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

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4. Unofficial Ambassador for an Atlantic Community

In July 1959 Ernst van der Beugel officially left the Dutch government for a position in the private sector. Such a transfer might have heralded the final chapter of a more traditional account of diplomatic history that limits the study of diplomacy to the nation state and its formal representatives. Yet, from the perspective of New Diplomatic History with its emphasis on an individual's diplomatic *role* and contribution to the diplomatic process instead of his or her *position* in or outside of officialdom, such a transition does not necessarily have to mean the end of one's relevance to diplomatic history. To the contrary, as the following chapters will demonstrate: if we decide to keep following Ernst van der Beugel into the private sphere it becomes clear that his diplomatic role and his contribution to the diplomatic process did not end at all with his move out of officialdom, but continued in an unofficial capacity and through informal diplomatic channels. It is not so much his departure from officialdom but rather the continuation of his role in transatlantic diplomacy that is most striking. Consequently, while the next three chapters will primarily zoom in on what this diplomatic role entailed by focusing on three case studies concerning Van der Beugel's unofficial diplomatic efforts in the light of perceived challenges to the transatlantic relationship, this chapter will focus on his transition to the private sector and identify key factors that enabled the continuation of his role in transatlantic diplomacy after he formally left the Dutch government.¹

Statesman without Office

The fall of the fourth Drees cabinet on 11 December 1958 came as "quite a shock" to Ernst van der Beugel.² He handed in his notice of resignation together with the other PvdA Cabinet members and was unexpectedly forced to reconsider his future. "The following day I started to realize what it meant to be without a job and without an alternative", Van der Beugel wrote in his diary on December 12. "It is as if all the securities outside of the personal sphere suddenly fall away and thoughts about the future control the day."³ He experienced the following days as a crisis period in which he felt confronted with a "rather definitive choice"

¹ Parts of this chapter also appeared in: Albertine Bloemendal, "Between Dinner Table and Formal Diplomacy: Ernst van der Beugel as an Unofficial Diplomat for an Atlantic Community", *New Global Studies*, 8:1 (2014): 103-119.

² EvdB/Kersten Oral History Interview, file 61-66, EvdB, NAH, p. 252: "Het was natuurlijk volkomen onverwachts. En het was voor mij dus niet het einde van twee jaar staatssecretariaat, maar het was het einde van alles wat ik tot nu toe gedaan had vanaf 1945. Dat is 'quite a shock'."; Foreign Service Dispatch, "Views of Dr. Ernst H. van der Beugel, Former Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, on Dutch Political Situation", 30 December, 1958, RG59, F482, Roll 6 ("Department of State Decimal File 1954-1959"), RSC: "Dr. Van der Beugel said that when the Cabinet decided to ask Finance Minister Hofstra to put the Parliament proposal for a two-year extension of certain temporary tax measures, it had no idea that it would be provoking a Cabinet crisis."

³ E.H. van der Beugel, "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", file 1, EvdB, p. 195 (translation mine).

which he had preferred to avoid for a long time to come.⁴ He did not worry much about losing his political position as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, but the prospect of leaving the department and the insecurity he experienced concerning his future fell heavy on him.

During the days and weeks that followed, Van der Beugel received several job offers. Rumors about an appointment as Government Commissioner for European Integration reached the Dutch embassy in Washington DC, but these were soon debunked by Van der Beugel. "I have come to the conclusion that I should not again occupy a position similar to the one I had before I became Deputy Foreign Minister, whether this would mean occupying the chair of Director General or becoming Government Commissioner", he explained to ambassador van Roijen. "One should only return to an old chair, when one is inwardly convinced that one will remain seated on it for a fairly long period, and I certainly lack that inward conviction. As a result I would consider it indecent to take upon me anything but a temporary position."⁵ Consequently, Van der Beugel informed Joseph Luns that he did not desire to return to his old position at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs because he considered this to be "improper."⁶ Even so, the choice did not come easy and Van der Beugel told Luns he would very much appreciate a *periode transitoire*. This way, he would not have to break with his work at the department instantaneously – he was after all still immersed in the negotiations concerning the Free Trade Area – and it would offer him a basis from which he could decide what his next move would be. Thus, on Van der Beugel's request, Luns created an interim position for him as Special Advisor of the Minister of Foreign Affairs with the title of Ambassador in which he would "remain in his present office" and "continue to speak for Holland in negotiations over the Free Trade Area and other such European problems." He would start on January 1, 1959 "with it known that he may move to other fields of activity within the next year or two."⁷

While Van der Beugel was still figuring out what path to take he confided to ambassador van Roijen that he was certain about a few things he did *not* want to do. PvdA leader Jaap Burger had offered him a seat in the Second Chamber,⁸ but Van der Beugel had no desire to remain in the political spotlight. When he had just been appointed as Deputy Foreign Minister he had written in his diary that he was not "wired" to be a politician because he considered himself too vulnerable and too objective for this. His experience as Deputy Foreign Minister had only confirmed this. Hence, he did not want to return to a prominent political position – now less than ever, in fact, because he feared a radicalization within the PvdA. "Like you, I still

⁴ E.H. van der Beugel to J.H. van Roijen, 23 December 1958, file 45, J.H. van Roijen Papers (hereafter "van Roijen Papers"), NAH (translation mine).

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", 196 (translation mine).

⁷ "Views of Dr. Ernst H. van der Beugel", 30 December, 1958, RG59, F482, Roll 6 (Department of State Decimal File 1954-1959), RSC; "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", 199.

⁸ "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", 202; "Views of Dr. Ernst H. van der Beugel", 30 December, 1958: "He had been offered a seat in the Second Chamber, and has refused it. He had been offered the job of 'Commissioner for Europe' in the Foreign Office – a position now not existing, but with proto-types in the Commissioner for Indonesia, Mr. Blom, and the unfulfilled Commissioner for Germany. He has refused that assignment as well, arguing that it would be improper for him to accept such an assignment with mental reservations over how long he would stay in it".

completely support the broad spiritual background of the Labor Party, but I cannot declare my solidarity to many points of practical politics,” he explained to van Roijen. Considering these circumstances, Van der Beugel believed it would be best to stay on as a member of the PvdA in an effort “to exert a moderating influence” on the party from behind the scenes.⁹

The alternative options he considered were a position in the Foreign Service and a switch to the private sector. Since no position in the Foreign Service was available in which Van der Beugel would feel both “happy and satisfied” and because he considered it “incorrect” to do something with his special training that others could do just as well or even better, the road ahead seemed to lead more and more into the direction of the private sector.¹⁰ Van Roijen was disappointed to hear this and, stressing his diplomatic value, disagreed with Van der Beugel’s argumentation against taking a job in the Foreign Service:

With regards to ‘the future’ I continue to think that it would be a great loss for our national interest if you would move to the corporate sector. I am convinced that sooner or later a post will open up in the Foreign Service in which you, as well as Miekje, shall find full satisfaction. As a man of the trade, I say this with some diffidence, but objectively I will have to conclude that at the moment there are few individuals in the Foreign Service who have shown to serve our country with as much dedication, but especially also with as much understanding and insight as you have.¹¹

Nevertheless, this was the direction Van der Beugel was gravitating towards. As a result of his experience during the Marshall Plan and the close cooperation with the private sector during that period combined with his father’s contacts in the financial and corporate world, Van der Beugel was well connected in private circles. Now that he could no longer turn to his father, who had passed away in 1953, one of the first people Ernst van der Beugel turned to for advice concerning his future was another important individual from his past: Hans Max Hirschfeld, with whom Van der Beugel had remained very close. Hirschfeld had already made the transfer to the private sector right after the completion of his work for the Marshall Plan in 1952. With him, Van der Beugel discussed possibilities for a future at the *Rotterdamsche Bank*, where Hirschfeld had started his career and where he was now a member of the Board of Supervisors, as well as the pros and cons of joining KLM Royal Dutch Airlines following a request by KLM president Aler to join the company as his possible successor.¹²

⁹ E.H. van der Beugel to J.H. van Roijen, 23 december 1958, file 45, van Roijen Papers.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ J.H. van Roijen to E.H. van der Beugel, 6 January, 1959, file 45, van Roijen Papers (translation mine).

¹² Hirschfeld had collected no less than eighteen positions on prominent Supervisory Boards after he left the Dutch government; “Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris”, 196; Meindert Fennema and John Rhijnsburger, *Hans Max Hirschfeld. Man van het grote geld* (Amsterdam: Bert Bakker, 2007), 317, 297-298.

KLM Connections

Ernst van der Beugel was no stranger to the KLM leadership. The Flying Dutchman had been a major recipient of American aid during the Marshall Plan years. In 1953, Van der Beugel had also been part of a committee appointed to study the Plesman Plan – a postwar proposal that focused on international cooperation in the execution and finance of grand infrastructural projects championed by aviation pioneer and legendary KLM-founder Albert Plesman. When Fons Aler replaced Plesman in 1954 Ernst van der Beugel sent him a personal note to congratulate him.¹³

During his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Van der Beugel had also become acquainted with Prince Bernhard von Lippe-Biesterfeld, the German-born spouse of Queen Juliana of the Netherlands. The prince, who had obtained his pilot license in England during the Second World War, was an avid aviation enthusiast and a member of the Board of Supervisors at KLM.¹⁴ After the war, Prince Bernhard had been appointed as Inspector-General of the Dutch armed forces and had established himself as a goodwill-ambassador of Dutch business interests abroad. When Van der Beugel still worked at the Marshall Plan Bureau, the prince would occasionally contact him to discuss informal meetings he had conducted with top officials in the United States and issues close to his heart, such as the off-shore possibilities for the Dutch ammunition industry in the U.S. or NATO plans for a collective production program for the aviation industry. Their relationship further intensified during Van der Beugel's stint as Deputy Foreign Minister when formalities made him a recurrent guest at Soestdijk Palace, the residence of the Dutch Queen and the prince consort.¹⁵ Even more important, however, was Van der Beugel's leadership of the Dutch delegation during the 1957 landing rights negotiations for KLM in the United States.

The acquisition of landing rights for KLM in the United States had been a recurring theme in Dutch-American relations since the Second World War, which caused a considerable amount of bilateral friction. KLM not only played a crucial role in the Dutch economy and in the post-war recovery of the Netherlands, but as the oldest airline in the world and carrier of the Dutch flag KLM was a vital source of pride for the Dutch – especially after the Netherlands had to let go of its lost empire in the East Indies.¹⁶

¹³ E.H. van der Beugel to I.A. Aler, 30 March 1954, EvdB, 35; EvdB/Kersten Oral History, 409.

¹⁴ Gerard Aalders, *Het Lockheed Schandaal* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2011), 140-144.

¹⁵ See for example: E.H. van der Beugel to T and M, 20 March 1956, file 5, EvdB; "Verslag bezoek aan Prins Bernhard", file 5, EvdB; EvdB/Kersen Oral History, p.388: "Ik heb natuurlijk veel met hem te maken gehad in functie. Als staatssecretaris en vooral in die militaire zaak ook, zag je elkaar. Hij kwam toen ook wel bij me. Ik kwam natuurlijk bij de koningin in functie, maar ik kwam ook wel bij hem een borrel drinken in die tijd. Toen is de KLM gekomen, waar hij commissaris was en waar ik heel veel met hem te maken heb gehad."

¹⁶ Giles Scott-Smith and David J. Snyder, "A Test of Sentiments: Civil Aviation, Alliance Politics, and the KLM Challenge in Dutch-American Relations", *Diplomatic History* 37: 5 (2013): 921; Marc Dierikx, "'Een spel zonder kaarten': KLM-landingsrechten als nationaal belang, 1945-1957" in *Jaarboek Buitenlandse Zaken: Derde Jaarboek voor de geschiedenis van de Nederlandse buitenlandse politiek*, ed. D.A. Hellema, C. Wiebes, B. Zeeman, (Den Haag: Sdu, 1997): 11-25; S.C. Labadie, "'Desert for dessert' De onderhandelingen tot het afsluiten van de luchtvaartovereenkomst van 3 april 1957 tussen Nederland en de Verenigde Staten van Amerika" (masters thesis, VU University Amsterdam, 2000): 20-25.

As one of the leading European airlines the 'Flying Dutchman' had wanted to expand its services in the United States after the war but the Americans were reluctant to grant them the necessary landing rights. Whereas the Dutch strongly favored freedom of the air, which offered the only way for such a small country to endure international competition, they soon found out that their American partners merely paid lip service to this idea. In practice the Americans pursued more protectionist policies based on bilateral agreements on a *quid pro quo* basis. With only one significant airport in the country, this left the Dutch with little to bargain with – except for their political loyalty as a faithful transatlantic ally in the Cold War. The U.S. State department was relatively sympathetic to Dutch landing rights requests as a means to reward a loyal Cold War ally with access to American airports, but they faced strong opposition from domestic airlines who saw KLM as a strong rival with whom they did not desire to compete on their home turf. The U.S. aviation industry was well organized and skillfully linked their own commercial interests to Cold War fears and security interests while lobbying Congress. After all, aviation was regarded as an industry that did not only have economic, but also military-strategic significance. As a result, in the absence of a real treaty the Dutch only received a series of temporary landing rights agreements during the first post-war decade. In the Netherlands, the American reluctance to successfully negotiate a real treaty was interpreted as unfriendly and unthankful behavior by the Americans towards one of its most loyal allies, hurting not only Dutch pride, but also the bilateral relationship.¹⁷

In the spring of 1956, with the expiration of the temporary permits in sight, the Dutch started to put pressure on the United States to resolve the landing rights dispute. The importance attached to this issue by the Dutch was underlined by the fact that Queen Juliana explicitly mentioned the matter in her annual speech to the Dutch parliament, beseeching the Americans to take the 'reasonable Dutch demands' into consideration. Prime minister Drees furthermore sent a personal letter to President Eisenhower to emphasize the importance of the matter and the Dutch cabinet postponed the ratification of a proposed Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between the Netherlands and the United States, which had been on the table since 1948, and in which Ernst van der Beugel had also invested much time during his days at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁸ The 'reasonable Dutch demands' mentioned by the Queen consisted of the replacement of the temporary arrangement by a standard civil air agreement and an expansion of KLM's service to the United States with three new flights: they wanted access to Los Angeles, Houston and a route including Amsterdam-New York-Curacao. The importance attached to these negotiations in the Netherlands did not go unnoticed in the United States. "Rarely have instruments of both the Cabinet and Parliament gone to such lengths in public to achieve what would seem to outsiders to be a fairly limited objective", a New York Times journalist observed shortly before

¹⁷ Labadie, "Desert for dessert": 25-30; Scott-Smith and Snyder, "A Test of Sentiments", 920-922.

¹⁸ "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", 25; "A Test of Sentiments", 922-930; "Memorandum to the President concerning U.S.-Netherlands Civil Aviation Negotiations, March 14, 1957, box 1, Chronological File – March 1957 (2), Christian A. Herter Papers, Eisenhower Presidential Library (EPL); "Troonrede 18 september 1956", last accessed 7 December, 2016. <http://www.troonredes.nl/troonrede-18-september-1956/>

the negotiations were finally reopened in the spring of 1957. What is more, “the importance the Netherlands attaches to the discussion” was also reflected, the journalist noted, “by the fact that her delegation will be led by the second man in the Foreign Ministry, Dr. E.H. van der Beugel, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs.”¹⁹

Ernst van der Beugel was not very eager about this appointment at first. The subject was not really his ‘thing’ and even though he “liked the opportunity to spend some time in the U.S.,” he believed that there was “little honor to be gained” with this task. “It will be difficult”, he wrote in his diary on 23 February, “and I don’t think we will get it.” Once he got involved, however, he became a passionate champion for KLM landing rights in the U.S. and very critical of the American attitude in this context.²⁰

The negotiations were indeed difficult as expected. They were also followed with an exceptional high degree of attention in the Dutch parliament and press, a fact about which Van der Beugel, who turned out to be a tough negotiator, frequently reminded his American counterparts. At some point, the Americans were willing to accept the demand for a civil air agreement including the expansion of landing rights for Houston and New York, but argued that they had to solve a conflict in Congress before they could discuss Los Angeles. This infuriated Van der Beugel, who in turn suggested breaking off the talks completely and told the American delegation that he considered any deal excluding the West Coast as “unjust, discriminatory and dishonorable”.²¹ In a letter, explaining this position to Foreign minister Luns, Van der Beugel argued that the West Coast was so essential that he would rather leave Washington “quarrelling” than without landing rights to Los Angeles. He regarded the exclusion of the West Coast – for which comparable European airlines like Lufthansa, BOAC and SAS had received landing rights – as extremely discriminatory and argued that it would severely impair KLM’s standing in the world by relegating it to being a “second rate” airline for the foreseeable future.²² Not just KLM’s future, but the Dutch national interest – not to mention Dutch pride – were at stake here. With the Dutch delegation threatening to walk out on the negotiations, President Eisenhower was informed and a crisis meeting was set up with the American Secretary of State John Foster Dulles in which Van der Beugel repeated his position, backed by both KLM and the Dutch cabinet.²³ In the end, however, he received instructions from the Dutch government to accept the deal offered to him by the Americans – without Los Angeles. They had decided that the far-reaching political consequences of a Dutch ‘no’ would be too grave.

While the American refusal to grant KLM access to the West Coast received a “sharply critical” response in the Netherlands, Van der Beugel’s efforts were very much appreciated –

¹⁹ Walter H. Waggoner, “Dutch put Hopes in U.S. Air Talks: Stake National Pride on Plea for Expanded Rights”, *New York Times*, 11 March, 1957, 46.

²⁰ “Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris”, 13.

²¹ E.H. van der Beugel to J.M.A.H. Luns and W. Drees, 27 March 1957, file 3, EvdB.

²² E.H. van der Beugel to J.M.A.H. Luns, 22 March, 1957, file 3, EvdB; E.H. van der Beugel to J.Algera (Minister of Transportation), 26 March 1957, file 3, EvdB.

²³ Codebericht 3687, E.H. van der Beugel to J.M.A.H. Luns, 29 March 1957, file 3, EvdB.

by the Dutch government and by the public at large as demonstrated by the massive coverage of the event in the Dutch media.²⁴ In the years that followed Van der Beugel regularly openly criticized the United States on this point. After all, the American position – which he found hypocritical and unfair – not only hurt the Dutch national interest, but also undermined the transatlantic relationship. To Van der Beugel’s frustration, the civil aviation dispute would remain a major source of friction in Dutch-American relations for at least two more decades. Van der Beugel’s role in this narrative would also continue, albeit in different capacities.

Ernst van der Beugel’s efforts on behalf of the Flying Dutchman in the United States were also greatly appreciated among the airline’s leadership. About a week before the fall of the Drees cabinet, KLM president Aler approached Van der Beugel to probe his interests in a career at KLM in the event that he might have to leave his position as Deputy Minister prematurely. Van der Beugel told him that if such a thing were to happen he would earnestly consider any serious proposal. This was not the first time that Van der Beugel was offered a job at KLM. Prior to the 1956 Cabinet forming negotiations – and thus prior to his negotiations on behalf of KLM in the United States – Van der Beugel had already been offered a directorship at KLM, which he had declined.²⁵ Since then circumstances had changed, however, and so had the job offer. As it turned out, the Flying Dutchman was experiencing some turbulence while entering the jet age resulting, among other things, from the acquisition of a series of new aircraft and the Board of Supervisors believed it would be good to blow some fresh air through the airline’s leadership. Moreover, in December 1958 KLM president Fons Aler announced that he had decided to step down as president once he would reach retirement age in May 1961. As a result, the KLM leadership was looking for a capable successor.²⁶

In the meantime, Ernst van der Beugel’s relationship to KLM had changed somewhat as well. While he had originally considered the landing rights matter a boring business, he had come to take a personal interest in the airline. In April 1958 he wrote a letter to Prime-Minister Drees in which he expressed “grave worries” about the direction KLM was taking – a move he explained to the Prime-Minister by saying that KLM had received “a special place” in his heart since the landing rights negotiations he had conducted for them in the United States.²⁷ His experience as a participant in these negotiations proved to be especially valuable now that the Board of Supervisors had come to the conclusion “that the increasingly complex world of international aviation required a new type of leadership in which patience, tact, diplomacy and familiarity with the field of international relations – traits through which neither Plesman nor Aler had distinguished themselves – would be a necessity.”²⁸ Thus, Van

²⁴ “Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris”, pp. 45,55; Christian Herter, “Memorandum for the President”, 17 February 1960, box 12, Eisenhower, Papers as President, 1953-61 (Ann Whitman File), Dulles-HerterSeries, EPL.

²⁵ “Views of Mr. Posthumus”, memorandum of conversation, February 5, 1959, RG59, F482, Roll 6: Department of State Decimal File 1954-1959, RSC.

²⁶ See: Marc Dierikx, *Blaauw in de lucht: Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij 1919-1999* (Den Haag: SDU Uitgevers, 1999), 187.

²⁷ E.H. van der Beugel to W. Drees, 28 April 1958, file 35, EvdB (translation mine).

²⁸ Dierikx, *Blaauw in de lucht*, 187 (translation mine).

der Beugel's diplomatic skills were regarded as an important asset, which should help him, in the words of Time Magazine, "to steer the world's fourth-largest international airline deftly through the financial perils of the jet age."²⁹

After some weeks of negotiations, during which he wanted to make sure that he would enter KLM not just as vice-president but as the certain successor of Aler, Van der Beugel decided to take the leap to the private sector and joined KLM.³⁰ While he mentioned on different occasions that he considered this a difficult decision, because it meant the end of fifteen years of work for the Dutch government which he had done with great enthusiasm and dedication and in which he had put "much of his heart"³¹, Van der Beugel mentioned repeatedly that, in contrast, his choice for KLM was a purely rational one:

It is a decision that I take with my mind and not with my heart. With my mind, because I do not want a political gamble, even though I am perfectly happy in my current position, even without the State Secretariat, but I am of the opinion that rationally this is the best moment to cut this line. If I say 'no' again, I will have become the man who has decided at the moment in which they wanted him to stay employed with the government. That is both for my career and for my finances too big a risk.³²

Transition and Continuity

Thus, on May 25, 1959 Ernst van der Beugel left the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to join KLM Dutch Royal Airlines as its Vice-President.³³ While this transition to the private sector may at first sight appear as a fundamental break with his career as a diplomat, reality proved to be more complex. The end of Van der Beugel's official career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs did, in fact, not mean the end of his involvement in transatlantic relations. Instead, his experience as a formal diplomat rather served as a kind of springboard to a more diffuse and free-from approach to transatlantic diplomacy.

During his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and through his work for the Marshall Plan, Ernst van der Beugel had developed an extensive social network that reached all over the Atlantic Community. Hence, he was very well connected, he had earned a good deal of trust and credibility, and he was seen by many as an authoritative expert in the field of European integration and transatlantic affairs whose consultation was sought after regularly. On December 2, 1959, for example – just a few months after he had left the Dutch government – Ernst van der Beugel was invited by the Council on Foreign Relations in New

²⁹ "The Netherlands: Crisis at KLM", *Time Magazine*, 11 January, 1963.

³⁰ This was eventually arranged through the mediation of van der Beugel's college friend Emile van Lennep, who was a member of the Board of Directors at KLM at the time. See: "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", p. 205; EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 309, 409; See also: E. van Lennep and E. Schoorl, *Emile van Lennep in de werelddeconomie. Herinneringen van een internationale Nederlander* (Leiden: Stenfert Kroese, 1991).

³¹ E.H. van der Beugel to J.H. van Roijen, 23 December 1958, inv. no. 45, Van Roijen Papers, NAH (translation mine).

³² "Dagboek van een Staatssecretaris", p. 209.

³³ Dierikx, *Blauw in de lucht*, 187.

York to talk about “issues in the Common Market” at a private and off-the-record round table meeting in his honor attended by “a group of men widely experienced in United States foreign economic policy and the European economy.”³⁴ During the meeting, Van der Beugel voiced his worries about recent developments concerning the process of European integration. “While a look at the Common Market at this juncture may have given one the impression that it had been a success”, Van der Beugel expressed “serious apprehensions” and informed his audience about his “impression of failure” ensuing from the fact that the organization of the Common Market had resulted in a split in Europe between the ‘inner six’ Common Market countries and the ‘outer seven’ EFTA countries. Thus, he argued, “the Common Market rather runs counter to the movement of cohesion of Western countries – is a step away from it.”³⁵ Van der Beugel specifically shared his disapproval of America’s role in this development, criticizing its Common Market-focused policy at the expense of a broader Free Trade Area including Great Britain and beseeched the American foreign policy establishment to put pressure on the European countries of the “six” and the “seven” to come together and to pursue its “former policy aims of European cooperation in OEEC and NATO in favor of greater Western cohesion.”³⁶ On a more positive note, he also used the opportunity to express his admiration for the Council on Foreign Relations and his hopes “that Europeans will create a similar organization of statesman without office.”³⁷ Many more similar visits and exhortations would follow during the ensuing decades.

As mentioned in chapter two, the Council on Foreign Relations was one of the central meeting places of the unofficial foreign policy elite in the United States, often referred to as the ‘East Coast establishment’ with which Ernst van der Beugel had been closely associated since the Marshall Plan. Back home in the Netherlands, he also remained an eminent member of the informal Dutch foreign policy establishment and served as vice-chairman of one of its key organizations: the Netherlands Institute for Foreign Affairs.³⁸ In addition to that, Van der Beugel did not only stay closely involved in the Dutch Labor Party, trying to influence its course from behind the scenes, he also served as a member of multiple informal advisory committee’s consulting the Dutch government on issues involving foreign and security policy, including the informal advisory committee with members from the business community that Hirschfeld had set up during the Marshall Plan days, which Van der Beugel joined as a private member in 1965 and to which he was appointed chairman in 1978. He also served as a

³⁴ Council on Foreign Relations, “Round Table meeting in honor of Ernst H. van der Beugel”, Wednesday, December 2, 1959, box 453, file “Special Ad Hoc Meetings July 1959-June 1960”, Records of the Council on Foreign Relations, PUL.

³⁵ Ulf Sudeck, “Report of Round Table Meeting in Honor of Hon. Ernst H. van der Beugel”, December 21, 1959, box 453, file “Special Ad Hoc Meetings July 1959-June 1960”, Records of the Council on Foreign Relations, PUL.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid. On the role of the Council on Foreign Relations in the early Cold War see: Michael Wala, *The Council on Foreign Relations and American Foreign Policy in the Early Cold War* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1994).

³⁸ See: P.R. Baehr, J.H. Leuridijk and Ph. P. Everts, *Elite en buitenlandse politiek in Nederland : een onderzoek naar de structuur, houdingen en opvattingen van de Nederlandse buitenlands - politieke elite* (Den Haag: Staatsuitgeverij, 1978); A.G. Harryvan, J. van der Harst and S. van Voorst, *Voor Nederland en Europa: Politici en ambtenaren over het Nederlandse Europeabeleid en de Europese integratie, 1945-1975* (Den Haag: Boom, 2001), 28; J.J.C. Voorhoeve, *Peace, profits and principle - a study of Dutch foreign policy* (Den Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1979), 85.

member of temporary advisory committees to consult the government on specific issues, such as the committee of civil and military experts (1971-1972) also known as the “Van Rijckevorsel Committee” and the advisory committee on the European Union (1974-1975) that became known as the “Spierenburg Committee”. In the meantime, Van der Beugel maintained close contact with his former colleagues at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in particular with the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs Joseph Luns, who continued to serve as Foreign Minister until 1971 when he was appointed Secretary General of NATO – a position he would hold until 1984, offering Van der Beugel direct access to the highest echelons of NATO leadership. In addition, he also remained closely in touch with his international diplomatic and political acquaintances, thus ensuring access to formal decision-making establishments throughout the Atlantic Community.

Ernst van der Beugel’s extensive web of contacts, combined with the trust and credibility he had earned through the years, made him a well-informed and valuable source of information and offered a useful backchannel for informal communication. When he acquired intelligence he considered significant, he wrote reports comparable to the diplomatic dispatches he used to write while still a government official, which he distributed to whomever he deemed valuable. In September 1960, for example, he wrote a letter to Joseph Luns and the Secretary General of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Baron Tuyll van Serooskerken, to inform them about a conversation he had had in London with the British Labor politician Denis Healey concerning changes in the British attitude toward the Common Market and the recent visit of the British Prime Minister MacMillan to German Chancellor Adenauer.³⁹ He also frequently briefed his American contacts about the latest developments in Europe and after visits to the US State Department he wrote “confidential memoranda” about conversations with American politicians and diplomats like George Ball, Bob Schaezel and Henry Owen which he distributed within his network including formal diplomats like the Dutch ambassador in Washington, Herman van Roijen, who remained a close friend of Ernst van der Beugel.⁴⁰

The Unofficial Atlantic Community

The continuation of Van der Beugel’s role in transatlantic diplomacy was also greatly facilitated by the existence of the unofficial transatlantic sphere mentioned in the introduction of this dissertation. A great part of the social fabric at the heart of the unofficial post-war Atlantic Community found its origins in the intense cooperation between Americans and Europeans during World War II, the Marshall Plan and the formation of NATO during which many high-level transatlantic friendships developed based on shared experiences and a deep sense of common purpose and destiny, which created an important foundation for

³⁹ E.H. van der Beugel to Mr. S.J. Baron Tuyll van Serooskerken, 15 September 1960, file 35, EvdB.

⁴⁰ E.H. van der Beugel to J.H. van Roijen, 19 November 1964, file 45, van Roijen Papers. For an in depth study on Ambassador Herman van Roijen, see: Rimko van der Maar and Hans Meijer, *Herman van Roijen (1905-1991): een diplomaat van klasse* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2013).

future cooperation.⁴¹ As the Norwegian historian Geir Lundestad argues, “it was obvious that the many meetings in the various Atlantic organizations and the establishment of permanent bureaucratic structures for these organizations had to encourage the creation of transnational elites.”⁴²

One of the important characteristics of the highly integrated Atlantic elite that developed during the post-war decades was that it consisted not only of formal government representatives like diplomats and politicians but also included business men, lawyers, bankers, philanthropists, journalists and academics.⁴³ “The creation of such elites far from ended conflicts among the participating nations, but it must have made the chances of resolving conflicts somewhat greater. The effect was significantly heightened by the fact that many of these members of these transnational elites had worked together for as long as they had under the most challenging circumstances. Huge events such as the Second World War and/or the start of the Cold War had to bring the various personalities together, particularly since the outcomes of these events were perceived as favorable as they were.”⁴⁴ The Marshall Plan in particular served as a major catalyst of public-private cooperation within the emerging Atlantic Community facilitating the development of a diverse yet closely integrated Atlantic elite by bringing Americans with different backgrounds, but many of them belonging to the East Coast Establishment, in close contact with a diverse group of influentials from Western-European countries.

After the Marshall Plan ended, many remained active through the diverse constellation of private Atlantic organizations that offered an unofficial transatlantic substructure for European and American elites to maintain contact while working on common causes. After all, the development of the unofficial post-war Atlantic Community went hand in hand with processes of globalization that made it easier for private individuals and groups to play a role in international relations. Hence, this period saw the rise of many private groups and individuals with various Atlanticist genealogies promoting close transatlantic cooperation.⁴⁵ The assemblage of Atlantic NGO’s included, for example, the International Movement for Atlantic Union, the Congress of European-American Associations, the Atlantic Treaty Organization, the Declaration of Atlantic Unity organization, the U.S. Citizens Commission on NATO, the Bilderberg Meetings, the Atlantic-Brücke, Le Cercle, the International Institute for

⁴¹ See for example: Geir Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe Since 1945: From “Empire” by Invitation to Transatlantic Drift* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 13, 72; Thomas W. Gijswijt, “Beyond NATO: Transnational elite networks and the Atlantic alliance.” in *Transforming NATO in the Cold War: Challenges beyond deterrence in the 1960s*, ed. Andreas Wenger, Christian Nuenlist, and Anna Locher (London and New York: Routledge., 2007), 50.

⁴² Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe*, 72.

⁴³ Giles Scott-Smith, “Ghosts in the Machine? Ernst van der Beugel, the Transatlantic Elite, and the ‘New Diplomatic History.’” <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/19602/Oratie%20Scott-Smith.pdf?sequence=2>

⁴⁴ Lundestad, *The United States and Western Europe*, 72.

⁴⁵ Valérie Aubourg, for example, has described three distinctive genealogies of some key Atlantic NGO’s that rose to the fore in the 1950s. See: Valérie Aubourg, “Creating the Texture of the Atlantic Community: The NATO Information Service, private Atlantic networks and the Atlantic Community in the 1950s,” in *European Community, Atlantic Community?* ed. Valérie Aubourg, Gérard Bosuat and Giles Scott-Smith (Paris: Soleb, 2008), 404-408.

Strategic Studies and the Atlantic Institute. Many of them served as unofficial meeting places for the Atlantic elite. Thus, they not only served as vehicles for Atlanticist inspired action and thinking, but also helped to sustain a closely-knit transatlantic elite network.⁴⁶ Harvard professor Charles Maier even writes about the emergence of an Atlantic elite with “semi-sacral status: Marshal, McCloy, Lovett, Spaak, Monnet, and other ‘wise men’ who exhorted to common effort and cooperation (...) transatlantic trips, common foreign policy forums, a network of clubby associations for talk and mutual self-regard created in effect a transnational ruling group.”⁴⁷ Thus, next to and at times overlapping the formal transatlantic structures, there existed an unofficial realm accommodating private individuals, networks and organizations all committed to fostering close transatlantic ties.

The official and unofficial realms of transatlantic diplomacy did not operate in isolation from each other, but were closely linked through unofficial transnational networks and converged at informal meeting places, which were all part of one and the same transatlantic diplomatic playing field. The unofficial Atlantic Community thus accommodated “a complex combination of private initiatives and official encouragement through which a shared experience in the war or the immediate after-war years was more important than distinctions between State and private groups.”⁴⁸ While the Atlantic NGO’s at times cooperated with nation states in pursuit of common goals we should not disregard the agency of these private ventures. As Valérie Aubourg’s research on Bilderberg and the Atlantic Institute has demonstrated:

[I]n neither case do we find a systematic organization of a Cold War waged by covert means through these two private institutions. We see rather a more nuanced picture of multiple initiatives, rooted in the same conception of culture as a crucial tool in transatlantic relations, people who often had a similar experience of the war, of the occupation in Germany or of the Marshall Plan. They were

⁴⁶ Joseph E. Johnson to American Participants in Bilderberg Meetings, 13 July 1962 (“Private Organizations Concerned with Atlantic and/or European Unity”), Business Correspondence, J. General Correspondence; Jul-Aug 1962, Christian A. Herter Papers, HCL; Kenneth Weisbrode, “The Political and Cultural Underpinnings of Atlanticism’s Crisis in the 1960s”, in *More Atlantic Crossings? European Voices in the Postwar Atlantic Community*, GHI Bulletin Supplement 10 eds. Jan Logemann and Mary Nolan (2014), 53; Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century*, 165-169; David Ellwood, “What Winning Stories Teach: The Marshall Plan and Atlanticism as Enduring Narratives,” in *Defining the Atlantic Community: Culture, Intellectuals, and Policies in the Mid-Twentieth Century*, ed. Marco Mariano (New York, Routledge, 2010), 119-123; Valérie Aubourg, “Organizing Atlanticism: the Bilderberg Group and the Atlantic Institute, 1952-1963,” in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe 1945-1960*, eds. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London, Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 92-108.

⁴⁷ Charles Maier, “Empires or Nations? 1918, 1945, 1989”, in *Three Postwar Eras in Comparison: Western Europe 1918–1945–1989*, eds. Carl Levy and Mark Roseman (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 59-60; Qtd. in D.W. Ellwood, “From Marshall Plan to Atlanticism: Communication Strategies and Geopolitical Narratives,” in *European Community, Atlantic Community?*, ed. Valérie Aubourg, Gérard Bosuat and Giles Scott-Smith (Paris: Soleb, 2008), 53.

⁴⁸ Valérie Aubourg, “Organizing Atlanticism: The Bilderberg Group and the Atlantic Institute” in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe 1945-1960*, eds. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003), 103.

convinced that close interaction of European and American elites was key to a stable, Atlantic region.⁴⁹

It was in the context of this unofficial realm at the heart of the Atlantic Community that Ernst van der Beugel was able to carve out a prominent role for himself after he left the Dutch government. A pivotal event that facilitated and fortified the continuation of his role in transatlantic diplomacy during this time of transition from officialdom to the private sphere was his appointment as Honorary Secretary General of the Bilderberg Meetings; one of the key Cold War meeting places between formal diplomats and politicians and the broader unofficial Atlantic elite and, according to Richardson, Kakabadse and Kakabadse, “the most prestigious of all informal transnational networks.”⁵⁰

The Bilderberg Meetings

The Bilderberg conferences came into being during a period of rising transatlantic tensions in the early 1950s. The main goal of the meetings, which were the brain child of the Polish champion of the European movement Joseph Retinger, was to maintain Atlantic unity through informal off the record conferences where European and American influentials could speak freely, ease policy differences and dispel misunderstandings.⁵¹ The Bilderberg Meetings were thus meant to facilitate the informal exchange of information, the establishment of relationships of trust among members of the Atlantic elite, and the strengthening of common values and beliefs, while also serving as a “safety valve for dissent and conflicting views within the pluralistic community of the West.”⁵² The meetings took three days, offering the attendees plenty of opportunities to bond, and thus to foster a very concrete sense of transatlantic community among the elite. Participants were seen as “Atlantic community leaders”, drawn from government and military circles, the worlds of business, law and finance, philanthropy, academia and the media, or in the words of the American honorary secretary general of the Bilderberg Meetings, Joseph E. Johnson, “a trans-national cross-section of people who are directly or indirectly influential in policy making and the leadership of public opinion.”⁵³

⁴⁹ Ibid., 102.

⁵⁰ Ian N. Richardson, Andrew P. Kakabadse, Nada K. Kakabadse, *Bilderberg People: Elite Power and Consensus in World Affairs*, (London: Routledge, 2011), very first page, [not numbered].

⁵¹ Giles Scott-Smith, “Ghosts in the Machine?”.

⁵² Thomas Gijswijt, “The Bilderberg Group and Dutch-American Relations” in *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations*, eds. Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen and Giles Scott-Smith (Amsterdam: Boom, 2009), 808.

⁵³ “Evaluation by Joseph E. Johnson” in: Ford Foundation Report, Bilderberg Meetings 1969-1971, Ford Foundation Grant File, Bilderberg, PA 56-341, Section 3: Reports, Reel 5464, FFA, RAC; “Background and purposes of the Bilderberg Meetings”, December 4, 1975, box 327, RG3, Bilderberg Meetings, Rockefeller Family Archive (permission by Peter Johnson): “the Bilderberg Meetings arose out of the complex problems and intricate relationships that emerged among the European and North American countries following World War II. A need was felt for a private, not-for-the-record forum where Atlantic community leaders – governmental, political, business, labour professional and academic – could exchange their views and explore ways for cooperation, agreement and resolution of problems of temporary concern. By means of a free and frank exchange of views, Bilderberg set out to lay the foundations for improving mutual understanding between Europeans and Americans on shared problems.”

As described in the previous chapter, Ernst van der Beugel attended his first Bilderberg meeting in January 1959, when he was still employed as special advisor to the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs. This meeting was not a normal Bilderberg Meeting, but a so-called “enlarged steering committee meeting”, a more *ad-hoc* get-together than the general conferences set up to discuss a specific crisis situation – in this case the deadlock in the FTA negotiations – with a select group of thirty one high-level participants.⁵⁴ That same year, Van der Beugel, who by now had left the Dutch government to join KLM as vice-president, was also invited to the ‘normal’ Bilderberg Meeting in Yesilkoy, Turkey on September 18-19.⁵⁵ What is more, Prince Bernhard had also invited him to the Steering Committee meeting that took place during that same weekend. It was at this meeting that Bilderberg founder Joseph Retinger announced to resign as Secretary General after which the prince proposed to appoint Ernst van der Beugel as Retinger’s successor. Despite the fact that Van der Beugel was rather new to Bilderberg this proposal was hailed with “unanimous approval” by the rest of the Steering Committee. Ernst van der Beugel accepted and it was decided that he would “officially assume his functions as Honorary Secretary General of the European Group on the first of January, 1960.”⁵⁶

According to the Danish historian Ingeborg Philipsen, the 1959-1960 change of was a “real turning point” for Bilderberg as a permanent organization. One of the key reasons for this was that Van der Beugel’s relationship with the Americans was “much more harmonious than Retinger’s had been.”⁵⁷ The beginning of the Bilderberg conferences had in fact been a bit rusty. The Americans had initially not been very keen to respond to Retinger’s initiative, partly because they simply did not trust him. During the Second World War, Retinger had cooperated with the British intelligence services and according to Thomas Gijswijt his “actions had aroused suspicions in Washington intelligence circles.” The prominent American Bilderberger Charles Douglas Jackson, an expert on psychological warfare who had served in the Office of Strategic Services during World War II, in fact suspected that he was a British secret agent. While they failed to establish a definite connection between Retinger and the British Secret Service, suspicions within the American group never really disappeared.⁵⁸

In December 1959, shortly after it had been decided that Ernst van der Beugel would succeed Retinger, the Secretary-General to be made a trip to New York where American Steering Committee member Jack Heinz – CEO of the Heinz food processing company – organized a dinner in his honor, giving Van der Beugel the “privilege to have much contact

⁵⁴ “Invitation Prince of the Netherlands”, Soestdijk Palace, December 1958, file 14, Bilderberg.

⁵⁵ “Bilderberg Group – Yesilkoy Conference 18-20 September: List of Participants”, file 14, Bilderberg.

⁵⁶ “Bilderberg Group, Steering Committee Meeting Çinar Hotel, Yesilkoy”, 17 September and 20 September, 1959, file 51, Bilderberg. See also: HRH Prince Bernhard, contribution to “Book on Ernst”, AHB: Ernst and I (...) soon became friends and by that I mean that we could ask each other for advice in all important issues in our work and in our private lives. So when Dr. Retinger died [sic], Ernst was quite obviously the first person I wanted to ask to become the Honorary Secretary General. I was very happy he accepted.

⁵⁷ Ingeborg Philipsen, “Diplomacy with Ambiguity: The History of the Bilderberg Organisation 1952-1977” (PhD diss., Kobenhavens Univeritet, 2009), 110.

⁵⁸ Thomas W. Gijswijt, “Uniting the West: the Bilderberg Group, the Cold War and European integration, 1952– 1966” (Phd diss., Heidelberg University, 2007), 25.

with the members of the American group, individually as well as collectively.”⁵⁹ During this stay it turned out that the replacement of Retinger could not have happened soon enough. “They rejoice in the final termination of the operations of the London secretariat”, Van der Beugel wrote in a report to Prince Bernhard. Even so, it turned out that the Americans were still worried about the continuation of certain activities by Retinger’s assistant John Pomian, whose position had not been discussed at the Steering Committee meeting in Turkey.

Ernst van der Beugel and Prince Bernhard had decided that it would be best to move the Bilderberg secretariat from London to The Hague and to replace Pomian by the former Dutch diplomat Arnold Lamping, who had just ended his formal diplomatic career in May 1959 as the Dutch ambassador in Bonn.⁶⁰ This idea was “well received” by the Americans.⁶¹ How urgent the replacement matter actually from the perspective of the American Bilderbergers became especially clear when Pomian sent out the invitations for a meeting of the Advisory Committee to be held on the 30th of January 1960. After the American Steering Committee members found out that these invitations had still been sent out by Pomian, American Secretary General Joe Johnson sent an urgent telex to Van der Beugel saying that the Americans had understood Pomian would be out by the first of January. “We did not know of any plan to continue him for three months. I believe that if his status during that period is any more than a consultative one we will lose senior American co-chairman,”⁶² Johnson stated. The senior American co-chairman was the earlier mentioned C.D. Jackson. Van der Beugel, who wrote to Prince Bernhard that it struck him that the American group seemed to have developed “an allergy for anything that is in any way related to the old Secretariat”⁶³ immediately tried to take the American worries away by means of a telex with the following message:

Presume that our conversation yesterday dispelled any doubt about position Pomian. I repeat Pomian will stop function as from first of January when I, assisted by former ambassador Lamping will take over. Pomian will be at disposal for 3 months of Lamping to transfer secretariat and will not even have a consultative capacity. In other words the outside world will have no dealings whatsoever with Pomian after the first of January. This is an even more definite and clear solution than we agreed upon in Istanbul when only Retingers position was arranged and Pomians position was still open. Therefore I do not see any reason why these definite solutions as to Retinger and Pomians positions should not satisfy our American friends.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ E.H. van der Beugel to HRH Prince Bernhard, 9 December 1959, file 52, Bilderberg.

⁶⁰ W.J.M. Klaassen, 'Lamping, Arnold Theodoor (1893-1970)', in *Biografisch Woordenboek van Nederland*. Accessed 12-11-2013: <http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/bwn1880-2000/lemmata/bwn2/lamping>

⁶¹ E.H. van der Beugel to HRH Prince Bernhard, 9 December 1959, file 52, Bilderberg.

⁶² E.H. van der Beugel to HRH Prince Bernhard, 21 December 1959, “Bijlage II: Kopie Telex van Mr. Johnson”, file 52, Bilderberg.

⁶³ E.H. van der Beugel to HRH Prince Bernhard, 21 December 1959, file 52, Bilderberg.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

Thus, Ernst van der Beugel's succession of Retinger established a new sense of trust between the American group and the Europeans within Bilderberg, which greatly strengthened the foundation of the venture. On a personal level, Van der Beugel's position in Bilderberg helped him to gather "transnational social capital"; it gave him a new kind of status as an unofficial ambassador for Atlantic unity and consolidated his position among the transatlantic elite.⁶⁵ As Secretary General, van der Beugel played a key role in selecting the participants and the topics of conversation during the meetings. Thus, he did not only serve as a facilitator of informal transatlantic contact but also helped to set the agenda of the unofficial transatlantic elite. For the next twenty years Ernst van der Beugel would serve as the driving force behind the Bilderberg Meetings, or as Henry Kissinger put it "I considered him for many years as sort of the glue that held the group together."⁶⁶

In her dissertation, Ingeborg Philipsen describes Bilderberg as a "diplomatic" initiative.⁶⁷ It is important to realize, however, that this was not just a label retrospectively attached to the venture by an academic. Those involved in the Bilderberg Meetings also perceived themselves as unofficial diplomats; as participants in and contributors to the transatlantic diplomatic process and likewise employed the language of diplomacy to describe their own activities. As John Pomian, explained to Van der Beugel during the transition of the Bilderberg secretariat from London to The Hague: "The principle activity of the [Bilderberg] Secretariat is of what might be called, a diplomatic nature. It involves keeping in touch with the members of the group, keeping abreast of political developments and in particular of the developments of ideas and with the people who are behind them."⁶⁸

Meanwhile, the European Secretariat referred to the members of the Steering Committee as "Bilderberg ambassadors" to their respective countries.⁶⁹ With regard to the Bilderberg Meetings, Ernst van der Beugel himself would speak of "our non-official international relations,"⁷⁰ whereas his successor as European Secretary General of the Bilderberg Meetings, Victor Halberstadt, also referred to Ernst van der Beugel as a "private diplomat".⁷¹

Ernst der Beugel's position in Bilderberg gave him a kind of unofficial diplomatic standing that transcended his role as an individual actor, while he did not represent a nation state, he did represent a valued institute on the transatlantic diplomatic playing field that offered a meeting place for the transatlantic elite committed to the transnational pursuit of Atlantic Community. The Bilderberg secretariat became Van der Beugel's unofficial Atlantic

⁶⁵ Valérie Aubourg. "The Bilderberg Group: Promoting European Governance inside an Atlantic Community of Values," in *Transnational networks in regional integration: Governing Europe 1945-83*, ed. Wolfram Kaiser, Brigitte Leucht and Michael Gehler (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 49.

⁶⁶ Henry Kissinger, interview with the author, 4 January 2012.

⁶⁷ See for example: Ingeborg Philipsen, "Diplomacy with Ambiguity", 261.

⁶⁸ "Notes on the organization and activities of the Bilderberg Group Secretariat", file 53, Bilderberg.

⁶⁹ "Vergadering 10 november ten Paleize", file 62, Bilderberg.

⁷⁰ E.H. van der Beugel, "Victor de Raadsman Spreekuur van 8-24 uur", "Lezingen", AHB.

⁷¹ Victor Halberstadt, "Opmerkingen bij aanbieding Ernst H. van der Beugel Fellowship, 2 februari 1983", Scrapbook XVIII, AHB (translation mine): "het ontslaat je niet van de plicht in alle opzichten nog lang actief te blijven als Nederlands enige particuliere diplomaat."

headquarters and the meetings a key vehicle in his pursuit of transatlantic unity, as the following chapters will demonstrate in more detail.

Public Voice

In addition to his activities behind the scenes of transatlantic diplomacy, Ernst van der Beugel also did not shy away from publicly speaking his mind – something he often could not do while still a formal civil servant. To illustrate this, it is useful to take a closer look at a rather outspoken speech he delivered on July 1961 at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce in London. In the speech, he fiercely criticized Gaullist France as well as the attitude of the Germans and proclaimed in very strong terms that – in order to create a healthy balance of power in Europe and to thwart the Gaullist dream to dominate the continent – it was absolutely necessary that the English apply for membership of the Common Market. He presented this not merely as his personal opinion, but added that “the Netherlands” would very much applaud this.⁷² Present in the audience were many representatives of trade and industry, members of the Dutch and British press as well as the Dutch ambassador in London, the English ambassador to the Netherlands, the earlier mentioned Labor politician and Bilderberg Steering Committee member Denis Healey and the British Minister of Trade Reginald Maudling.⁷³ Maudling had represented Great Britain in the negotiations about the Free Trade Area and the Common Market and was also a close acquaintance of Van der Beugel through the Bilderberg Steering Committee. It was probably no coincidence that on the same day the British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan announced that he would soon make a formal statement concerning the British relationship to the Common Market.⁷⁴ A few weeks later the United Kingdom officially applied for membership of the Common Market.

The speech did not go unnoticed in the Netherlands. The initial news coverage of the speech was soon followed by a series of editorials in Dutch magazines and newspapers discussing the role of private individuals – and in particular Ernst van der Beugel – in international relations. How did they respond to this private diplomatic intervention? Some editorials called the speech brave, others disassociated themselves from it saying that when Van der Beugel spoke of “the Netherlands” he did not speak for them. Many feared that the Dutchman’s harsh words about France and Germany might have negative consequences for KLM’s relations in those countries, thus indirectly hurting the Dutch national interest.⁷⁵

⁷² See for example: “Openhartige rede drs. v.d. Beugel: Fransen willen Britten niet in de E.E.G”, *Telegraaf*, 21 July 1961; “Particulier in Statenverkeer”, *De Rotterdammer*, 25 July 1961; “KLM-president pleit in Londen voor Bonn”, *De Waarheid*, 21 July 1961; “Vrijmoedig Commentaar” *De Tijd/De Maasbode*, 21 July 1961.

⁷³ “Table Plan, The Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in the U.K.”, Luncheon 20 July 1961, Scrapbook VI, AHB;

“KLM-directeur wekt Engeland op toe te treden tot E.E.G.”, *De Tijd/De Maasbode*, 21 July 1961.

⁷⁴ “Frankrijk misbruikt Europese idealen voor eigen macht”, *Volkskrant*, 21 July 1961.

⁷⁵ “Moedig”, *De Gelderlander*. 25 July, 1961; “Vrijmoedig commentaar”, *De Tijd*, 21 July 1961; “Vlucht in de politiek”, *Volkskrant*, 21 July 1961.

According to the *Volkscrant* (a prominent Dutch daily newspaper) Van der Beugel had turned himself into the mouthpiece of his former employer: the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁷⁶

During his speech, Van der Beugel himself had pointed out that now that he was not attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs any more, he could finally speak freely – a great advantage of his newly acquired unofficial capacity. After all, as the preceding chapter also demonstrated, as a civil servant he had to conform to the formal position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as a Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs he had to comply with the cabinet, but now, Van der Beugel argued, he was a free citizen.⁷⁷ Some found, however, that he had no business meddling in international relations as a private individual in the first place – an idea that was dismissed as archaic by an editor of the *Rotterdamsche Courant*: “Here and there one still finds traces of the opinion that relations between states are exclusively the business of governments”, he observed. “In the middle of the twentieth century, however, we must have reached the point where a private citizen can no longer be denied the right to make contact with others should he consider it useful, even at the international level.”⁷⁸ While there was no clear consensus on who or what Van der Beugel represented or what the repercussions of his actions would be, all the editorials took the speech very seriously. By doing so, they all seemed to agree that Ernst van der Beugel, even as a private citizen, was a serious actor in the diplomatic arena whose actions mattered.

Diplomats at the American embassy in The Hague seemed to agree with this and kept a close eye on Van der Beugel’s activities. They informed their colleagues in Washington when they found out that Van der Beugel planned to visit the United States and offered assistance in setting up meetings. They also reported on articles he wrote, speeches he delivered and meetings they had with him. In a 1964 diplomatic dispatch from the American embassy in The Hague he was described as: “Van der Beugel, who is well and favorably known to many American officials, holds no official position at the moment, but is at once a leading member of the Labor Party and influential in government circles.”⁷⁹

A Transatlantic Mediator

One of the Americans with whom Ernst van der Beugel developed a particularly close relationship was Henry Kissinger. They had first met in 1957 when Kissinger was a promising junior scholar at Harvard and Van der Beugel served as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs.⁸⁰ They got along right away. Over time their relationship developed into a very close friendship, which according to both men resembled a relationship between brothers.⁸¹ They kept an intensive correspondence, telephoned each other regularly and met often.

⁷⁶ “Vlucht in de politiek”.

⁷⁷ “Particulier in Statenverkeer”; “Ongepaste redevoering”, *De Telegraaf*, 29 July, 1961.

⁷⁸ “Particulier in Statenverkeer”.

⁷⁹ “European Unity and Atlantic Cooperation”, US Embassy The Hague, December 4, 1964, RG59, Reel 5, RSC.

⁸⁰ Henry A. Kissinger, contribution to the “Book on Ernst”, April 1980, box 27, Folder 1, Shepard Stone Papers, RSCL.

⁸¹ Henry Kissinger, interview with the author, 4 January 2012; EvdB/Kersten Oral History, pp. 873-875.

Their relationship also proved to be useful for diplomatic purposes – especially after Van der Beugel had left the Dutch government. In May 1961, for example, Kissinger forwarded a letter from his friend outlining Dutch agitation about the ongoing Dutch-American landing rights dispute to President Kennedy’s National Security Advisor, Mc. George Bundy. This would certainly not be the last time that Van der Beugel appealed to Kissinger in the context of KLM’s landing rights negotiations. During the same period, soon after Prime-Minister Harold MacMillan’s announcement that Britain wanted to apply for membership of the Common Market, Van der Beugel again wrote a long letter to Kissinger; this time outlining his ideas concerning the importance of Britain’s inclusion in the Common Market with a strong emphasis on the significance of American pressure. “The US should persuade Britain not to try to arrange too much beforehand” he told Kissinger, “most of their problems can also be solved when being a full member – and they should try to convince the French that it is of the greatest political importance that the enlarged Community comes into being and starts working as soon as possible.”⁸² Henry Kissinger, in turn also called upon Ernst van der Beugel for aid when he ran into diplomatic difficulties with regard to Europe as will be demonstrated in chapter six of this dissertation.

According to Kissinger, Van der Beugel was still “taken very seriously” within the transatlantic diplomatic scene after he had left the Dutch government. Kissinger described the Dutchman as “a sort of mediator”, on the one hand “between America and Europe” but also “in inter-European disputes” – in particular “between conflicting points of view.”⁸³ These conflicting points of view came very clearly to the fore in 1963, when Charles de Gaulle vetoed British Membership of the EEC and dragged the Atlantic alliance into an existential crisis.⁸⁴ While this did not surprise Ernst van der Beugel, it did very much upset him. In fact, the Gaullist challenge to Atlantic cohesion was an important motivation for Ernst van der Beugel to remain active in transatlantic diplomacy – as were other threats to the Atlantic Community. He was certainly not the only Atlanticist who had left government service to be roused back into action as a private citizen to defend the Atlantic relationship that he had helped to build and maintain during the first post-war years. As Kenneth Weisbrode points out in his history of the US State Department’s Bureau of European Affairs:

De Gaulle, by rejecting British admission to the Common Market in 1963, signing a separate Franco-German treaty soon thereafter, and withdrawing from the unified NATO military command in 1966, seemed to confirm the worst suspicions of the Atlanticists about the risks of experimenting with alternative approaches. Into this breach, then, they came from their perches outside government to defend the

⁸¹ E.H. van der Beugel to H.A. Kissinger, 11 August 11 1961, Private Collection of Henry A. Kissinger – Selected Correspondence (HAK).

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Henry Kissinger, interview with the author, 4 January 2012.

⁸⁴ For a detailed analysis of Charles de Gaulle and the transatlantic relationship see Sebastian Reyn, “Atlantis Lost: The American Experience with De Gaulle, 1958-1969” (PhD diss., University of Leiden, 2007).

idea of Atlantic Community inherited from the late 1940s and to act as its self-appointed policy guardian.⁸⁵

About a year earlier, in the Spring of 1962, the American diplomat and Atlanticist Theodore Achilles, a close friend of Ernst van der Beugel, had even deliberately ended his thirty-year career at the U.S. State Department arguing that he could “contribute best toward the realization of these goals [such as expanding and deepening Atlantic Community] as a private citizen”.⁸⁶

Turbulence at KLM

1963 also happened to be the year in which Ernst van der Beugel left his post at KLM. While looking back decades later, Van der Beugel emphasized that his move to KLM had very much been motivated by the “glamor” and “sex appeal” of the job, a desire for status, security and “to maintain a prestigious position.”⁸⁷ The glamor wore off rapidly, however, when in January 1963 he resigned after which he was admitted to a hospital in The Hague suffering from what was officially described as ‘exhaustion’. As one clever editor at Time Magazine pointed out, however, “the fundamental causes of Van der Beugel’s departure had as much to do with KLM’s health as with his own.”⁸⁸

While it appeared on the outside that business was going well, the Dutch aviation historian Marc Dierikx points out that Van der Beugel had in fact entered a company that was preparing for hard times.⁸⁹ For a large part this was the result of developments that had taken place and decisions that had been made before Van der Beugel entered the picture, but things certainly did not improve once Van der Beugel took over and crisis kept on following upon crisis. Since KLM’s annual figures still remained positive, the seriousness of the situation initially remained concealed, but by 1961 – the year in which Van der Beugel succeeded Aler – the perilous condition of KLM became awfully clear. Overcapacity, wrong aircraft purchases and the very high investments associated with the purchase of DC-8 aircraft together with the loss of landing rights in Jakarta in December 1957 combined with the subsequent termination of KLM’s cooperation with Garuda airlines in Indonesia in January 1958, drew a trail of destruction through KLM’s finances. By 1961 the ensuing crisis was further exacerbated by the revaluation of the Dutch guilder that cost KLM about eleven million guilders. Around the same time, Schiphol airport introduced a new tax on aircraft fuel that disproportionately affected KLM. Meanwhile, KLM’s market share of the crucial transatlantic market dropped considerably since the Dutch, despite Van der Beugel’s efforts behind the scenes, were still

⁸⁵ Kenneth Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century: Four Generations of Extraordinary Diplomats Who Forged America's Vital Alliance With Europe* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2009), 163.

⁸⁶ Qtd. In: Weisbrode, *The Atlantic Century*, 151-152. After he left the State Department Achilles became a director and Vice Chairman of the Atlantic Council of the United States and a governor of the Atlantic Institute.

⁸⁷ EvdB/Kersten Oral history 426-427.

⁸⁸ “The Netherlands: Crisis at KLM”, *Time Magazine*, 11 January 1963.

⁸⁹ Dierikx, *Blauw in de lucht*, 187.

not able to reach agreement with the Americans on the desired expansion of landing rights in the United States. To make matters worse, two brand-new KLM airplanes crashed in the spring of 1961, which did not particularly help KLM's image. This event also took a high emotional toll from Ernst van der Beugel who tried to personally visit the families of each and every victim of these disastrous accidents.⁹⁰

Ernst van der Beugel personally took the lead in drafting a long term strategic report to turn the tide at KLM. To survive, the airline had to shrink drastically, freeze its production for several years while its revenue should be increased considerably, Van der Beugel argued in his pessimistic report. The entire operation had to cost up to 1500 jobs.⁹¹ While it was clear that only radical reorganizations could solve the situation, the KLM leadership was divided. "Such financial turbulence made everyone fasten seat belts in KLM's executive suites," Time Magazine observed. "One group of entrenched, old-line KLM executives argued that despite the economic headwinds, the line should just continue to expand and even resume its service to Indonesia" while "a more moderate faction" sympathized with Ernst van der Beugel and "favored cutting back."⁹²

In the end, Van der Beugel was unable to unite his directors behind his plans. Instead of a drastic reorganization of the airline, they decided to patch things up by improving the financial results through an intensification of their marketing efforts combined with cost control. In practice, this meant that no fundamental changes were made. As a result, in December 1961 Van der Beugel was forced to turn to the Dutch government for financial assistance. The government, which held 71% of the airline's stocks,⁹³ came to KLM's aid but offered only a temporary solution that did not solve the structural problems that KLM had to deal with. Consequently, as "more and more knotty problems piled up on his desk" as more fundamental solutions appeared unattainable, Van der Beugel decided to call in outside support by asking the American management consulting firm McKinsey & Company for advice. The ensuing report was devastating for the KLM directors. They had provided inadequate leadership and barely had any hold of the line-organization of the company, according to the McKinsey report's verdict.⁹⁴ Ernst van der Beugel resigned.

Looking back on the affair, Van der Beugel acknowledged that he had failed and that he should have intervened far more radically.⁹⁵ More striking though, is the fact that according to Van der Beugel the root cause of his malfunctioning could in the end be reduced to a simple lack of interest and commitment:

I found that I was not sufficiently concentrated – not sufficiently committed. I actually considered it annoying. Apart from the question whether it was good or bad, I found it wearisome. I considered talking and thinking about aviation all day

⁹⁰ Ibid., 191.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² "The Netherlands: Crisis at KLM".

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Dierikx, *Blauw in de lucht*, 194.

⁹⁵ EvdB/Kersten Oral history, p. 424

long annoying. And if your heart is not in it, you are not doing things well, obviously.⁹⁶

In contrast, as this chapter has illustrated, Van der Beugel's heart and interest above all still went out to the Atlantic cause and it was during his time at KLM that he discovered how the unofficial networks and channels at the heart of the Atlantic Community still allowed him to play a role on the transatlantic diplomatic playing field – a role in which he, as a private citizen, could speak more freely than as a government servant and in which he could devote his energy unambiguously to the causes he believed in. The close transatlantic relations that had been established during the post-war period had to be maintained, secured and defended – with passion. Consequently, after Ernst van der Beugel left KLM, he decided to pursue an even more diffuse existence in which he greatly expanded his unofficial activities in transatlantic relations.

First of all, he wrote a dissertation titled “From Marshall Aid to Atlantic Partnership: European Integration as a Concern of American Foreign Policy”, which was published by Elsevier in 1966 with a foreword by Henry Kissinger. During that same year, Van der Beugel was appointed as “Professor of Western Cooperation after the Second World War” at Leiden University. He also regularly visited Harvard University as a guest lecturer. His academic position furthermore added to his status as an expert in the field of European integration and trans-Atlantic relations and as such he became an active contributor to public debates concerning European integration and trans-Atlantic relations. He published numerous articles in newspapers and magazines and delivered many speeches in both Europe and the United States. Furthermore, he became involved with exchange programs, think tanks and informal international relations councils like the Atlantic Institute in France, the International Institute for Strategic Studies and the Ditchley Foundation in England and the Council on Foreign Relations in the United States as well as with powerful American foundations like the Ford Foundation and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, which provided most of the funding for private Atlanticist organizations.⁹⁷ In addition, Van der Beugel started to collect an impressive list of directorships in the business sector and the financial world that came to serve as his main source of income, enabling him to travel abundantly and to keep up a lifestyle that facilitated the kind of private undertakings in pursuit of Atlantic cooperation that he was so passionate about.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 125. “Ik vond dat ik er onvoldoende op geconcentreerd was. Ik vond dat ik onvoldoende geëngageerd was. Ik vond het eigenlijk vervelend. Afgezien van de vraag of het goed of slecht ging, ik vond het vervelend. Ik vond de hele dag over luchtvaart praten, denken, lullen vervelend. En als je iets niet met je hart doet, doe je het dus ook niet goed.”

⁹⁷ For the role of American foundations in building transatlantic elite-networks see: Inderjeet Parmar, *Foundations of the American Century: The Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller Foundations in the Rise of American Power* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012); Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Volker R. Berghahn, “The Ford Foundation and the Forging of the Atlantic Community after World War II” in *European Community, Atlantic Community?* ed. Valérie Aubourg, Gérard Bosuat and Giles Scott-Smith (Paris: Soleb, 2009), 93-110.

⁹⁸ For a list of van der Beugel's directorships see “Annex A”.

When Van der Beugel had left the Dutch government he was approached to join the board of directors from several companies. When he left KLM the list grew fast – with positions not just in the Netherlands, but also abroad. This included a very prestigious directorship at the Warburg bank in London, where the renowned Siegfried Warburg had initially even asked Van der Beugel to become a partner; a proposition he eventually declined in favor of a more diverse and freestyle career that enabled him to stay more involved in transatlantic diplomacy. Van der Beugel would later remark that the connections he made through Bilderberg had also without any doubt helped in the acquisition of new positions. He questioned whether he would have gotten his directorships at Xerox in the United States, General Electric in England and Petrofina in Belgium without Bilderberg and he was certain that his chairmanship of the renowned International Institute for Strategic Studies in London was a direct result of his role in the Bilderberg Meetings.⁹⁹ He was careful, however, not to devote more than half of his time to his growing assortment of directorships that brought in most of the money. The other half of his time he wanted to devote to his ‘non-profit activities’, most of which were dedicated to fostering and maintaining close transatlantic relations.¹⁰⁰ While there is no reason to doubt Ernst van der Beugel’s sincerity in pursuit of close transatlantic relations, it is important to keep in mind that the participants of ventures like the Bilderberg Meetings were not always and not solely driven by motivations of a diplomatic nature, but that there were also other strong incentives such as personal status and prestige at play.¹⁰¹ At the same time, Van der Beugel’s personal status and prestige were also assets that enabled him to continue to play a role on the transatlantic diplomatic playing field even after he had left the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Conclusion

Ernst van der Beugel’s career switch to the private sector was a rational decision based on his desire to further his professional career in a way that enabled him to maintain his status and a sense of financial security. At KLM the initial sex appeal soon wore off, however, since his heart was not in it. Instead, he was still intellectually and emotionally attached to the process of transatlantic diplomacy, which had played a central role in his life since 1947. It was during his career at KLM that Van der Beugel carved out a place for himself among the unofficial Atlantic elite that enabled him to remain involved in the process of transatlantic relations in a private capacity. Despite the fact that he was not a formal diplomat anymore he was still taken seriously as a private actor on the diplomatic playing field. What is more, Ernst van der

⁹⁹ EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 707.

¹⁰⁰ E.H. van der Beugel to Peter Fleck, [date unknown], file 9, EvdB: “Ik moet erg oppassen dat het commissariaten-element dat steeds groeiende is (...) niet meer neemt dan 50% van mijn tijd. Ik wil de andere 50% van mijn tijd overhouden voor non-profit activiteiten.” For list of van der Beugel’s “non-profit” positions see appendix B “other positions”.

¹⁰¹ On Bilderberg and elite status, see: Ingeborg Philipsen, “Diplomacy with Ambiguity”, 263: “this study shows that the motivation of the participants may have been less ideological in the sense that personal gains (...)The gains of the participants included elite status, networking, gathering of information, the possibility to have informal talks and occasionally to put forward new ideas and suggestions.”

Beugel and other non-state actors involved in Bilderberg, for example, also took their own role in transatlantic diplomacy seriously, describing themselves as “private diplomats” engaged in “non-official international relations.” The continuation of Van der Beugel’s diplomatic role in a private capacity makes him an interesting subject from the perspective of New Diplomatic History. While the following chapters will focus in more detail on what this role entailed and how his unofficial activities related to the formal diplomatic process in the context of three specific challenges to the transatlantic relationship, this chapter primarily focused on the period of transition from officialdom to the unofficial realm of transatlantic diplomacy so central to New Diplomatic History. In doing so, it demonstrated that an actor’s relevance to the diplomatic process and an actor’s role on the diplomatic playing field is determined by more factors than one’s official relationship to a nation-state.

The endurance of Ernst van der Beugel’s role in transatlantic diplomacy was enabled by both personal and external factors that neatly tied into each other. On the personal level, one can discern a combination of assets that can be classified in categories of social, intellectual and financial capital, which were not only important in and of themselves, but which also amplified each other. First of all, with regards to social capital, Ernst van der Beugel possessed an extensive network that stretched all over the Atlantic Community. This network consisted of influentials from different spheres including journalists, academics, philanthropists, lawyers, captains of industry, labor leaders, civil servants and politicians. Due to his track record as an official diplomat, Van der Beugel was known and trusted as a professional. Above all, his experience as an official diplomat allowed him to maintain a certain insider-status in an otherwise relatively closed-off world. His professional experience, network, expertise and credibility thus offered him access to formal decision making establishments in different countries across the Atlantic, in particular in the Netherlands and in the United States. Secondly, but closely related to the first, through his career as a formal diplomat Van der Beugel had gained a great deal of knowledge and experience that gave him a high level of expertise, in particular with regards to the process of European integration and transatlantic foreign, security and economic policy. From 1966 onwards Van der Beugel’s position as Professor of Western Cooperation at Leiden University reinforced his status as an expert. In fact, this position even offered him the ability to create the illusion of objectivity through academic detachment. Meanwhile, his ever expanding social network and access to influentials across the Atlantic Community provided him with a great amount of valuable insider information, which in turn made him an interesting individual to connect with – an *interlocuteur valable* – which consecutively provided the potential to further expand his access. Last but not least, his expertise combined with his access to influentials on both sides of the Atlantic made him an attractive candidate for consultancy positions and directorships, both in the Netherlands and abroad, which subsequently enabled Van der Beugel to finance his private activities in pursuit of transatlantic relations.¹⁰²

¹⁰² EvdB/Kersten Oral History, p. 431.

In addition to these personal assets, the continuation of Van der Beugel's role in transatlantic diplomacy was facilitated by the existence of a closely-knit Atlantic elite, that Van der Beugel – through his personal experiences and in particular through his role in the Marshall Plan – had almost organically been woven into. The perpetuation of his role in transatlantic affairs as a private citizen was also facilitated by processes of globalization that made it easier for private individuals, in particular those belonging to the elite, to play a greater role in international and transnational relations in general. Within the North Atlantic area, these processes went hand in hand with the development of an unofficial Atlantic Community, which through a complex constellation of private organizations and initiatives next to and at times overlapping the formal structures of transatlantic diplomacy provided the infrastructure through which an unofficial transnational elite could operate – at times independently and at times in tandem with formal diplomacy – in pursuit of Atlantic unity in the context of the Cold War. Indeed, it was through his central position in one of the most prestigious of these organizations, namely the Bilderberg Meetings, that Ernst van der Beugel was able to consolidate a central position among the unofficial Atlantic elite through which he could remain a relevant and serious player – with direct access to the formal foreign policy establishments – on the transatlantic diplomatic playing field.

The continuation of his diplomatic role unintentionally seems to have received a symbolic twist by the fact that after he left KLM Ernst van der Beugel moved back into the very same building at the Smidswater in The Hague that had once served as the nerve center of the Marshall Plan bureau established by Hans Max Hirschfeld in 1948. It was this building, in which Van der Beugel had already housed the Bilderberg Secretariat in 1960, which from 1963 onwards became the unofficial headquarters from which he executed his informal transatlantic diplomacy in pursuit of Atlantic unity. As the remaining chapters will demonstrate, over the years Ernst van der Beugel would be roused into action by multiple perceived threats to the strength, cohesion and sustainability of the Atlantic Community that he had helped to build. Consequently, the following chapters will more specifically focus on Van der Beugel's unofficial activities in the context of three challenges to Atlantic unity: 1) the Gaullist challenge of the 1960's, 2) the challenge posed by détente, the democratization of foreign policy and the changing transatlantic landscape during the late 1960's and the early 1970's and 3) the challenge posed by the rise of a new generation that did not share the experiences of the Second World War, the reconstruction of Europe or the beginning of the Cold War.

