that "it is clear that the Atlantic Treaty shall not develop into an Atlantic federation any time soon. This fact combined with the English position forces the conclusion that European countries should seek the solution to their problems in the formation of a European federation as part of and in cooperation with the Atlantic Community." A fast process of European continental integration did not eliminate the possibility for an Atlantic federation, they emphasized, but could actually function as a stepping-stone towards it.[30] Consequently, Atlantic ambitions should not be a reason to slow down European federalism. This explicit attention to the concept of an Atlantic federation can be explained by the popularity of

[30] "Aan het Partijbestuur van de Partij van de Arbeid", 11 October 1951, file 7 ("Documenten met betrekking tot de Groep van Tien"), C.L. Patijn Papers (hereafter CLP), NAH.

Clarance Streit's 1939 book "Union Now: a Proposal for a Federal Union of the Democracies of the North Atlantic", which had greatly influenced Max Kohnstamm's ideas.[31]

The letter's authors met on four occasions with the party leadership to discuss their grievances. Van der Beugel, Kohnstamm, Tinbergen and Van der Lee were assigned to discuss the issue of European integration in a meeting with the party leadership – including Prime Minister Drees – on November 7.[32] During the meeting, they once more made their case for a speedy federalist form of integration including a European army. The latter seemed like the only major sticking point, but Kohnstamm disagreed, arguing that the Ten also displayed a far greater appreciation for continental integration than the party leadership. Fellow party member Jacques de Kadt, for example, had voiced great pessimism concerning the feasibility of continental European integration, which he considered impossible due to the great differences between the European countries. "Let us, the socialist movement, seek our strength in being champions for the Atlantic defense; that is hard enough already," he argued. Despite these exchanges the letter's authors were not able to convince the party leadership of their views and "severe differences of opinion" persisted. [33] Even so, as Robin de Bruin has pointed out, "a side effect of the intervention by the Group of Ten was that its members had been able to place themselves in the spotlight." By 1956 five of them, including Ernst van der Beugel, had been taken up in the PvdA's committee on foreign affairs. [34]

Diverging Paths: the European Defense Community and the Rise of the Gaullists

While Van der Beugel initially subscribed to the points put forward by the Group of Ten, his position on some of the letter's key tenets shifted as the process of European integration started to gain a more concrete form in the international political-diplomatic arena. As the process unfolded his attitude changed particularly on the plausibility of a European army, on the importance of English participation and with regards to the idea that Europe should integrate into a continental political federation enabling it to speak with one voice so as to confront the United States as an 'equal partner'. Lastly, considering the international political context, in particular the rising influence of the Gaullists in France, he also came to disagree with the desire of a fast paced integration process if this meant speedy progression into a direction he perceived to be perilous for the primacy of the Atlantic Community.

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[31] "Van grote invloed op mijn denken was het boek van Clarance Streit, Union Now, dat ik gedurende dat jaar in Amerika had leren kennen." Anjo Harryvan and Jan van der Harst, "Een sneeuwveld in 1942 – Vraaggesprek met drs. M. Kohnstamm" in V*oor Nederland en Europa: Politici en ambtenaren over het Nederlandse Europabeleid en de Europese integratie, 1945-1975*, eds. Harryvan et al. (Amsterdam/Meppel: Boom, 2001), 83; See: Clarance K. Streit, *Union Now: a Proposal for a Federal Union of the Democracies of the North Atlantic* (New York: Harper Bros., 1939).
[32] E.H. van der Beugel to C.L. Patijn, 1 November 1951, file 7, CLP.
[33] "Notulen van de vergadering van het Partijbestuur, gehouden op Woensdag 7 November 1951", inv. no. 22 (9): Notulen P.B. Vergaderingen 1951/1952, archive of the PvdA (hereafter "PvdA"), International Institute for Social History (translation mine). See also: Wendy Asbeek Brusse, "The Dutch Socialist Party", in *Socialist Parties and the Question of Europe in the 1950s*, ed. Richard Griffiths (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 120-122.
[34] Robin de Bruin, *Elastisch Europa: De integratie van Europa en de Nederlandse politiek, 1947-1968* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Wereldbibliotheek, 2014), 137 (translation mine).

Indeed, the key to understanding Van der Beugel's growing skepticism towards the process of European integration as it unfolded can be found in the clash between his understanding of the fundamental primacy of the Atlantic relationship in the context of the Cold War and the growing influence of the Gaullists on French foreign policy. The latter worried him because he was afraid they might want to hijack the process of European integration for their own purposes of re-establishing French *grandeur* in Western Europe at the expense of American hegemony, thus fundamentally disturbing the power balance on which he believed Western security in the context of the Cold War depended. So, whereas Van der Beugel agreed with many of the key principles undergirding European integration, he did not believe that the political circumstances in Europe allowed for their realization in a way that would serve the Dutch national interest, which he understood to be interwoven with the American security guarantee institutionalized through NATO and dependent on American hegemony in Western Europe.

The first cracks in Van der Beugel's faith in the process of European integration as it unfolded became visible in the context of the European Defense Community. Van der Beugel had considered the Pleven Plan as a bridge too far from the start, but – as he had already explained during one of the meetings with the PvdA leadership – because the Americans had embraced it and pressed the six ECSC countries to move ahead along those lines he went along for pragmatic reasons.[35] In the process, he reminded his audience that the European countries could only make sure that the U.S. Congress would continue its "generous policy" towards Western Europe through the way in which they chose to proceed on the path of European integration. "A large part of what takes place in the military arena is no longer a matter of national sovereignty, but is decided by what the Americans want from us," Van der Beugel maintained. He conceded that he shared some of the party leadership's practical objections against the EDC, "but," he added, "what alternative do we have?"[36]

The better alternative, from Van der Beugel's perspective, was in fact NATO. Like many in the Dutch foreign policy establishment, Van der Beugel feared that the EDC "would boil down to the establishment of a European pillar within or even outside NATO, hence undermining American leadership, weakening the Western alliance, and consequently jeopardizing Dutch national security."[37] Van der Beugel would often remark, however, that what was desirable needed to be distinguished from what was possible and while he believed military integration through NATO was desirable, current circumstances did not allow the Netherlands to pursue this path. Already at this stage, he was in fact *plus américain que les Américains*.

[35] E.H. van der Beugel to J.H. van Roijen, 20 February 1952, file 35, Ernst van der Beugel Papers (hereafter 'EvdB'), NAH (translation mine).
[36] "Notulen van de vergadering van het Partijbestuur", 7 November 1951, box 22, file 9, PvdA archive (hereafter 'PvdA') (translation mine).
[37] Jan van der Harst, "Dutch and U.S. Assessments of European Political Integration", in *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations*, ed. Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen and Giles Scott-Smith (Amsterdam: Boom, 2009), 643.

Despite his reservations, Ernst van der Beugel did not openly speak out against the EDC. In order to make sure that the Americans would not turn away from Europe he went along with the policy in an attempt to make the best of the existing situation. Privately, however, he expressed serious doubts concerning its feasibility. In a personal letter to Herman van Roijen, the Dutch ambassador in Washington DC, Van der Beugel confided in February 1952 that he blamed the Americans for creating the impression that Europe would not be defendable without a German army, which he regarded as "one of the most serious mistakes since 1945." The defensibility of Europe did "not depend on ten or twelve German divisions, but solely on whether one will be covered by the American military."[38] He blamed the Americans for being insensitive to the German question, but also for ignoring how profoundly the fear for German rearmament was still alive in France.

To make matters worse, the political situation in France became only less favorable. In January 1954, the Netherlands was the first country to ratify the EDC treaty. Of course, Foreign minister Beyen's attempt to pursue a Common Market by making concrete steps into this direction a condition for a European Political Community (EPC) depended on the prior establishment of the European Defense Community. At the same time, however, Dutch ratification of the EDC treaty was also meant as a gesture of goodwill, not least towards the United States where officials became increasingly worried that Dutch insistence on its economic goals in the EPC would become an extra reason for the French to reject the European Defense Community.[39]

In January 1953, the newly elected Eisenhower administration had brought a new perspective on the EDC to the White House. President Eisenhower and Secretary of State John Foster Dulles perceived the EDC not just as a military solution to realize a German defense contribution. Instead, as Marc Trachtenberg has pointed out "The real point of the EDC (…) was to weld France and Germany together as the core of a strong European federation that could stand up to Russia on its own, and thus make it possible for American forces to withdraw from Europe in the near future."[40] According to Van der Beugel, "for the United States, the political, military and economic unification of Western Europe had become an end in itself and was no longer a means."[41]

The Eisenhower administration's pressure on the European countries to ratify the EDC was relentless. White House pressure was added to the already zealous pressure for European integration from Capitol Hill, which had been a fact of transatlantic political life since the conception of the Marshall Plan. That the U.S. Congress had also embraced the EDC project as a step in the right direction was once more underlined in the Spring of 1952 when U.S. legislators had "made further aid to the European NATO powers dependent upon

[38] Ibid. (translation mine).
[39] See: W.H. Weenink, *Bankier van de wereld, bouwer van Europa: Johan Willem Beyen 1897-1976* (Amsterdam: Prometheus, 2005), 338.
[40] Marc Trachtenberg, *A Constructed Peace: The Making of the European Settlement, 1945-1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 121-122.
[41] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 292.

'concrete measures for political federation, military integration and economic unification in Europe.'"[42] According to Van der Beugel, now "every act of American diplomacy towards the European countries was inspired and dominated by the issue of the ratification of the EDC."[43] In December 1953 American pressure reached a climax when Secretary of State Dulles declared that if the European countries would fail to ratify the EDC treaty, "this would compel an agonizing reappraisal of basic United States policy,"[44] which might include a withdrawal of United States forces from the European continent. Obviously, this was a nightmare scenario from Van der Beugel's point of view, who regarded this "brusque" threat and "unprecedented bluntness in the intercourse between allied nations" as proof that for the United States "the issue was now presented in terms of the broadest political ideology and had elements of an almost theological dispute."[45]

While American pressure increased, the situation in France only worsened. The French Assemblée was permeated by a pervasive sense of uncertainty concerning the ratification of the EDC treaty. This situation was aggravated by the unstable political situation in Paris, which culminated in a political crisis that brought the radical Pierre Mendès France to power after the French military defeat at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954.[46] While the new government was divided on the EDC Treaty, French General Charles de Gaulle denounced the entire EDC project on April 7, urging the French to become independent both from the United States and the Soviet Union.[47] This view greatly alarmed Ernst van der Beugel who was convinced that the fate of Western civilization and Europe in particular depended on the closest possible bond between Europe and the United States and that a disintegration of the nascent Atlantic Community would only play into the hands of the Soviet Communists. [48]

The rising influence of the Gaullists in France had already led to the reluctant acceptance – under severe American pressure – of five interpretive protocols to the EDC Treaty in June 1953. After deliberately delaying the ratification process, Mendès France put forward a new series of proposals regarding the EDC in August 1954, which according to Van der Beugel "would have emptied the Treaty of its basic political meaning, because every trace of supranationalism was to be either deleted or delayed." The Dutch also regarded the French proposals as discriminatory towards Germany. They were not the only ones who thought

[42] Klaus Schwabe, "United States and European Integration, 1947-1957", in *Western Europe and Germany: The Beginnings of European Integration, 1945-1960*, ed. Clemens Wurm (Oxford: Berg, 1995), 118-119.
[43] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 291.
[44] Quoted in: Brian R. Duchin, "The 'Agonizing Reappraisal': Eisenhower, Dulles, and the European Defense Community," *Diplomatic History* 16:2 (1992), 201-202.
[45] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 292-294.
[46] Weenink, *Bankier van de wereld*, 338-339.
[47] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 295.
[48] See for example: "Drs. Van der Beugel over Europese integratie", *Handelsblad*, 22 November 1956; "De verhouding van Nederland tot Amerika," *Prov. Zeeuwse Krant*, 9 April 1954: "De wereld is nu eenmaal in twee kampen verdeeld en er is geen discussie rond de vraag in welk kamp wij staan. Maar dan is het ook duidelijk dat met de Amerikaanse economische en militaire steun onze existentie samenhangt, dat onze beschaving ervan afhangt"; "De Amerikaanse invloed op de Europese Samenwerking", *Rotterdammer*, 29 juni 1956: "Onze nationale en persoonlijke existentie is ten nauwste betrokken bij een goede verhouding tussen Europa en Amerika en bij een voortzetting van de Amerikaanse buitenlandse politiek ten aanzien van de Europese samenwerking."

Mendès France had crossed a line. Despite continuous American pressure his proposals crashed on "a solid front of refusal" of the other Five. Eventually, the EDC treaty died a certain death during a vote in the French Assemblée on August 30, 1954. Formally this was not a vote on the treaty itself, but – as Van der Beugel was keen to point out – on a Gaullist resolution eliminating the treaty from the Assemblée's agenda. Van der Beugel also liked to underline that in their rejection of the EDC treaty the Gaullists found themselves on the same side as the communists in the French Assemblée.[49]

Thus, Ernst van der Beugel's worries concerning the EDC had materialized. Just weeks before its rejection he had asked the American ambassador to the Netherlands, Doc Matthews, with whom he had a very close relationship, whether the Americans were thinking about alternatives to the EDC. Matthews replied that he was very sorry, but that he had received instructions from the State Department prohibiting him to talk about any alternative. "That is how committed the Americans were to EDC!", Van der Beugel would recall. [50]

In the end, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles called the French rejection a "tragedy" and issued a bitterly worded statement, but the 'agonizing reappraisal' was not put into effect. As an alternative to integrate the Germans into the Western defense structures, the old Brussels Treaty was dusted off and expanded to include Germany and Italy after which it was linked to NATO. In May 1955, after all signatories had ratified the new Brussels Treaty, the Federal Republic of Germany was eventually accepted into NATO. In his dissertation, published in 1966, Van der Beugel's reflections on the American role during this episode were not exactly flattering:

> The dogmatic character of this policy, the refusal to consider alternatives, the confusion between means and ends and the unprecedented pressure to obtain a specific solution for a problem over which the United States had no ultimate control, led to a situation in which the strain on the Western alliance was increased instead of mitigated. In these kinds of circumstances, the leader of the alliance should have more maturity and wisdom, should act less dogmatically and should not commit its power and prestige to a case, of which the success was so much in doubt.[51]

With the failure of the European Defense Community, Beyen's dream of a Common Market linked to a European Political Community also burst into pieces. From the Dutch perspective, the moving train of European integration that Beyen had jumped onto in the fall of 1952 had been derailed by a French act of sabotage. Beyen was furious. Ernst van der Beugel had never experienced seeing a minister in office so distraught. Beyen just could not fathom what had happened. "At that moment he could have killed Mendès-France with his bare hands,"[52] Van

[49] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 296-297.
[50] Ibid., 269.
[51] Ibid., 299.
[52] E.H. van der Beugel to G.J. van Heuven Goedhart, 29 November 1954, file 35, EvdB (translation mine).

der Beugel recalled. The EDC episode also left a significant dent in Van der Beugel's already bruised confidence concerning the sincerity of the European and Atlantic intentions of the French and the Gaullists in particular. In November 1954, a few months after the French Assemblée had killed the EDC, Van der Beugel expressed his worries concerning a renewed French nationalism under Mendès-France, driven by the desire to position Europe as a third, neutral power between the United States and the Soviet Union:

> In my opinion, Mendès-France is a personalization of a very activist (that is new about it) French nationalism. The entire setting, design and methodology are brutally nationalistic. While on a positive note, it has a very large intelligence and activism combined with a non-conservative attitude towards certain problems, it remains essentially sharply nationalistic with (…) fascist tendencies. It is also completely opportunistic and that explains the group of Gaullists and third-way-sympathizers surrounding him that I happen to know, who find each other in their activism and in particular through the reinforcement of a possible neutrality in this world.[53]

The death of the EDC delivered a heavy blow to the process of continental European integration and heralded a period of great pessimism. The possibility of progress along economic and supranational lines – as the Dutch desired – looked particularly dim. "This French nationalism has not torpedoed the EDC based on a fear for the Germans, but based on a fear for the supranational development"[54] Van der Beugel concluded. During the months following the failure of the EDC Van der Beugel stressed the need for a supranational approach to continental European integration both internally as well as in speeches to different audiences throughout the Netherlands.

While he was devastated by the failure of the EDC, Beyen's enthusiasm for European integration along supranational economic lines only grew stronger. At the same time, the minister shared Van der Beugel's worries about the French nationalistic approach that had come to the fore under Mendès-France and called for a pause. As long as Mendès-France would be in charge, every truly supranational initiative would be rejected, he believed. Consequently, the Dutch would have to wait for a better political climate while resisting French "blackmail" in pursuit of "pseudo integration."[55] Van der Beugel agreed: "There are two forms of cooperation possible in the West", he wrote in a letter to his friend Gerrit Jan van Heuven Goedhart, who served as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. "On the one hand the intergovernmental cooperation like in NATO, OEEC, etc. which is a kind of cooperation we should not underestimate, but which – in the end – can never reach the fundamental solution and on the other hand the supranational solution in which the English will not participate, to which the French are currently opposed and which will also fail to

[53] Ibid. (translation mine).
[54] Ibid. (translation mine).
[55] Weenink, *Bankier van de wereld*, p. 343 (translation mine).

attract the Germans in a couple of years. In between there is a zone of hodgepodge, which – without any doubt – will be pursued by Mendès-France. In that zone it will be attempted to confuse both forms of cooperation, with the main purpose of undermining any form of truly supranational cooperation and to replace it with something that carries the disadvantages of both in it."[56]

Atlanticist vs. Europeanists and the Straightjacket of Administrative Discipline

It was also in the context of the European Defense Community that a clear difference in priorities between Europeanists and Atlanticists became visible within the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As it turned out, Van der Beugel's growing cautiousness towards European integration as it unfolded was not shared by some of his closest friends at the department. Already in February 1952, Van der Beugel noticed "a sharp dividing line" cutting through the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs based on "a very profound disagreement on this issue" and feared that the issue had become as divisive as the decolonization of Indonesia had been during the late 1940s. "Facing those who are deeply worried about surrendering large tracts of sovereignty to the group of six Schuman countries are those who consider a fast – and I would almost say virtually unconditional – blending into the larger continental European unity as the only solution for both the German problem and the future of the European countries." Van der Beugel considered this situation the hardest for those, including himself, "who seek to find a middle ground (…) in the end we are in our positions to defend, without reserve, Dutch interests – also when these Dutch interests clash with the political pressure towards the quickest and maximum amount of integration possible."[57]

Overall, the international situation had become so strained, Van der Beugel argued, that the best solution would be to insert "a pause for reflection."[58] He had in fact been so charmed by an article in *The Economist* that proposed such a pause that he had suggested to Conny Patijn to give a copy to Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Dirk Stikker. The ensuing correspondence reflects the schism that had developed within the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Patijn disagreed completely with the article and found it above all representative of a Britain out of touch with the rest of Europe. He also questioned Van der Beugel's motives: "Is your sympathy for this article not based on the fact that it gives you some good arguments for your position that *nothing should happen* and thus, that it works towards *stalling* European integration-along-lines-you-do-not-want?"[59], he wondered. For Van der Beugel this was an affront: "I have great difficulties with the dogmatism of European integration as professed by you," he replied. "When I have objections against (…) Karl Barth or against the new church

[56] E.H. van der Beugel to G.J. van Heuven Goedhart, 29 November 1954, file 35, EvdB (translation mine). For an in depth study on Gerrit Jan van Heuven Goedhart, see: Jeroen Corduwener, *Riemen om de kin! Biografie van mr.dr. Gerrit Jan van Heuven Goedhart* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2011).
[57] E.H. van der Beugel to Herman van Roijen, 20 February 1952, file 35, EvdB (translation mine).
[58] "A Pause in Germany", *The Economist*, February 16, 1952, p. 379.
[59] E.H. van der Beugel to C.L. Patijn, 22 February 1952, file 5, EvdB (translation mine).

order or against Christian education, I do not wish to be confronted constantly with the question whether I believe in the resurrection of the dead."[60]

Van der Beugel's letters did not only demonstrate a growing distrust towards French politics, but also revealed a clear sympathy towards the United Kingdom. This sympathy was primarily based on the idea that British participation in the process of European integration would "offer a guarantee for a closer transatlantic bond."[61] He also claimed to be sincere in his request for a pause. The EDC had thus far been only a paper plan, he argued. It had not been well enough thought through and – most importantly – it "did not fit the political realities of its time in Germany and France." Instead, he felt that the emphasis should lie not on political and military integration, but on the economic and financial spheres:

> I refuse to cheer blindly for a concept of continental European integration. After what has happened during the preceding six months less than ever so. With regards to this issue, the spirit is definitely not upon me, and that is the core of your accusation.[62]

While Van der Beugel noted that it was above all "a matter of pace" that separated him from his Europeanist friends, on a more fundamental level it was his more realist outlook that clashed with the European idealism of some of his best friends. To Ernst van der Beugel, not European integration *an sich*, but the Dutch national interest – which for security reasons he regarded as directly tied to the closest possible transatlantic relationship – should be the main priority of Dutch foreign policy. European integration was thus only desirable to the extent in which it amplified the Dutch national interest by strengthening the Atlantic alliance in the face of Soviet communism. While at first European integration seemed to go hand in hand with close transatlantic relations, Van der Beugel now found himself separated from some of his most intimate friends, on the other side of a schism separating Europeans from Atlanticists.

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, however, the Atlanticists were in the majority. As Jérôme Heldring would later put it, a "regent tradition" lived on at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs that "manifested itself in a pragmatic, non-ideological policy, which, consequently, approached the ideology of European federalism with suspicion."[63] Conny Patijn was in fact one of the few European exceptions to the Atlanticist rule. Max Kohnstamm was another exception.[64] They were two of the odd ones out at a department where realism reigned supreme and their passionate pro-European activism was not appreciated by the department's leadership. From the spring of 1951 onwards, Max Kohnstamm had

[60] Ibid.
[61] E.H. van der Beugel, "Nederland in de naoorlogse Westelijke Samenwerking", *Internationale Spectator* 49:3 (1995): 129 (translation mine).
[62] E.H. van der Beugel to Patijn, 22 February 1952, file 5, EvdB.
[63] Jérôme Heldring, "De Nederlandse Buitenlandse Politiek na 1945", in *Nederlands buitenlandse politiek: heden en verleden*, eds. E.H. van der Beugel et al. (Baarn: In Den Toren, 1978), 32 (translation mine).
[64] Others were Jan Meijer and Theo Bot. See EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p.254.

experienced the feeling that he had reached a 'dead end' at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "*la voie de garage,*"[65] as he put it. The old guard at the department regarded him with suspicion, not just because of his strong federalist sympathies, but also as a result of his unconventional informal activities. Kohnstamm would, for example, frequently contact Europe-minded members of parliament with the intention to push the Dutch government through parliament into the direction of further integration.[66] This was simply 'not done' according to Secretary-General Han Boon who made sure that Kohnstamm got *kaltgestellt*.[67] In the summer of 1952 Kohnstamm left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to join Jean Monnet as his secretary at the High Authority of the ECSC, a position in which Kohnstamm was "perfectly happy" according to Van der Beugel.[68] Kohnstamm's diaries demonstrate, however, that the discrepancy between the European political goals he tried to pursue and the 'technocratic element' was even greater at the High Authority than at a 'national ministry'. Thus, when Monnet left the High Authority in 1956, Kohnstamm gladly joined him to pursue their European ideals "as a free agent" behind the scenes of transatlantic diplomacy.[69] That same year Patijn exchanged his position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for a seat in the Second Chamber of the Dutch parliament representing the PvdA.[70]

While Kohnstamm struggled with the Atlanticist administrative discipline under Stikker, Ernst Van der Beugel's personal convictions with regards to the process of European integration did not always square with the more ambitious European plans of minister Beyen. Even so, as a civil servant it was his task to defend and execute his minister's policy. To illustrate, in March 1953 Dirk Stikker, who had accepted a post as Dutch ambassador to Britain after he had stepped down as Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated his growing concerns about the European policy of his successor in a letter to Beyen. He had the impression that the Netherlands was "leading the way in a federalist direction" with its ambitions vis-à-vis the *marché unique* of the six Schuman countries, a development he considered "dangerous". He expressed great pessimism with regards to "the French, in other words 'continental' integration plans" and warned against the "weakness and hollowness" of the French. Stikker advised Beyen to seek cooperation with England instead. Last but not least, he also feared "the danger of deadlock with regards to the EDC", based on his impression that France would not ratify the EDC treaty, at least not in a form which would be acceptable to the other partners – and without the EDC no political community or economic community would come

[65] Harryvan and van der Harst, *Voor Nederland en Europa*, 95 (translation mine).
[66] Anjo G. Harryvan and Jan van der Harst, *Max Kohnstamm: Leven en werk van een Europeaan* (Utrecht: Spectrum, 2008), 133.
[67] Harryvan and van der Harst, *Max Kohnstamm*, 133; Harryvan and van der Harst, "'Een sneeuwveld in 1942'", 95.
[68] E.H. van der Beugel to C.L. Patijn, 1 November 1952, file 1, CLP.
[69] Mathieu Segers and Max Kohnstamm, *De Europese Dagboeken van Max Kohnstamm. Augustus 1953-September 1957* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2008) 11-13.
[70] See: Mathieu Segers and Max Kohnstamm, *De Europese dagboeken van Max Kohnstamm*, 58; Harryvan and van der Harst, *Max Kohnstamm*, 133; Mathieu Segers and Max Kohnstamm, *Diep Spel: De Europese dagboeken van Max Kohnstamm, september 1957-februari 1963* (Amsterdam: Boom 2010), 86.

into existence. Consequently, Stikker advised Beyen to study alternative possibilities to involve Germany in the defense of Europe.

It should be no surprise that Ernst van der Beugel strongly sympathized with the worries expressed by Stikker. While Beyen was aware of this, or as Van der Beugel himself suggested, maybe exactly because he was aware of this, Beyen asked Van der Beugel to formulate his reply to Stikker, which Van der Beugel did.[71] In the reply, Van der Beugel defended Beyen's policy with verve explaining that by signing the ECSC and EDC treaties the Dutch had reached a "point of no return."[72] Beyen only made minimal editorial changes to the final version and even decided to distribute copies to the Dutch ambassadors in Washington, Brussels, Luxembourg, Paris and Bonn, arguing that this could be "useful as a clarification of the Dutch point of view regarding integration."[73] A more serious instance in which Van der Beugel's personal convictions clashed with Beyen's European policy concerned the relaunch of Beyen's plans for economic integration in 1955.

During spring 1955 the dark clouds that had gathered over the process of European integration since the Gaullists had torpedoed the EDC in the summer of 1954 seemed to be slowly drifting away from the firmament of little Europe. The fall of the Mendès-France administration on 6 February 1955 followed by the emergence of a new cabinet under the leadership of Edgar Faure ushered in a period that seemed to enable a "*Relance Européenne*". In the new French cabinet "the anti-European (i.e. anti-integration) Gaullist element was considerably weaker." Instead, with Antoine Pinay appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs and Robert Schuman as Minister of Justice, the pro-European M.R.P. now held important posts, which contributed to "a new optimism characterized by a resurgence of pro-integration hopes and expectations."[74]

Since September 1954, Jean Monnet – the godfather of the Schuman Plan and the EDC – had been working on a new blueprint to get the derailed process of European integration back on track. In the process, he closely cooperated with the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs Paul Henri Spaak who notified his Benelux colleagues in March 1955 about their evolving ideas. Their plans were based on relaunching European integration through a supranational sectoral approach focused on expanding the supranational powers of the ECSC to the energy and transport sectors combined with the creation of a new, distinct High Authority for the production of atomic energy for civil purposes. While Beyen supported the supranational approach he was not happy with Monnet's sectoral methodology. Instead, he wanted to use the opportunity to revamp his own plan for horizontal economic integration on a supranational basis and to propose the creation of a Benelux initiative aimed at the creation

[71] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 352: "Die brief heb ik geschreven. Ik heb de brief van Beyen geschreven, hoewel ik het met Stikker eens was. Dat is altijd een voorbeeld voor mij geweest dat je je natuurlijk toch als ambtenaar aanpast aan je minister. (…) Tegen Stikker kon je zeggen, veel makkelijker dan tegen Beyeen, 'nee , dat moet u niet doen. Dat zou erg onverstandig zijn.' Als Spierenburg en ik dat samen zeiden, dan luisterde hij heel goed."
[72] J.W. Beyen to D.U. Stikker, 11 March 1953, file 57, EvdB (translation mine).
[73] Letter Beyen, "Europese Integratie", 20 March 1953, file 35, EvdB; Weenink, Bankier van de wereld, 332 (translation mine); Ermers and van der Kragt, "Tussen tradities en tractaten", p 54.
[74] Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence*, 81.

of a Western European Economic Union. If necessary, this initiative could be combined with Monnet's plans.[75]

Ernst van der Beugel, however, did not share Beyen's optimism. In response to Beyen's intentions to resurrect his original plan Van der Beugel had asked his close advisor Jaap Kymmell to review the "original ideas of the Beyen Plan". The result of this exercise reminded Van der Beugel of how "correct" as well as "ambitious" this original plan had been. "At the relaunch of these plans, we cannot completely close our eyes to the central question whether they make a truly realistic chance in Europe today" he subsequently wrote to Beyen.[76] In fact, Van der Beugel was convinced that this question had to be answered negatively. He believed that on the short term the ideas voiced in the Beyen Plan would not only be unacceptable to France, but to all five partner countries. As he explained to Beyen:

> I belong indeed to the pessimists who do not believe that a reduction of tariffs, combined with the idea of a fund and coupled to certain necessary harmonization measures belongs to the realm of reality. I have no concrete evidence to support this, but when we look at the Benelux and when we look further at the conversation concerning European integration that we have been conducting all the time, I believe that there is more reason for this pessimism than to hope for the possibility of realization.[77]

Instead, Van der Beugel made clear that, considering the circumstances, he actually regarded Jean Monnet's proposal for an expansion of the ECSC as the only realistic option in the short term. While Van der Beugel underlined that he shared Beyen's general objections against the sectoral approach, he suggested to be careful with the assumption that supranational cooperation in certain sectors would probably never lead to general supranational cooperation, saying it "could very well turn out to the only slow but realistic way." In contrast, he believed that in the foreseeable future Beyen's plan could only lead to "an excessively lengthy study."[78] Kymmell and Van der Beugel were not the only ones to draw this conclusion. The entire top leadership of the department of Foreign Affairs opposed Beyen's initiative, including the highest official Secretary General Tuyll van Serooskerken as well as the Director General for Political Affairs Eschauzier, but it was Van der Beugel who led the pack in their opposition.

Beyen, however, was not amused by Van der Beugel's initiative to submit his original plan to a critical internal examination, nor by the unsolicited advice that resulted from the review. A week later he responded in a very businesslike memorandum concluding that if things were up to Kymmell and Van der Beugel it would be certain that *nothing* would happen with regards to European integration. Beyen suspected them of rejecting continental

[75] Duchêne, *Jean Monnet*, 272-274.
[76] E.H. van der Beugel to J.W. Beyen, "Europese Economische Integratie", 5 April, 1955, file 18711, Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken Code-Archief 1955-1964 (hereafter "MinBuZa 1955-1964"), NAH (translation mine).
[77] Ibid. (translation mine).
[78] Ibid. (translation mine).

supranational integration in favor of intergovernmental integration within the framework of the OEEC, as Stikker had originally tried. This was also the suspicion of two devout Europeans at the department concerned with the matter, Director of Western Cooperation Theo Bot and the Chief of the Bureau for European Integration Charles Rutten, both of whom backed Beyen's plan and turned themselves against Van der Beugel's memorandum. Their direct superior, however, was Director General Eschauzier who agreed with Van der Beugel.[79] Beyen claimed not to have any illusions concerning the feasibility of his plan, but argued that "one should never stop fighting for the cause of European integration."[80] Van der Beugel emphasized that he and Beyen did not disagree about the desired form of integration, claiming that he too perceived supranational integration as the only possibility, but that he did not see "how the ultimate objective, *on which you and we do not differ of opinion*, can be achieved *on the short term*." According to Beyen it was "more than the methodology"; their differences involved their "basic attitudes and understanding."[81]

Ernst van der Beugel forwarded his correspondence with Beyen to Tjarda van Starkenborgh Stachouwer, the Dutch Ambassador to the North Atlantic Council and the OEEC in Paris "because it is necessary that one knows in Paris how the ideas are developing". After explicating his own stance once more, Van der Beugel concluded that "it is for Tuyll, Eschauzier and myself, who completely agree on this matter, rather annoying that our ideas encounter such great resistance from the Minister." Even so, he had explained to Beyen, that he considered it as the task of civil servants to express internally what was on their minds, but that Beyen would eventually be the one who determined the policy to which they would "direct themselves with good humor and energy."[82] Thus, Van der Beugel once more experienced the limitations of his room for maneuver as a government official bound by the department's administrative discipline and directed himself to his minister's orders. In his memoirs, Beyen recalled how very fortunate he had been with the fact that, with regards to his European policy, his senior executives Van der Beugel and Eschauzier "exerted themselves with me for the goal I pursued – even though they were not all as convinced as I was."[83]

[79] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 387-388. In his memoirs Charles Rutten wrote: "Men was bij het DGEM [Directoraat Generaal voor Economisch en Militaire Aangelegenheden] een groot voorstander van de intergouvernementele vorm van samenwerking waarop de OEES was gebaseerd en had weinig vertrouwen in de methode-Monnet. Bij de actie van het DGEM tegen de plannen van Beyen werd echter ook dankbaar gebruikgemaakt van de hierboven vermelde bezorgdheid van velen over de politieke risico's die het voorstel van Beyen met zich zou kunnen meebrengen." Charles Rutten, *Aan de wieg van Europa en andere Buitenlandse Zaken: Herinneringen van een diplomaat* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2005), 34.

[80] Ermers en Kragt, "Tussen traditie en tractaten", p. 124 (translation mine).

[81] Memorandum E.H. van der Beugel to J.W. Beyen, 12 April 1955, file 18701, MinBuZa 1955-1964 (emphasis by E.H. van der Beugel, translation mine).

[82] Memorandum E.H. van der Beugel to Starkenborgh, 18 April 1955, inv. no. 19701, MinBuZa 1955-1964 (translation mine).

[83] Johan W. Beyen, *Het spel en de knikkers: een kroniek van vijftig jaren* (Rotterdam: Donker, 1968), 215 (translation mine).

Despite these differences of opinion, Ernst van der Beugel continued to play a key role in the coordination of Beyen's European policy, which despite Van der Beugel's pessimism, quickly reaped an unexpected but far reaching success.[84] At the Messina Conference in June 1955, the Benelux countries introduced a memorandum, which tied the plans of an atomic energy community to the idea of a Common Market. Against all expectations this move led to the establishment of a committee, which would work out the ideas put forward in the memorandum under the leadership of the Belgian minister of foreign affairs Paul-Henri Spaak. [85] As it turned out, the Messina Conference paved the way for the Treaties of Rome, which would establish EUROTOM and the Common Market. "We have all been mistaken", Van der Beugel exclaimed after the Messina Conference, "Who would have thought that the French would be willing to trade a customs union for the bomb?"[86] While Beyen's ideas became key tenets of the Rome treaties, and thus of the process of European integration, the 1956 Dutch elections prevented the foreign minister from personally overseeing the negotiations concerning these treaties.

After the elections of June 1956, the construction with two Dutch Ministers of Foreign Affairs was abandoned. Instead, it was decided that the Minister of Foreign Affairs would be assisted by a deputy. Next to serving as a general substitute to the Minister, this new Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs – also referred to as 'State Secretary of Foreign Affairs' – would specifically be charged with matters concerning European integration. After long negotiations about the cabinet formation, Joseph Luns was eventually appointed as the Minister of Foreign Affairs in October 1956. But, to the chagrin of Catholic Party leader Romme, he found no suitable candidate for the position of Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs within his own Catholic Party. Instead, Luns desired this position to be fulfilled by Ernst van der Beugel whom he had known since his student years and in whom he had great faith. In fact, Luns had already asked Van der Beugel to become his State Secretary at an earlier, rather premature stage but Van der Beugel had not shown any interest in this political position.[87] This time, however, both Joseph Luns and Prime-Minister Drees were committed to convince Van der Beugel to accept.

The PvdA faction in parliament was less enthusiastic. As faction leader Jaap Burger explained, "whether rightly so or not" Ernst van der Beugel had "acquired a reputation of being an inhibiting, if not an antagonistic factor with regard to European integration."[88] Consequently, due to Van der Beugel's alleged "anti-European predisposition" the party preferred a more outspoken European, like Conny Patijn or Jan Meijer. Drees had replied to similar accusations by telling Burger that at least Van der Beugel didn't give in to Burger's – by now pro-European – faction so easily. Burger was furious about this comment, which

[84] See: Ermers and Kragt, "Tussen traditie en tractaten", p. 147.
[85] See for example EvdB/Kersten Oral History, pp. 205-206: "Er zijn weinig conferenties geweest waar de verwachtingen zo lag waren en waar het resultaat zo positief is geweest als in Messina."
[86] Quoted in: Ermers and Kragt, "Tussen tradities en tractaten", p. 150 (translation mine).
[87] Albert Kersten, *Luns, een politieke biografie* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2010), 184.
[88] J.A.W. Burger to E.H. van der Beugel, 17 October 1956, file 2, EvdB.

obviously only served as grist to the mill of his objections and only strengthened the faction leader's suspicion towards Van der Beugel's European sympathies.[89]

It soon turned out that the fact that Prime Minister Drees had nominated Van der Beugel for this position had been an important reason in itself for the faction to distrust Van der Beugel's stance on European integration. As a result of Drees' enthusiasm, Van der Beugel was regarded as a "Drees boy" and as a result party members who did not know him very well now projected the Prime Minister's views on European integration onto Ernst van der Beugel.[90] While they definitely shared a certain degree of skepticism towards the ongoing process of European integration and a mistrust of French designs, Drees's cynicism was of a more dogmatic nature than Van der Beugel's hesitancy, which was rather driven by a more detached pragmatic realism combined with a somewhat sentimental attachment to United States. With regard to the institutional debates raging in Europe, for example, Van der Beugel did not share Drees' aversion to supranationalism. Even so, Van der Beugel had clearly become part of a power struggle between Prime Minister Drees and faction leader Burger that was played out above his head.[91]

Faced with this lack of trust, Van der Beugel informed Luns and Drees that he could not accept their offer. Drees, however, was furious about the interference of his own party's faction leader and would not give up his fight. On November 22, the prime minister telephoned Van der Beugel with the announcement that the PvdA faction had withdrawn its objections. When Van der Beugel tried to explain that he needed some time to think about this rather unexpected turn of events, Drees became angry and told him that turning down the position was not an option.[92] The prime minister had completely committed himself to the case and after his confrontation with Burger a rejection by Van der Beugel would be "politically unacceptable".[93] The next day Van der Beugel's appointment had already reached the press.[94]

State Secretary: the Road to Rome

As State Secretary Ernst van der Beugel became responsible for matters of foreign affairs concerning European integration and transatlantic policy. In this capacity he oversaw Dutch policy in the run op to the Rome Treaties and conducted the negotiations concerning a British proposal to establish a Free Trade Area encompassing not just the six Common Market countries, but the entire OEEC. In the process, the distrust that Ernst van der Beugel had started to develop towards the European and Atlantic intentions of the Gaullists during the events surrounding the EDC fiasco would only grow stronger. What is more, he again felt

[89] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 238.
[90] Ibid., p. 172.
[91] "Bijlage 1 bij het Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", The Hague, October 1956, file 2, EvdB.
[92] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 235.
[93] "Bijlage 1 bij het Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", The Hague, October 1956, file 2, EvdB (translation mine).
[94] "Drs. E.H. van der Beugel wordt Staatssecretaris van Buitenlandse Zaken", *De Rotterdammer*, 23 November 1956.

restricted in his pursuit of what he perceived to be the Dutch national interest as a result of American insistence on a speedy integration process. As it turns out, this pressure – as well as a great deal of the pressure he came to face from within the Dutch parliament – could be traced back to the influence of non-state actors behind the scenes of transatlantic diplomacy including Jean Monnet and his dear friend Max Kohnstamm.

During the negotiations about the Common Market the Dutch once again found themselves at loggerheads with the French on basically all the issues they cared most about. Whereas the Dutch desired an open community with a low external customs tariff, the French aimed for the opposite. While the Dutch believed social harmonization should not be a condition for the implementation of the Common Market, the French believed it should. In addition, the Dutch had come to manifest themselves as staunch advocates of a supranational structure for the Common Market – partly to make sure that (especially French) political forces could be kept at bay while safeguarding the free market. In fact, the Dutch council of ministers had unanimously decided that the Dutch should withdraw itself from the Europe of the Six if too few responsibilities would be transferred to the supranational commission, since in that case the Europe of the six would not be that different from the more Atlantic oriented, but intergovernmental OEEC, as Van der Beugel had also argued in the past.[95]

The recurrent difficulties with the French function as a key *leitmotif* in the diary that Ernst van der Beugel kept during his stint as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs. His notes clearly demonstrate his growing frustration and resentment towards the French, who allegedly acted "scandalous"[96] during the negotiations in the Spaak Committee. Van der Beugel constantly had the feeling that they were all being spoofed by the French "and the entire French-infiltrated secretariat."[97] Already during his first month in office he felt the Dutch were getting increasingly isolated. As he became convinced that Spaak just wanted to push the treaties through, that the French aimed for this as well in order to secure their privileged position while Italy acted like "Europe's prostitute", Van der Beugel reported that the negotiations filled him with ever increasing concern, even keeping him awake at night.[98] Meanwhile on the home front the fourth Drees cabinet was divided between a group of deeply devoted European idealists, including Agriculture minister Sicco Mansholt, Justice minister Ivo Samkalden and the minister for Social Work Marga Klompé on the one hand, and more skeptical Europeans including Drees, Luns and Van der Beugel on the other hand. This could be a challenge in itself, but what complicated matters even more for Ernst van der Beugel was that most Europeans in the Dutch cabinet as well as in parliament had close ties to Jean Monnet and his recently established private pressure group for European integration, the *Action Committee for a United States of Europe*.

[95] Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, 125-126. See for example: Memorandum 2019, E.H. van der Beugel to S and DGPZ, 5 October 1955, file 57, EvdB.
[96] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", file 1, EvdB, p. 30 (translantion mine).
[97] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", p. 22 (translation mine).
[98] Ibid., p. 18. (translation mine).

After handing over the presidency of the High Authority in June, 1955 Jean Monnet had established a highly effective lobby-group to promote and revive the process of European integration after the failure of the EDC.[99] Through so-called "resolutions" leading parliamentarians and trade-unionists committed themselves to the goals of the Action Committee, making it an influential multinational lobby. With the exclusion of the extreme left and right, members from almost all political parties were connected to the Action Committee; enabling Jean Monnet to mobilize broad support for the process of European integration as he envisioned it.[100] Ernst van der Beugel was deeply impressed – as well as annoyed – by the power Monnet was able to assert as a private agent in the political-diplomatic arena, which at times severely limited the freedom of action he as a government representative had in executing Dutch European policy. "As soon as the Action Committee agreed on a certain issue or line of action, the governments were, in view of the composition of the Monnet group, confronted with a solid front, the attitude of which they were forced to take into account", Van der Beugel recalled. "If for instance, the Netherlands Government took a position during the negotiations, which in the eyes of Monnet was detrimental to the outcome, the Dutch members of the group were mobilized to put pressure on the Netherlands Government to yield a point or to take action or initiatives which, by itself, it would not have undertaken. This, sometimes, severely limited the possibilities of negotiation for the governments and it often subjected them to a force which did not originate in the political life of their own countries."[101]

This experience with Monnet also proved to be an important lesson to Van der Beugel on the power of informal transnational networks and private individuals to influence international policy and negotiations. It made him realize how "one individual from a foreign country can influence leading statesmen and officials of a very powerful and in many aspects decisive nation." While it would be hard to measure his "great and permanent influence" exactly, Van der Beugel observed that "the history of American policy towards the process of European unification cannot (…) be explained without recognition of Monnet's influence on the formulation of that policy." [102] Thus, Van der Beugel – inspired by his personal experience – himself also subscribed to one of the key tenets of New Diplomatic History, namely that one does not need to be formally employed by a government to be a significant, even dominant, player on the diplomatic playing field.

While Monnet had a superb European network, Van der Beugel was most impressed by the Frenchman's strong bonds with influentials in Washington both within the Democratic and the Republican parties. These connections providing Monnet with access to the American decision-making establishment and enabled him to mobilize the American diplomatic machinery "to remove the many obstacles on the road to final and concrete results of the

[99] See: Duchêne, *Jean Monnet*, 284-308.
[100] Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, 120; Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 315.
[101] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 316.
[102] Ibid., 246-247.

negotiations, leading to the Treaties of Rome." If Monnet believed a particular country caused the negotiations to run into difficulties he immediately alerted his American contacts who made sure that "the American diplomatic representative in that country approached the Foreign Ministry in order to communicate the opinion of the American government which, in practically all cases, coincided with Monnet's point of view."[103] Thus, Van der Beugel concluded, "Monnet and his Action Committee were unofficially supervising the negotiations." What annoyed Van der Beugel most about this situation was the fact that "Monnet was so obsessed by the necessity of obtaining concrete results that he and his Committee tended to lend a willing ear to the most difficult partner in the negotiations – France. Thereby, it often lost its indispensable objectivity and sometimes, unwillingly, became an instrument of French demands and negotiating positions."[104] At times this gave the more cautious Europeans in The Hague the feeling that they were seated "not in the Dutch, but in the French Cabinet."[105] Van der Beugel deeply deplored that his more dogmatic colleagues, blinded by their passion for European integration, at times came to disregard the Dutch national interest in the process.

In the end, however, Van der Beugel was relieved when the negotiations were completed. "The treaties are not very pretty", he wrote in his diary. "I'm very skeptical towards their implementation, but it is a political necessity, which, relatively speaking, has not ended badly for us."[106] The result of these negotiations, as Van der Beugel saw it, was above all a very French treaty. By acting like the most difficult party at the negotiation table combined with the rush of the more *dévoué* Europeans like Spaak and Monnet's Action Committee's efforts via the European parliaments and the American diplomatic machinery to push the treaties through as fast as possible, the French had been able to leave a much greater mark on the treaty with regards to their institutional as well as their economic views than any other partner.[107] While the Rome treaties had been more French in character than Van der Beugel would have liked, he had great hopes that now these treaties had been signed, negotiations would follow about a British plan to connect the six countries of the newly established European Economic Community to the rest of the OEEC countries by means of an industrial Free Trade Area.

Hope and disillusionment: the Free Trade Area and Charles de Gaulle

Following the presentation of the 'Spaak Report' in the summer of 1956, the English – observing that the process of European integration that had suddenly been revamped in

[103] Ibid., 232. On Monnet's relations with the Americans foreign policy establishment see: Clifford P. Hackett, *Monnet and the Americans: The Father of a United Europe and His U.S. Supporters* (Washington DC: Jean Monnet Council, 1995); Pascaline Winand, *Eisenhower, Kennedy and the United States of Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993).
[104] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 316.
[105] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", p 30.
[106] Ibid., 32.
[107] EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 188.

Messina seemed to take off without them, thus leading to the creation of a rival continental European economic block – submitted a proposal in the OEEC to study the feasibility of an association between the six Common Market countries and the rest of the OEEC in the form of an industrial Free Trade Area. While Van der Beugel considered it of the utmost importance to create a close association with the UK and the other OEEC countries, he believed the UK would not get on board unless they would be confronted with a '*fait accompli*' in the form of the Rome Treaties. Meanwhile, he believed it was of great importance to follow the very 'promising' developments in UK closely and even to take these developments into consideration during the negotiations on the road to the Rome treaties.[108]

During the fall of 1957, after the treaties of Rome had been signed, the feasibility of the British proposal for a Free Trade Area (FTA) in manufactured goods only (so excluding agriculture) was considered by a committee set up by the OEEC under the chairmanship of the British Paymaster General Reginald Maudling.[109] On August 29, 1957 Van der Beugel met Maudling for the first time during a visit in The Hague where the Englishman left an 'excellent' first impression on Van der Beugel for whom the FTA negotiations would be the first big multilateral negotiations that he had to lead himself. From the start of the discussions in October 1957, Van der Beugel had the impression that the Dutch and the Germans were on the same page concerning the feasibility of the English plans as both German Foreign Minister Heinrich von Brentano and the German top diplomat Walter Hallstein, who in January 1958 became the first president of the European Commission, had been very positive. In the Dutch council of ministers, however, Van der Beugel encountered similar problems as he had done during the negotiations for the Rome treaties: this time characterized by strong resistance against the Free Trade Area that he traced back to Jean Monnet's Action Committee.[110]

What worried Van der Beugel even more, however, was the political crisis that unfolded in France as a result of the May 13 Algiers putsch, which had its origins in a demonstration in Algiers against the formation of Pierre Pflimlin's new government after Plimlin had declared to be in favor of negotiations with the *Front de la Libération Nationale* (FLN) in the Algerian War. The coup was perpetrated by French civilians and military personnel trying to impose a policy change in favor of French Algeria and brought France on the brink of a civil war.[111] During a secret cabinet level meeting of the EEC on May 19, 1958, Maurice Faure sketched a deeply depressing image of the situation in France which ended with the remark that if the Christian Democratic prime minister Pierre Pflimlin would not succeed in uniting the France of Algiers with the France of Paris, General de Gaulle would move into power within ten days. "If de Gaulle comes to power in France, I envision the phantom image of an anti-NATO politics of

[108] See: Ernst van der Beugel to S. en DGPZ, 2 November 1956, "Engeland en de Zes" and E.H. van der Beugel to M, Memo 1987: "Mijn bezoek aan Londen van 6 t/m 8 november 1956", 10 November 1956, file 58, EvdB.
[109] David Gowland and Arthur Turner, eds., *Britain and European Integration 1945-1998: A Documentary History* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 83.
[110] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", p. 97.
[111] Henk Wesseling, *De man die nee zei: Charles de Gaulle, 1890-1970* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2012), 135-137; Miriam Camps, *Britain and European Community: 1955-1963* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1964), 171.

the French government combined with a soothing attitude towards the Six in order to use the Six an instrument of French power politics. An unacceptable situation", Van der Beugel wrote in his diary. "I have the same feeling in my stomach as in '33. I believe it is going to be de Gaulle, but that means, that rebelling generals can send an, in this case rotten, but still democratic regime home. The situation is just as serious as it was in 1933." During the days that followed Van der Beugel slept poorly and "thought of nothing but Paris." He could not stand the people who believed de Gaulle would be a good solution. "It is better than a Popular Front" he concluded, "but it is the bankruptcy of much that is dear to us."[112]

When a few weeks later de Gaulle did indeed come to power in France Van der Beugel was deeply concerned about the consequences this would have for the negotiations concerning the Free Trade Area – not without reason as would become clear later on.[113] In July, Van der Beugel still had the feeling that the French understood how isolated they were in their rejection of the Free Trade Area, but it was all downhill from that moment on. Back home in the Netherlands, a conflict unfolded between Van der Beugel and Monnet adept Sicco Mansholt concerning the exclusion of agricultural policy in the British plans for a Free Trade Area, which created a rift within the Dutch government on the issue. In September, it became clear that the Germans – who Van der Beugel had considered as his main allies in the negotiations – had completely aligned themselves with the French position. Meanwhile, the Belgians were useless according to Van der Beugel and the Italians "sold themselves to the highest bidder." As it turned out, not the French but the Dutch found themselves isolated in their enthusiasm for the FTA – a situation that filled Van der Beugel with grave concern.[114] On 9 October, 1958 Max Kohnstamm reported in his diary that Van der Beugel was so somber about the negotiations that he no longer believed the FTA would be achievable.[115] During a big press conference on 20 October 1958 Van der Beugel shared his concerns with the Dutch and international press. A week later he was again deeply dismayed by the French attitude. "The way in which they treated us, defies any description", Van der Beugel wrote. "While the meetings took place in Paris, no French minister showed up." The only positive element was that the Germans finally found out that they had been deceived by the French. "They exploded in the most literal sense of the word." While this appeared to be all very 'amusing' Van der Beugel argued that amusement did not help the negotiations one step further. In fact, the situation was so grave that Van der Beugel suggested during a lunch with Stikker and Maudling that the only way the FTA could still be saved might be a meeting between De Gaulle, Adenauer and MacMillan. "This is not just about the Free Trade Area, but it is much more about the life of the Six themselves. Things cannot go on like this", Van der Beugel

[112] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", p.146.
[113] Ibid., 147; Gowland and Turner, *Britain and European Integration*, 83: "Initial French hostility to the British proposal intensified following the collapse of the French Republic in May 1958 and the Gaullist return to power".
[114] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", p.169.
[115] Segers and Kohnstamm, *Diep spel*, 99.

wrote in his diary. "We cannot form a community on the conditions of a country that preaches sheer protectionism."[116]

Ernst der Beugel spent most of November in the United States, where he complained about the impasse in the FTA negotiations as a result of the French attitude and beseeched the Americans to intervene. During a conversation with undersecretary of state Herter he argued "that the future of the OEEC depended on these negotiations and that the OEEC was after all their baby."[117] In fact, the "political consequences of a split between the EEC and the rest of the OEEC countries" could be so great, he argued that it would "endanger much of the accomplishments of the postwar period, including NATO." At the same time, he "doubted that a restrictionist EEC could long survive." [118] Van der Beugel also expressed concerns about the consequences of the negotiations for French-German relations, an issue the U.S. cared deeply about. While great progress had been made, he "feared that the French were pushing the Germans too hard". Since an inward-looking Common Market was contrary to German interests Van der Beugel was afraid that this would eventually backfire if the French forced German acquiescence in this respect, which might cause German industrial leaders to rebel "with potentially dangerous consequences to French-German relations." He told Herter that the Dutch government believed that "the most efficacious American role in the EEC-FTA problem might be found in an attempt to influence the Chancellor to take a fairly strong line with the French in respect to the need for a liberal oriented Common Market." He claimed to understand American "caution in respect to intervening in the current dispute – also considering the fact that the 'ghost of the EDC' could still be sensed in the Department's halls" but maintained that the "the friends of trade liberalism within the EEC were in rather desperate need of assistance."[119] In the end, it would all be to no avail as the Americans did not intervene and Charles de Gaulle unilaterally rejected the Free Trade Area.

Shortly after Van der Beugel returned from the United States the fourth Drees cabinet collapsed after which Van der Beugel accepted a temporary position enabling him to continue his role in the failing negotiations concerning the relationship between the Common Market countries and the rest of the OEEC. After a clash between the French and the English on the 16th of December Van der Beugel concluded that the "breach is complete." Europe was heading towards months of serious crises with regard to the economic cooperation filled with more "sabotage" by the French. A "deeply depressing" situation, Van der Beugel observed. "Seldom I have seen the situation for our country with regards to European integration as somber as in these weeks."[120]

[116] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", pp. 178-179.
[117] Ibid., p. 189.
[118] Memorandum of Conversation, November 21, 1958, Document 40, Foreign Relations of the United States (hereafter FRUS), 1958-1960. Volume VII, Part 1, Western European Integration and Security, Canada. Accessed 14 December, 2016, https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1958-60v07p1/d40
[119] Ibid.
[120] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", pp. 197, 206, 209.

Now that the formal negotiations had reached a deadlock, the unofficial Atlantic elite mobilized in an attempt to mediate the crisis that had emerged in the FTA negotiations in a more informal atmosphere. To this end, Ernst van der Beugel and other key individuals involved in the official negotiations were invited by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands – the spouse of Queen Juliana – to attend a special ad-hoc Bilderberg Meeting on "the present state of negotiations regarding the EEC and the Free Trade Area." [121] The meeting took place at "Hotel de Bilderberg" in Oosterbeek – the same venue as where the very first Bilderberg conference had been organized in a private attempt to mediate growing transatlantic tensions in 1954.[122] For the purposes of the 1959 meeting, the hotel had been "entirely taken over for the meeting" from noon on Saturday January 17 until noon on Monday, January 19.[123]

Ernst van der Beugel was positively impressed by the meeting, in particular by the high level of both the discussions and the participants.[124] In a report he prepared for Foreign Minister Luns, he described the debates as "very candid and more informal than is possible in official meetings." As a result they also "had the advantage of making the positions even more clear than they had become during the last couple of months."[125] The verbatim report of the meeting shows that Van der Beugel actively participated in the debates. He used the opportunity, for example, to bring up tensions within the group of six Common Market countries, a point he introduced by stressing that he was going to bring up "a rather delicate subject, which can be discussed in this group, and which cannot be discussed in more official gatherings."[126] After the meeting Van der Beugel wrote in his diary that he had not only actively participated in the discussions, but also "introduced some controversial subjects – to the visible delight of the Prince", whom he obviously had tried to impress.[127] On a personal level, the Bilderberg weekend also helped to intensify Van der Beugel's contact with his

[121] Participants: Giovanni Agnelli (Italy), Hubert Ansiaux (Belgium), Raymond Aron (France), George W. Ball (United States), Fritz Berg (Germany), Ernst van der Beugel (Netherlands), Muharrem Nuri Birgi (Turkey), Wlater Bovery (Switzerland), Georges Brutelle (France), Louis Camu (Belgium), Hakon Christiansen (Denmark), Arthur H. Dean (United States), John H. Ferguson (United States), Hugh Gaitskell (United Kingdom), H.J. Heinz (United States), The Viscount Kilmuir (United Kingdom), J.O. Krag (Denmark), Giovanni F. Malagodi (Italy), T.HE.E.H. Mathon (Netherlands), Reginald Maudling (United Kingdom), Alfred Mueller-Armack (Germany), George Nebolsine (United States), Bertil Ohlin (Sweden), Jacques Piette (France), Alberto Pirelli (Italy), Pietro Quaroni (Italy), Jean Rey (European Economic Community), Paul Rijkens (Netherlands), George Villiers (France) and Otto Wolff von Amerongen (Germany). Bilderberg Group, "List of Participants: Enlarged Steering Committee Meeting 17th-19th January 1959", file 51, Collection "Bilderberg Conferenties: Secretariaat, 1952-2004" (hereafter "Bilderberg"), NAH.

[122] The next chapter will go deeper into the Bilderberg Meetings.

[123] Bilderberg Group, "Enlarged Steering Committee Meeting, 17th, 18th and 19th January 1959", file 51, Bilderberg.

[124] E.H. van der Beutel to J.H. Retinger, April 20 1959, file 53, Bilderberg; "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", 207.

[125] E.H. van der Beugel to J.M.A.H. Luns, 19 January 1959, "no. 181", file 2, EvdB: "De besprekingen gingen over de vrijhandelszone en het was een zeer openhartig en toch wel informeler gesprek dan in officiële zittingen mogelijk is .(…) De debatten hadden het voordeel de posities nog eens duidelijker te maken dan ze ons in de laatste maanden al zijn gebleken."

[126] "Verbatim Report of the Enlarged Steering Committee Meeting", file 17, Bilderberg.

[127] "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", 207-208: "Ik heb levendig meegedaan aan de discussie en heb een paar keer onder zichtbare vreugde van de Prins zware knuppels in het hoenderhok geworpen."

German colleague Müller-Armack. They agreed to keep each other informed about any new developments in the future.[128]

What is more, the open discussions at the Bilderberg meeting played a crucial role in the confirmation of Van der Beugel's already strong suspicions concerning French ambitions with regards to European integration under De Gaulle. The 'clearer' impressions with which Van der Beugel left the meeting filled him with the "the greatest possible concern." As he informed Luns afterwards, during the candid discussions at the Bilderberg meeting it had been confirmed that France "attached itself to the Europe of the Six, not because it wants integration, but because it wants to attain the leadership of this group. Villiers and Aron, who are both close to the government, have left absolutely no room for misunderstanding on this." While this idea was not new, Van der Beugel noted that it had received a new impetus with the election of De Gaulle. With regards to the situation in France, he furthermore observed that all "political life underneath de Gaulle has ceased to exist" arguing that France had become an "absolute monarchy, but without the mistresses." Considering the serious nature of this situation Van der Beugel hoped to meet up soon with Luns to discuss these problems personally arguing that a "Europe of the Six as an instrument of French domination would be completely unacceptable."[129] Thus, while Van der Beugel considered the Bilderberg discussions very useful and illuminating, with regards to the FTA negotiations they had above all confirmed beyond a doubt that "the French would not be prepared to accept a free trade zone, even if all their requirements were met."[130]

A few days later Van der Beugel had a 'heart to heart' talk with European Commission president Hallstein at his home in The Hague during which Van der Beugel shared his gloomy thoughts as well as his criticism on the German's policy in the 'most explicit terms'. The talk revealed to Van der Beugel the depth of the differences in their thinking about Europe. "He is a supporter of the theory that the *marché commun* is and should be a precursor of the political integration of the Six. As a consequence of that position he does not want to endanger this process in any way. I do not believe in political integration with the France of de Gaulle and consequently my main priority is for the Six to operate as the driving force behind a deeper cooperation in a larger Europe."[131] With the OEEC negotiations in a deadlock, Van der Beugel had started preparations for a new quest, this time focused on an attempt to enlarge the *marché commun*, starting with the U.K., but this too had been to no avail. After all the frustrations he had experienced with the French first during the negotiations about the European Defense Community, followed by the Rome Treaties and now the Free Trade Association, the arrival of Charles de Gaulle on the European scene was the real game changer for Van der Beugel's attitude towards the process of European integration. "All my instincts rise up against the treatment we need to put up with and against the life-threatening

[128] E.H. van der Beugel to J.M.A.H. Luns, 19 January 1959, file 2, EvdB; "Summing up by E.H. van der Beugel", file 45, J.H. van Roijen Papers, NAH.
[129] E.H. van der Beugel to J.M.A.H. Luns, 19 January 1959, "no. 181", file 2, EvdB.
[130] E.H. van der Beugel to J.M.A.H. Luns, 19 January 1959, "no. 180", file 2, EvdB.
[131] Ibid., p. 209.

instincts that are in the process of gaining the upper hand. We are becoming an instrument of French politics which is totally disastrous." Rumors that de Gaulle wanted to retreat the French Mediterranean fleet from the NATO-command, an act Van der Beugel regarded as "an existential deterioration of Western policy"[132] fed his worries even more. The experiences of these last months not only affected Van der Beugel's views on European integration and transatlantic relations, but also deepened the rift in thinking between him and his Europeanist friends, including Max Kohnstamm. "Max remains a sweet and intimate friend", Van der Beugel wrote in the spring of 1959, "the most difficult thing, however, is that gradually we have come to disagree very fundamentally about the European issue. He is the dreamy idealist, deeply impressed by Monnet, and during these last couple of months I have become deeply disillusioned and extremely skeptical towards the entire venture."[133]

As he was about to leave the Dutch government in May 1959, Van der Beugel shared his disappointment in and disillusionment with the process of European integration as it had unfolded in a couple of speeches that received a great deal of attention in the Dutch media, summing up his views on Dutch European and Atlantic policy as they had crystallized during his career in public service. The time for sweet idealistic dreams about European integration had ended, he declared. The expectations with which the Netherlands had entered the process of European integration had not materialized. First of all, they had expected that the EEC would be followed by a free trade zone, which never materialized – especially as a result of French resistance. Secondly, they had expected that German economic liberalism would function as a counterweight to French protectionism, but in reality political forces had rendered the expected balance impossible and a French-German axis had developed in 'Little Europe' instead. Thirdly, the Dutch had expected that the European Commission would also stand up for the interests of the little countries, but here too, everything revolved around the French-German axis. It was now time the Netherlands pursued its own interests, in this pursuit solidarity with the United States should be the main priority. It would be a big mistake, according to Van der Beugel, if the European countries would think that they could pursue their own plans, independently form the United States.[134]

Conclusion: an Atlanticist European

As a result of the close links between the Marshall Plan and European integration, Ernst van der Beugel became closely involved in the process of European integration. While he had enthusiastically embraced the Schuman Plan in 1950, he became more skeptical as the integration process unfolded. In debates between Atlanticists and Europeanists, Van der

[132] Ibid., 220-221.
[133] Ibid., 227.
[134] See for example: "Drs. Van der Beugel over de EEG: Tijd van dromen over 'Europa' is Voorbij", *Vrije Volk*, 8 May, 1959.

Beugel clearly belonged to the Atlanticist camp. This did not mean, however, that he was anti-European integration.

When a journalist of the *Rotterdammer* newspaper informed the Belgian Prime Minister Paul Henri Spaak about the controversy surrounding Ernst van der Beugel's appointment as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs caused by his alleged anti-European attitude, Spaak acted surprised, saying that he considered such critical doubts incomprehensible and praised Van der Beugel as an "excellent European". Obviously, the standard of what makes an "excellent European" partly depends on the eyes of the beholder. In the eyes of fervent Europeanists like Max Kohnstamm, Conny Patijn, Charles Rutten or Theo Bot Van der Beugel's European faith was weighed and found wanting. While Ernst van der Beugel was not against European integration he lacked the ideological fervor of more fanatic Europeans. His approach, in contrast, reflected the more detached and pragmatic realism that prevailed at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but it would be a severe oversimplification to conclude from this that he was anti-European. The debates between Europeanists and Atlanticists did not revolve around the question "European integration or no European integration?" There was a basic consensus about the necessity of European integration in general. The disputes that arose mainly concerned the *form* and *purpose* of this integration.

Van der Beugel's hesitancy towards speedy European integration was determined by a different, more restrictive, understanding of what kinds of integration would be desirable. In contrast to the Europeanists, Van der Beugel did not perceive European integration as an *end* in and of itself, but as a *means* to enhance the Dutch national interest. On an economic level, this meant a form of European integration that limited protectionism and facilitated free trade in an open economic community – a desire that the Dutch shared with the United Kingdom and the United States, but which was rather unpopular in France. Overall, Van der Beugel took a rather pragmatic approach to the institutional debates about supranationalism vs. intergovernmentalism and sectoral vs. general integration dictated by his understanding of the Dutch national interest in light of the existing circumstances. If continental integration could not be realized on a supranational footing, Van der Beugel preferred a more Atlanticist approach, even if that meant that this had to happen in the intergovernmental context of the OEEC.

Of supreme importance in any discussion regarding the direction of European integration was the Dutch – and Atlantic – security interest. Ernst van der Beugel's understanding of the ideal Atlantic Community was rooted in a realist stream of Atlanticism, which regarded Atlantic unity under strong American leadership as essential for the security of the West in the context of the Cold War. Consequently, European integration was always meant to play an ancillary role. Since Van der Beugel believed that the security of the Netherlands, as well as the security of the entire European continent and Western civilization in general, depended completely on Atlantic unity under strong American leadership as institutionalized in NATO, he objected to any form of integration that could possibly loosen transatlantic ties. Hence, he declared that European integration "may never be seen as an

attempt to close itself off from the rest of the world, but only as an attempt to strengthen the European pillar of the Western alliance", claiming that "our national and personal existence depends on it."[135]

From early on Van der Beugel suspected that the Gaullists wanted Europe to pursue a course more independent from the United States. A more independent Europe that might even be tempted to position itself as a third, neutral power between the Soviet Union on the one hand and the United States on the other, was one of his biggest fears. Such a disintegration of the nascent Atlantic Community would leave Western Europe weak and vulnerable and thus as an easy prey for expansionist Soviet power and influence. His experience of the failure of the European Defense Community, and in particular the role of a France that often successfully pursued interests that were diametrically opposed to those of the Netherlands by playing the 'most difficult partner' card greatly frustrated Van der Beugel and made him pessimistic about the direction and possibilities of continental European integration along lines that would be in the Dutch national – and Atlantic – interest as he perceived it. The subsequent rise of Charles de Gaulle to power, the death stroke he delivered to the negotiations about the Free Trade Area and especially his desire to create a Europe that would act more independently from the United States was the real game changer for Ernst van der Beugel, who regarded this as an utterly unacceptable development. The only integration Charles de Gaulle would allow would be detrimental to the Dutch national interest and to Atlantic security. In this context, he believed, stagnation was better than progress into what he considered as a perilous direction. Consequently, he left the Dutch government disappointed and disillusioned with how European integration was unfolding. As a private citizen, however, he would be free to express himself as the European Atlanticist he had become.

After all, this chapter has also demonstrated how in his official position Ernst van der Beugel – as any civil servant – had to execute the policy set out by his minister. While the Atlantic priority at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had taken root under the leadership of Dirk Stikker, his successor, Willem Beyen, pursued a more Europeanist path. In this context Van der Beugel's Atlanticist priority sometimes clashed with his minister's ideas, revealing a certain tension between the formal policy line and his personal convictions, as illustrated for example by the Stikker letter or Van der Beugel's opposition to the *relance européenne*. Max Kohnstamm had experienced similar tensions as a Europeanist working at a predominantly Atlanticist Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1956 he had transferred to the private sector, where he could more purely pursue his own European ideals through Jean Monnet's Action Committee.

As this chapter has demonstrated, when we adjust our frame of analysis just a little bit by adding a transnational layer to it, we gain a more holistic understanding of the diplomatic process. By also including the role of private individuals and organizations that

[135] "Europa's integratie is geen streven naar de derde weg", *Trouw*, 24 November 1956.

were active in the transatlantic diplomatic arena – such as Jean Monnet and his Action Committee and the Bilderberg Meetings – it becomes clear that formal diplomacy did not take place in a vacuum: there were more stakeholders involved in transatlantic diplomacy than just nation states. Their activities were closely connected and all of them were trying to contribute to the multidimensional management of the transatlantic relationship. As Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ernst van der Beugel witnessed from up close how powerful these private actors could be. In fact, as an official government representative he frequently felt restricted in his pursuit of what he believed to be the Dutch national interest as a result of Monnet's influence behind the scenes of transatlantic diplomacy. Domestically, Van der Beugel had to deal with Monnet's influence on members of the Dutch parliament who had close ties to his Action Committee for a United Europe, but even more important was Monnet's personal influence on the American foreign policy establishment. The American pressure on European countries with regards to a speedy European integration, which Van der Beugel often regarded as detrimental for the Atlantic relationship could often be traced back to the Frenchman's direct influence within the U.S. State department and diplomatic machinery.[136] At the same time, he also experienced how an unofficial venture like the Bilderberg Meetings could complement the formal transatlantic diplomatic infrastructure by offering a meeting place where the different transatlantic stakeholders could speak more freely and build relationships of trust in an informal atmosphere. Eventually, Van der Beugel himself came to subscribe to a key tenet of New Diplomatic History, arguing in his dissertation that "the history of American policy towards the process of European unification cannot (…) be explained without recognition of Monnet's influence on the formulation of that policy." [137] While he often disapproved of Monnet's influence because he believed the Europeanists, with their eagerness for a swift integration, indirectly played into the hands of the Gaullists, Van der Beugel would take the lessons concerning the informal means and unofficial channels used by Monnet to heart. After he had left the Dutch government himself, he took inspiration from Monnet convinced that at least part of his *modus operandi* could also be very well applied in the pursuit of Atlanticist goals.[138]

[136] When we add a transnational layer to our analysis of the transatlantic diplomatic process this also further complicates more simplistic ideas of passive Europeans undergoing American hegemony as the ideas driving U.S. policy also have some more complex transnational roots that include European influences.
[137] Van der Beugel, *From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership*, 246-247.
[138] See: E.H. van der Beugel to Shepard Stone and Joseph E. Slater, 13 June 1967, box ID#18975, Report#010874, IA-Joseph E. Slater, Ford Foundation Archive (hereafter "FFA"), Rockefeller Archive Center (RAC).