

Private Initiatives in International Diplomacy

The Rijkens Group and the West New Guinea Dispute 1949-1962



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Abstract: This thesis focuses on an informal collective of individuals known as the 'Rijkens group'. It offers new insights in the influence this group has had on the international developments of the West New Guinea dispute, thereby strongly challenging current historiographical consensus. This topic is approached from a New Diplomatic History perspective and focuses in almost equal parts on private archives, governmental archives and secondary literature. It showcases the value of expanding the notion of 'diplomacy' to also include non-state actors and therefore is able to present a more complete image of the exchanges between, and influences on, the countries involved in the dispute. Ultimately this thesis is able to conclude that the group was of large influence on the views and undertakings of the different governments involved in the dispute. This is accompanied by the group's influence on Dutch domestic press coverage of the West New Guinea dispute. Such coverage turned out to be much more representative of the group's opinion on the matter than that of the actual larger public.

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* Cover: Prince Bernhard (left) and Paul Rijkens (right) at the Royal Palace, 27-06-1963

Source: Elsevier Photographic Archive (Nationaal Archief)

Introduction

On the fourth of October 1961 the Dutch House of Representatives held its so-called 'General Considerations'. On this specific day an important item on the agenda was the discussion of the 'Luns plan', named after then minister of foreign affairs Joseph Luns. The plan, that would consist of a United Nations trusteeship taking over authority of West New Guinea from the Dutch government, found strong support throughout the house. Dumbstruck, therefore, was Jaap Burger, parliamentary leader of the Labour Party, when he heard the Anti-Revolutionary party (the party that had previously objected to any move towards a more pro-Indonesian stance) object to the plan on account of it not including any consultation with the Indonesian government. Something which Burger himself had already proposed in 1957 and which led him to exclaim that he had never seen such vulgar betrayal.¹ This outburst had the minister of education Jo Cals, step in and, somewhat demeaningly, explain a word used by Burger to Burger using a Dutch dictionary. What followed was one of the more spectacular breakdowns ever to have happened inside the parliamentary walls. Burger lost both his nerve and, so it seemed, a good deal of his sanity. He started to, rather hysterically, accuse the Dutch minister of colluding with a mysterious collective known as the 'Rijkens group'. Furthermore, he declared that the entire government was in the hands of the Rijkens group and that the dreaded big businesses of the country were the ones actually dictating government policy. In the following days, amidst fierce criticism from all segments of the media, Burger was forced to make a public apology. In the end, prominent party members decided that Burger was not fit to be party leader and within the year Burger retired.²

Regarding the approach

It was not just the fact that Burger could not follow up on his allegations, but also very much the content of his allegations that led both the press and other members of the house to criticize him. To this day, Dutch public view seems very sceptical of the notion how corporations can influence government policy. More generally, the influence of non-political actors has not been a serious part of historical research into Dutch politics. Only recently such conservative perceptions seem to be giving way. In the forefront of this shift is the field of New Diplomatic History (NDH). This thesis will, true to the historiographical orientation of NDH, look into the informal influences non-state actors have had, both on governmental policy and on the course of modern political history in general. It will attempt to present a more complete image of the diplomatic exchanges initiated by the West New Guinea

¹ P.J. Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze* (Amsterdam 2005) 379.

² Gerard Mulder and Paul Koedijk, *Léés die Krant! Geschiedenis van het naoorlogse Parool 1945-1970* (Amsterdam 1996) 421-422, 429; Jan Willem Brouwer and Jan Ramakers ed., *Regeren zonder rood. Het kabinet-De Quay 1959-1963* (Amsterdam 2007) 80, 81, 191.

dispute, presenting a study of those layers of diplomacy that lay 'outside' the orthodox research topics for diplomatic historians. It will, in other words, study the diplomatic practice itself, instead of only looking at the official results. As we shall see, diplomacy was not solely the domain of professional diplomats or official state actors. This study will focus on the private initiatives of those inspired to take on diplomatic roles in spite of any official governmental connection, and that were, as shall be argued, to a large degree important for the official outcome of the West New Guinea dispute. More specifically, this thesis will focus on an informal collective of individuals despised by Jaap Burger and publicly known as the 'Rijkens group'. Ultimately it will present a first answer to the question of what influence this non-governmental collective was able to exert on the developments of the West New Guinea dispute and its eventual outcome. A question that is exactly in line with the questions NDH scholars pose, since these studies, as the historian Giles Scott-Smith notes, "represent the value of historical curiosity into how and why the citizen(-elite) are able to take on the mantle of the 'diplomat' and insert themselves into the international maelstrom – and with what results."³

Regarding the topic

The Rijkens group is the name most often used for an informal collective of Dutch individuals that shared a strong dissatisfaction with Dutch governmental policy on the West New Guinea dispute. The group's primary objective was to improve the steadily worsening diplomatic relations between the Netherlands and Indonesia. Such an objective could originate from different motives for different members, but all agreed that worsening relations with Indonesia was not worth maintaining authority over West New Guinea over. The name 'Rijkens group' originates from minister of foreign affairs Joseph Luns, who correctly recognized the founder and primus inter pares of the group to be Paul Rijkens, the chairman of the Board of Directors of Unilever N.V..⁴ Save for his autobiography, Rijkens has not been the centre of much historical research, although historian and politician Loe de Jong called Rijkens "one of the most dynamic figures of the Second World War".⁵

Born on September 14th 1888, Rijkens was born into a family of businessmen. His father, Luppó Rijkens, was president of Hageman & Co. Limited, a margarine company that would be taken over by Van den Bergh & Jurgens Ld., which would later fuse with the Lever Brothers to form Unilever.⁶ After getting a degree in accounting at the age of eighteen, Rijkens would start working at the Van den Bergh margarine company.⁷ Here he would be quickly recognized as a gifted accountant and at 25 Rijkens

³ Giles Scott-Smith, 'Introduction: Private Diplomacy, Making the Citizen Visible', *New Global Studies* 12 (2014) 5.

⁴ Paul Rijkens, *Handel en Wandel. Nagelaten gedenkschriften 1888-1965* (Rotterdam 1965) 167; Elisabeth van Blankenstein, *Dr. M. van Blankenstein. Een Nederlands dagbladdiplomaat 1880-1964* (Zeist 1996) 400.

⁵ Loe de Jong, *Het Koninkrijk der Nederlanden in de Tweede Wereldoorlog* volume 9 (Amsterdam 1979) 1439.

⁶ Author Unknown, *Register of Defunct Companies* (London 1990) 233.

⁷ Rijkens, *Handel en Wandel*, 15, 21.

could boast the title of Managing Director.⁸ In 1933 Rijkens succeeded Anton Jurgens as the chairman of the board of directors, becoming the highest ranking member of the continental part of Unilever leadership.⁹ This promotion also signified the shift from a family led corporation (the Jurgens family was one of the original owners of Unilever) to a CEO with a fixed salary who could be held accountable for company policy.¹⁰

During the Second World War Rijkens lived in London and was handling the stress of managing an international company of which half was under German occupation. In 1940 in London, Rijkens would, together with the journalist Marcus van Blankenstein, set up the underground newspaper *Vrij Nederland* which is till this day a renowned national monthly journal.¹¹ Rijkens also found time to organise the Studiegroep voor Reconstructieproblemen. A thinktank that studied post-war reconstruction plans, chaired by Prince Bernhard van Lippe-Biesterfeld, son-in-law to the Dutch Royal Monarch in exile, Queen Wilhelmina.¹² This contact with the Dutch prince proved highly valuable when in 1952 Rijkens organized the first Bilderberg conference together with Bernhard and the Pole Joseph Retinger.¹³ Furthermore, the friendship between Bernhard and Rijkens would be of direct importance for the development of the West New Guinea dispute.

Returning from London, Rijkens received an honorary doctorate at the Nederlandse Economische Hogeschool in Rotterdam, together with then prime-minister Willem Drees.¹⁴ While not having been active in the sciences, the doctoral advisor of Drees, prof. C.W. de Vries explained that “it is much harder to be a great citizen than to be a great scientist”.¹⁵ Both men received the doctorate for excelling in citizenship. After the war Unilever flourished and became the global company that it remains today. Rijkens would lead the company as chairman of the board of directors until December 1955, when he resigned from his official functions but remained as an unofficial advisor to the board.¹⁶ Added with the fact that *Time* magazine called Rijkens ‘one of the world’s most important magnates’, one can conclude that, when Rijkens took up the goal of improving the worsening Dutch-Indonesian relations over the West New Guinea dispute, he was a force to be reckoned with.¹⁷

⁸ Ibidem 30-31.

⁹ The structure of the company entailed a Dutch and a British chairman with mutual responsibilities for their respective halves of the company.

¹⁰ Charles Wilson, *Geschiedenis van Unilever. Een beeld van economische groei en maatschappelijke verandering* (The Hague 1970) 347; Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 127.

¹¹ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 105.

¹² Ibidem 110, 112.

¹³ Valerie Aubourg, ‘Organizing Atlanticism: the Bilderberg group and the Atlantic institute, 1952–1963’, *Intelligence and National Security* 2 (2003) 92.

¹⁴ Rijkens, *Handel en Wandel*, 131-132.

¹⁵ Hans Daalder and Jelle Gaemers, *Willem Drees 1886-1988. Premier en elder Statesman. De jaren 1948-1988* (Amsterdam 2014) 100.

¹⁶ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 125-126, 133.

¹⁷ W.J. Reader, *Vijftig jaar Unilever* (London 1980) 104.

Regarding the period

The West New Guinea dispute is the term most often applied in English literature when referring to the conflict between the Republic of Indonesia and the Netherlands over authority of the Western half of the island of New Guinea (WNG for short). The dispute took place between 1949, when, at the Dutch-Indonesian Round Table Conference, the Netherlands recognized the sovereignty of the federal Indonesian state with the exception of its authority over West New Guinea, till 1962 when, at the brink of war, the Netherlands and Indonesia signed the New York agreement which transferred authority over WNG to Indonesia through a short interim period under a UN trusteeship. The dispute played a key role in Dutch politics of the period. Minister of foreign affairs Joseph Luns, for example, while responsible for matters on European integration, spent most of his time on WNG; leaving the European dossiers mostly to his undersecretary.¹⁸ Furthermore Jan de Quay, who was prime-minister in the final period of the dispute, is described by his biographer Cees Meijer to have the WNG dispute be the hardest testcase in his career.¹⁹ Even the Dutch ambassador in Washington Herman van Roijen described the WNG dispute as the hardest portfolio of his 'Washington years'.²⁰

Regarding the sources

The historiography of the WNG dispute is extensive and many detailed studies on specific aspects of the dispute have by now been produced. However, there has yet to be a single study specifically dedicated to the workings and influence of a group that boasted some of the most influential members of Dutch society. To be sure, the Rijkens group has been described before in publications on the WNG dispute. Some historians have dedicated pages to actions or aspects of the group, while at other times the group was reduced to a few sentences or even a footnote.²¹ Four larger works on the WNG dispute do mention the group in a more detailed manner and explored the extent to which it was a serious diplomatic actor.

Firstly, the historian Pieter Drooglever dedicates several pages to the nature and activities of the group, mentioning several meetings between members of the group and members of the Dutch and Indonesian government, yet also stating that the group was unable to influence Dutch policy in

¹⁸ Albert Kersten, *Luns. Een politieke biografie* (Amsterdam 2010) 270, 318.

¹⁹ Cees Meijer, *Jan de Quay 1901-1985. Een biografie* (Boom 2014) 285.

²⁰ Rimko van der Maar and Hans Meijer, *Herman van Roijen 1905-1991. Een diplomaat van klasse* (Amsterdam 2013) 307, 505.

²¹ John Jansen van Galen, 'Tussen koloniale rancune en vermomd idealisme. Het Nederlands beleid inzake het conflict rond Nieuw-Guinea' in: Martin Elands and Alfred Staarman ed., *Afscheid van Nieuw Guinea. Het Nederlands-Indonesisch conflict 1950-1962* (Bussum 2003) 20-21, 29; Rein Bijkerk, 'Ressentiment, roeping en realisme. Het Nieuw-Guineaconflikt in parlement en pers' in: Martin Elands and Alfred Staarman ed., *Afscheid van Nieuw Guinea. Het Nederlands-Indonesisch conflict 1950-1962* (Bussum 2003) 54-55; Pierre Heijboer, *De eer en de ellende. Nieuw-Guinea 1962* Zoetermeer 2012) 98; Ben Koster, *Een verloren land. De regering Kennedy en de Nieuw-Guinea kwestie 1961-1962* (Baarn 1991) 156.

any significant way.²² The same goes for the older work of historian Chris van Esterik who also describes several contacts members of the group had with both the Indonesian and Dutch government, while also stressing a supposed strong animosity between Luns and Rijkens. Van Esterik too believed the group was little able to achieve any concrete results, even describing the group's actions under the header 'Rijkens' failure'.²³ Historian Ronald Gase too concluded that the group achieved little to nothing, but in a less neutral manner describes his own annoyance with the fact that this was due to the unwillingness of the different Dutch governments, who refused to value the group as a useful diplomatic tool. Gase writes how, should the Dutch government have been more receptive to the group's messages, the WNG dispute might have been settled in a much more amicable manner.²⁴ Lastly the political scientist Arend Lijphart dedicates several pages to the group's history. Lijphart, much like the others, stated that the group achieved little since it focused solely on approaching members of the Dutch government while wholly ignoring Dutch public opinion. Lijphart suggests that, should the group have focussed more on the latter, it could have obtained important successes.²⁵ This thesis, in fact, will attempt to argue quite the opposite and future chapters will extensively discuss the ways in which the group concerned itself with the public opinion.

As the above already suggests there is, among all historians describing the group, one crucial similarity: practically all considered the group in the end largely unsuccessful. Not one author mentioning the group considers it to have had a significant influence on the developments of the dispute and not one claims that the group influenced the way the dispute was eventually settled.²⁶ Furthermore, many key Dutch politicians never thought the group to have played a decisive role either.²⁷ Much of traditional historiography has proven either uninterested, or even disapproving, of the notion that a focus on non-state actors in international diplomacy can yield valuable new insights. This thesis aims to drastically challenge such historical consensus.

For historians working in the field of New Diplomatic History perhaps the largest challenge is the collection of source material. Since scholars in this field are by definition occupying themselves

²² Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 374-375, 403.

²³ Chris van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost. Economie en politiek in de Nieuw-Guinea-kwestie* (Baarn 1982) 120-121, 129-131.

²⁴ Ronald Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog. Het Nederlands beleid ten aanzien van Nieuw Guinea* (Baarn 1984) 124-125.

²⁵ Arend Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization. The Dutch and West New Guinea* (Yale 1966) 220-221.

²⁶ H.J.A. Hofland, *Tegels lichten. Of ware verhalen over de autoriteiten in het Land van de Voldongen Feiten* (Amsterdam 1972) 54, 62; Wouter Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag. Willem Oltmans en de kwestie Nieuw-Guinea* (Amsterdam 2009) 120; Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 123; Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 147, 220; P.B.R. de Geus, *De Nieuw-Guinea kwestie. Aspecten van buitenlands beleid en militaire macht* (Leiden 1984) 89, 147; Duco Hellema, *De Karel Doorman naar Nieuw Guinea. Nederlands machtsvertoon in de Oost* (Amsterdam 2005) 23, 25; Van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 129, 147. One exception to this might be a lecture held by economic historian P.W. Klein in 1992, which will be discussed in chapter 3.

²⁷ Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 133, 138, 156, 170, 191.

with topics that lay largely outside the public domain, and are by definition unofficial, little archival material is left behind. The Rijkens group is an interesting exception to this common rule, yet this thesis suffers the same challenges other New Diplomatic Historians face. Paul Rijkens has left behind an extensive personal archive which is stored in the Unilever archives in Rotterdam. Having been little used by historians, some finally start to find their way to it. This has resulted in a biography on Paul Rijkens now being written by historian Hans Meijer. A highly positive development since Rijkens has been a greatly underappreciated element in Dutch society and an interesting historical figure. The downside of this project, however, has been the fact that due to such increased attention, for this research no access to the Unilever archives was granted.

This is, however, no insurmountable problem. Not much has been written on the Rijkens group in literature on the West New Guinea dispute. The standard overviews on their own pose a rather bleak and, as shall be argued throughout this work, undeserving picture. Yet, a thorough research of secondary literature, including a number of recent political biographies, seems to yield a more fruitful and complete picture of the group than any of the standard works present on their own. A literature review, therefore, would be valuable, as it would for the first time present a thorough and complete study of a gravely understudied topic. Having said that, this thesis aims to also present new archival material and new insights into the group that have been neither studied nor presented before. To this end, use was made both of archives of other members of the Rijkens group, and of archives of persons and institutions that stood on the receiving end of the undertakings of the group.

A second reason for why a study on the Rijkens group, without being granted access to the Rijkens archives, could be valuable, is the way in which this thesis worked to overcome these initial obstacles, providing a perhaps interesting example for how studies into such informal networks can be carried out. Circumnavigating the gaps in research material is something many scholars in the field of New Diplomatic History will be forced to do and for such a relatively new academic field the ways this thesis proposes to do so may perhaps, in the most modest of ways, function as an inspiration. One disclaimer needs to be made in connection to this. The attentive reader will notice that, throughout this work, references to the Rijkens archives are in fact made. These are based on earlier personal research dating three years back, when access to these archives was still obtained relatively easily.

Regarding the questions

Ultimately this thesis aims to present an answer to the question of what influence the Rijkens group has had on the developments of the WNG dispute. Through its findings it also aims to investigate, and ultimately challenge, existent conceptions of the group as being unimportant for the course of the dispute. This does not entail a complete overview of all the activities and undertakings of the group. Due to the inaccessibility of sources, and even more so the nature of the group, such a 'complete

history' would be very hard to achieve. Yet even without such a complete overview, important conclusions based on solid archival research will be presented. This question of what the actual influence of the Rijkens group on the developments of the WNG dispute was, should be seen as the red line that unifies the chapters of this thesis. To answer it, however, several other questions need to be addressed. What were the group's actions and to what extent can we trace them? Who did they approach? What plans did they make? And how did they execute them? Answers hereto showcase how much more can be known about the group than is currently the case, significantly challenging historiographical consensus. Furthermore, the story of those that were on the receptive end of the group's undertakings should play a central role. Were those approached by the group open or in any way receptive to the group's message? This too will be researched.

For a topic still associated with a certain degree of obscurity, it should be made especially clear how the Rijkens group shall here be approached. Some authors have defined the group as an unofficial 'diplomatic channel' which conveyed messages between two governments that were, so to say, not 'on speaking terms'.²⁸ Most others have referred to the group as a 'lobby', 'pressure' or 'advocacy' group.²⁹ These interpretations already conflict since one would imply government collaboration whereas the other would imply government persuasion. Yet neither interpretation does justice to what the Rijkens group really entailed. The group did more than either convey messages or lobby for policy change. As we shall see, it obtained most of its successes through bypassing the Dutch government altogether, either by influencing the press or by actually weakening the Dutch government's international position. This might also be why the group has, till now, been so little researched by Dutch diplomatic historians. Orthodox diplomatic historians failed to find a clear-cut framework with which to interpret the group. The relatively new insights produced by New Diplomatic History can help formulate a clearer view of how the group was a distinct political actor in its own right.³⁰ Ultimately the nature of the Rijkens group was a deeply multi-faceted one. It was, in essence, diplomatic channel, lobby group, public diplomat, ideological thinktank and influential political actor all at once.

²⁸ Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 224; Hans Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta. De Nederlands-Indonesische betrekkingen 1950-1962* (Utrecht 1994) 608; Kersten, *Luns*, 251; Hans Meijer, *Van Sabang tot Merauke! Indonesië en het Nieuw Guinea-vraagstuk* (Groningen 1986) 118.

²⁹ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 401; Lijphart, *The trauma of decolonization*, 146-147, 218; Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen 1905-1991*, 344; Hellema, *De Karel Doorman naar Nieuw-Guinea*, 23; Meijer, *Jan de Quay 1901-1985*, 290, 301; Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta*, 577; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 100; Van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 120; Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 147; J.G. Kikkert, *De wereld volgens Luns* (Utrecht 1992) 86-87; C.L.M. Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle. Dutch decolonisation and Indonesia 1945-1962* (Leiden 2002) 347, 349; Dirk Vlasblom, *Papoea. Een geschiedenis* (Amsterdam 2004) 301.

³⁰ Scott-Smith, 'Introduction: Private Diplomacy, Making the Citizen Visible', 3-4.

Regarding the structure

Regarding the structure of this thesis some concluding remarks are in order. Although described in very general terms above, the field of New Diplomatic History requires a more detailed discussion. Chapter 1 will give a brief overview of the general principles of this scholarly tradition, discussing the philosophy at the core of this field and providing a theoretical framework to place this thesis in. After this, chapter 2 will present a very general history of the events that occurred between 1949 and 1962. This so as to provide the reader not specifically well familiar with these events to have enough of an understanding of the dispute to comfortably carry on reading. Finally, chapter 3 will start discussing the Rijkens group in detail, focussing on the role the group played regarding Dutch governmental policy, the influence it had on Dutch politics in general, the role it played in public perception of the WNG dispute and the way the dispute was covered in the Dutch press. The same will then be done in chapter 4 for the connection between the group and Indonesia, and in chapter 5 for the United States. The decision to have the bulk of the thesis divided along geographical lines is a purely practical one. Hopefully it presents the reader with a clearer overview than, for example, a strictly chronological structure would. Lastly, chapter 6, functioning more as an appendix, will present a discussion of whether the group can said to have been working for, with or without the Dutch government. The conclusion will follow up on this and will present a first answer to the question of what influence the Rijkens group has had on the development of the WNG dispute.

Chapter 1

This thesis places itself in the scholarly tradition of New Diplomatic History (NDH). It should therefore first extend on what this really entails. The approaches and methodological suggestions offered by historians working from an NDH background form an important addition to the larger and older field of Diplomatic History. The differences NDH offers when compared with standard Diplomatic History, and even more so the value these differences encompass, will be set forth in the following paragraphs. Thereafter some concrete examples of recent publications stemming from NDH will be briefly discussed, after which in conclusion some final points concerning the methodology of this thesis will be addressed.

In his inaugural address in acceptance of the Ernst van der Beugel chair in Diplomatic History at Leiden University, Giles Scott-Smith stressed the importance of the concept of elites for diplomatic historians. Referring to the sociologist Thomas Bottomore, Scott-Smith added that the distinction between those that can and cannot exert political influence remains a rather vague one.³¹ Unofficial (non-state) actors can, and have, at times played important diplomatic roles. Despite of these conclusions, Scott-Smith in a later work writes that “The presence and resonance of private actors within the framework of international political affairs was long neglected due to the overarching shadow of ‘the state’ as the official representative of all things diplomatic.”³² It is these constraints standard Diplomatic History suffers that form the focussing points for researchers working from an NDH tradition. These scholars concern themselves with influences in international relations, diplomacy and governmental policy that lay ‘outside’ the realm of official state politics. By adding new ‘layers’ of investigation, a more complete understanding of diplomatic history is conceived. NDH is therefore aimed “specifically at the study of individuals and groups who perform diplomatic roles, rather than at international relations as a whole.”³³ Such studies show the fluidity and complexity of diplomatic exchanges and historical international relations, and also stress the previously neglected importance of private individuals in such exchanges. Furthermore, concerning source material, archival evidence still remains central, but this involves as much private papers as governmental archives.³⁴ For this thesis, these remarks regarding the source material prove especially relevant since source material concerning the Rijkens group proved largely inaccessible. This thesis will, in line with the NDH approach, focus in almost equal parts on private papers and governmental archives.

Two more points separate NDH from standard Diplomatic History and other historiographical

³¹ Giles Scott-Smith, *Ghosts in the Machine? Ernst van der Beugel, the Transatlantic Elite, and the ‘New’ Diplomatic History* (Leiden 2009) 5.

³² Giles Scott-Smith, ‘Introduction: Private Diplomacy, Making the Citizen Visible’, 2.

³³ Website of the network for New Diplomatic History. See: <https://newdiplomatichistory.org/about/>.

³⁴ Giles Scott-Smith, ‘Introduction: Private Diplomacy, Making the Citizen Visible’, 2.

disciplines. The first is the concept of the nation state. Standard Diplomatic History, with its focus on official state and governmental practices, naturally also demarcates subjects of research along nation state lines. At the same time, the nation state as a defining factor for research topics has largely vanished in most historical disciplines. NDH scholars often do occupy themselves with research subjects defined along nation state lines, yet at the same time the topics under research themselves cross these lines in such ways so that they can often best be described as 'transnationalists'.

A second point that separates NDH from most of the modern historiographical practice is the importance granted to individuals and groups. Much of modern historical research is concerned with historical trends and the influence of larger economic, social, cultural, climatological, etc. processes. On this, historian Johannes Großmann writes that, especially regarding the twentieth century, "the historical master-narrative seems to leave little room for appraisal of the Individual. It is no coincidence that social history, itself a product of the twentieth century, has distanced itself from the dictum 'men make history'."³⁵ NDH does focus more strongly on individuals, but the difference with standard Diplomatic History, and older historiography in general, is that, although in earlier periods individual actors were often attributed with significant influence, such individuals were almost always official state figures. New Diplomatic historians, instead, focus on those individuals that functioned 'outside' of official governmental circles, but did exert influence on political decision making. The Rijkens group, as we will see, attempted precisely this.

Although the NDH approach is a relatively novel addition to the field of Diplomatic History, some important studies have already been carried out. Scott-Smith himself, for instance, researched the role Ernst van der Beugels' friendship with Henry Kissinger played in the Dutch Royal Airlines (KLM) obtaining landing rights at Chicago airport.³⁶ He also researched the involvement of the Dutch businessman Ernst van Eeghen in what is known as the 'Euromissiles crisis'. Van Eeghen, amidst rising Cold War tensions, managed to function as a middle-man, conveying messages between the Dutch, American and Soviet government, as well as organize the 'Berkenrode conference' which saw participation from both Dutch and Soviet nuclear experts.³⁷ Scott-Smith in a later publication extended on Van Eeghen's endeavours and linked them to other instances of private diplomacy as undertaken by Kees van den Heuvel, Frans Alting von Geusau and Rudolf Jurrjens.³⁸ These studies indicate the extent to which private initiatives in international diplomacy were part of the Cold War, as well as the

³⁵ Johannes Großmann, 'Winning the Cold War. Anti-Communism, Informal Diplomacy, and the Transnational Career of Jean Violet', *New Global Studies* 12 (2014) 1.

³⁶ Scott-Smith, *Ghosts in the Machine?*

³⁷ Giles Scott-Smith, 'A Dutch Dartmouth. Ernst van Eeghen's Private Campaign to Defuse the Euromissiles Crisis', *New Global Studies* 12 (2014) 3.

³⁸ Giles Scott-Smith, 'Opening up Political Space. Informal Diplomacy, East-West Exchanges, and the Helsinki Process', in: Simo Mikkonen and Pia Koivunen ed., *Beyond the Divide. Entangled Histories of Cold War Europe* (Oxford 2015) 23-43.

fact that, without inclusion of such instances, a diplomatic history of Dutch Cold War relations will always remain incomplete. They challenge existing perceptions of Cold War diplomacy as well as add to them.

Scott-Smith has certainly not been alone in proving the value of this approach. Noticeable examples are the works of historians Johannes Großmann and Allen Pietrobon. Großmann, describing the life of the lawyer Jean Violet, showed the ways in which Violet was able to organize his impressive transatlantic network into a biannual meeting which would become known as the informal discussion forum 'Le Cercle'.³⁹ Le Cercle was oriented towards improving relations between political leaders and so "cut through the nationalist bureaucracies of the countries concerned, which often stopped their Governments from closer co-operation."⁴⁰ As with most initiatives researched by NDH scholars, Violet's direct influence on international politics remains difficult to measure. Yet this did not prevent Großmann to conclude that Violet had a lasting influence in "contributing to the formation of para-political and para-diplomatic transnational spaces of communication."⁴¹

Along the same lines historian Allen Pietrobon researched an instance of private diplomacy when a small group of Japanese and American citizens attempted to transport 25 Japanese women physically scarred by the atomic bombs to the U.S. for medical treatment. An initiative that would positively influence post-war Japanese-American relations. Pietrobon was the first to research the actual geopolitical goals of the group involved, and for the first time linked the initiative to an instance of private diplomacy. Following specifically the actions of the American Norman Cousins, Pietrobon was able to document the initially hesitant and even hostile views of the U.S. State Department. Those views would in the long run change to a much more appreciative opinion of what, as Pietrobon claims, the Department itself was unable to achieve: "a measured improvement in U.S.-Japanese relations."⁴²

These studies showcase the value a broader and more all-encompassing approach to Diplomatic History can offer. An achievement this thesis will in modest ways attempt to contribute to. Before moving on, some minor points should first be addressed. Firstly since the Rijkens group enjoyed strong ties with, and for a large part originated from, the corporate world, corporate historians arguably could have focussed on it to a larger extent. However, the few historical works that have been produced about the companies that were, indirectly through their leaders, involved, do not mention the group at all. This is true, for instance, for the immense history of Royal Dutch Shell by historians Stephen Howarth and Joost Jonker, although Shell employee Koos Scholtens was one of the group's

³⁹ Johannes Großmann, 'Winning the Cold War', 6.

⁴⁰ Ibidem.

⁴¹ Ibidem 8.

⁴² Allen Pietrobon, 'Humanitarian Aid or Private Diplomacy? Norman Cousins and the Treatment of the Atomic Bomb Victims', *New Global Studies* 12 (2014) 21.

most active members.⁴³ Furthermore Unilever historian W.J. Reader in his *Fifty Years of Unilever* fails to mention the WNG dispute, let alone the involvement of Unilever's chair of the board of directors. The same is true for historian I.J. Blanken's history of Philips N.V., although Frits Philips discussed the dispute with prime-minister De Quay extensively.⁴⁴ Lastly, a serious history of Royal Dutch Airlines (KLM) has yet to be written, although several smaller publications have emerged. One of these does mention the WNG dispute and the challenges this posed for KLM, yet it does not mention Vice-President Emile van Konijnenburg, who was, besides Rijkens, probably the group's most public figure.⁴⁵ Moreover, in the histories of Unilever and Philips, Indonesia is not even listed in the index although many other countries are.⁴⁶

To be sure, detailed accounts of the activities of companies like Shell and Unilever in Indonesia do exist. The historian Keetie Sluyterman, for instance, recently published a very detailed study of the activities and economic position of Unilever, Shell and Heineken in Indonesia between 1945-1967; focussing especially on the inclusion of local managers.⁴⁷ As a business historian Sluyterman does research corporate activities which are often, as described above, too controversial to be incorporated into official corporate histories. A business historical account of the Rijkens group would therefore not be outlandish, but such a particular study has yet to see the light. For now it suffices to state that official corporate histories make no mention of the group whatsoever.

As a final point, the concept of track II diplomacy should here be mentioned as the Rijkens group, to some extent, could be viewed as a clear example hereof. Retired U.S. Ambassador John McDonald, who published several works on the concept, defines track II diplomacy as "interaction between private citizens or groups of people within a country or from different countries who are outside the formal governmental power structure." What's more, McDonald writes that these individuals "have as their objective the reduction or resolution of conflict, within a country or between countries by lowering the anger or tension or fear that exists, through improved communication and a better understanding of each other's point of view."⁴⁸ All of this verges obviously very closely on

⁴³ The authors do mention the WNG dispute and the obstacles this posed for Shell in Indonesia, as well as CEO John Loudon's critical discussion of the matter with Dutch politicians; yet the group itself is never mentioned. See: Stephen Howarth and Joost Jonker, *Geschiedenis van Koninklijke Shell deel 2. Stuwmotor van de koolwaterstofrevolutie 1939-1973* (Amsterdam 2007) 230-232.

⁴⁴ Reader, *Fifty Years of Unilever*; I.J. Blanken, *Geschiedenis van Koninklijke Philips Electronics N.V. Deel V. Een industriële wereldfederatie* (Zaltbommel 2002).

⁴⁵ Henk Rol, *Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij. De geschiedenis van een vervoermaatschappij* (Sassenheim 1988) 55.

⁴⁶ This last point is especially remarkable since the leaders of these two companies referred to their involvement in the dispute extensively in their autobiographies. See: Rijkens, *Handel en Wandel*, 160-181; Frits Philips, *45 jaar met Philips* (Rotterdam 1976) 293-298.

⁴⁷ Keetie Sluyterman, 'Decolonisation and the organisation of the international workforce: Dutch multinationals in Indonesia, 1945-1967', *Business History* (2017).

⁴⁸ John McDonald, 'Introduction' in: John W. McDonald and Diane B. Bendahmane ed., *Conflict Resolution. Track Two Diplomacy* (Washington 1987) 1.

what is above described as the orientation of New Diplomatic historians. Furthermore, the attempts to reconcile or improve relations between conflicting countries was to a large extent precisely what the Rijkens group attempted to do.

Because of this the Rijkens group is, in many aspects, a good example of track II diplomacy. It endeavoured to organize meetings between influential Indonesian and Dutch individuals; a practice often referred to in track II literature as organizing 'workshops'.⁴⁹ Furthermore there are many instances of group members visiting Dutch members of government specifically to explain Indonesian views and actions. Yet the group (and its individual members) also undertook actions that go far beyond the endeavours of track II diplomats. The group attempted heavily to alter Dutch press coverage on the WNG dispute. It also attempted to work domestically a good deal on influencing its own government's policy, whereas a track II diplomat focuses outwardly on internationally facilitating diplomatic exchanges. Furthermore, government permission is commonplace for instances of track II diplomacy and, as we will see in chapter 6, such permission, regarding the Rijkens group, remains very hard to prove.⁵⁰ The group also interacted with different governments directly, whereas track II diplomacy describes exchanges between citizens from both sides of a diplomatic conflict. Even with McDonalds later additions to his understanding of track II diplomacy to now entail a total of nine tracks; no track covers the Rijkens group's activities since no track covers exchanges between private individuals and governments.⁵¹ Lastly, the group would achieve its largest successes by bypassing the Dutch government altogether and strategically weakening the Dutch government's position internationally. Because of this, and because the nature of the group is a much more multi-faceted one than can be described simply by track II notions, this thesis will not return to the concept again.

⁴⁹ Muzaffer Ercan Yilmaz, 'Track-Two Diplomacy as a Resolution Approach to International and Inter-Societal Conflicts', *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi* 19 (2013) 157.

⁵⁰ Harold H. Saunders, 'When Citizens Talk. Nonofficial dialogue in Relations between Nations', in: John W. McDonald and Diane B. Bendahmane ed., *Conflict Resolution. Track Two Diplomacy* (Washington 1987) 82.

⁵¹ The Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy offers a clear overview of the nine tracks currently identified. See: <http://imtd.org/about/what-is-multi-track-diplomacy/>.

Chapter 2

After the Second World War, when most of the Dutch East Indies had been Japanese controlled, the situation was highly chaotic.⁵² The region saw several years of gruesome fighting during the Indonesian War of Independence. During that time, in 1947, acting resident of West New Guinea Jan van Eechoud proposed a plan to speedily prepare the Papuans for self-government.⁵³ This suggestion of Van Eechoud included a notion that (West) New Guinea was distinctly different from the rest of Indonesia. Historian John Jansen van Galen states that the WNG dispute was born when the Dutch minister van Maarseveen adopted Van Eechoud's ideas and pressed that New Guinea would not be included in the discussions that would be held between Indonesia and the Netherlands at the end of 1947.⁵⁴ From then on, West New Guinea would, within the Dutch view, gain a special position and at the ensuing Round Table Conference (RTC) between the Netherlands and Indonesia in 1949 the Dutch recognized the de jure independence of the federal Indonesian state, with the important exception of West New Guinea. To save the agreement, it was decided that the matter of West New Guinea would be decided at a separate conference, to be held within a year after the RTC.⁵⁵

Without historical consensus on which arguments for retaining West New Guinea proved decisive, most historians agree that a number of arguments were taken serious by contemporaries. The richness in raw materials was often mentioned.⁵⁶ As was the intense personal unpopularity of Indonesian leaders in the Netherlands.⁵⁷ Moreover, it is argued that the entire process of losing its largest colony was such a traumatic experience for the Dutch that they were extremely motivated to retain whatever they could. An argument thought especially important by historian Hans Meijer, who here follows the political scientist Arend Lijphart.⁵⁸ Lijphart tellingly titled his work on the WNG dispute *The Trauma of Decolonization*. A recent study by historian Bart Stol has thoroughly researched this 'trauma thesis'. Stol argues against this sole notion of sentimentality by stating that Dutch policy on WNG (including the initial decision to retain it) was at least partly based on rational decision making. To be sure, there was a certain compensatory element to the decision to retain WNG after the loss of Indonesia. But this was only possible because Dutch politicians followed a broader European colonial line of searching for compensation for lost regions. The Dutch were inspired by a trend initiated by the

⁵² Jan Pouwer, 'The Colonisation, Decolonisation and Recolonisation of West New Guinea', *The Journal of Pacific History* 2 (1999) 165-166.

⁵³ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 95.

⁵⁴ John Jansen van Galen, *Afscheid van de koloniën. Het Nederlandse dekolonisatiebeleid 1942-2012* (Amsterdam 2013) 323.

⁵⁵ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 164-165; Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 84.

⁵⁶ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 81-82.

⁵⁷ Vincent Kuitenbrouwer, 'Beyond the 'Trauma of Decolonisation'. Dutch Cultural Diplomacy during the West New Guinea Question 1950-62', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 2 (2016) 309.

⁵⁸ Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 8-9; Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta*, 255; P.J. Drooglever, 'Een paar bedenkingen. Discussie over Een daad van vrije keuze', *BMGN: Low Countries Historical Review* 1 (2007) 99.

French and English, and found strong support with other European colonial powers for their decision to retain WNG.⁵⁹ Other arguments historians mention include the possible function WNG could serve in resettling Dutchmen from Indonesia, the strategic position of the island in international conflict and the fact that the Dutch would be better equipped to 'civilise' the still 'backward' Papuans.⁶⁰ Noticeably, the argument that would come to dominate Dutch sentiments from 1950 onwards, the Papuans their right to self-determination, was largely absent at the RTC.

The conference that, within one year of the RTC, would determine the fate of West New Guinea started on December 7th 1950.⁶¹ The Dutch immediately stated that authority was not under discussion, but were willing to allow the Indonesians to spread their language and culture, with the Papuans eventually deciding on their own future. This stance was unacceptable for the Indonesian delegation who refused any negotiations that did not start from the principle of a transfer of sovereignty. This meant the failure of the conference.⁶² One that historians question to have had much political promise from the start.⁶³

Meanwhile the Dutch government, led by prime-minister Willem Drees, proved less stable than anticipated when minister of foreign affairs D.U. Stikker proclaimed that he favoured ceding WNG to the Indonesians. The liberal party minister saw his own liberal party file a motion against his policy and in January 1951 the cabinet fell.⁶⁴ Both Drees and Stikker would return to their ministerial positions in the next cabinet. The latter, however, for only a brief period, leaving Dutch politics altogether the next year.⁶⁵ To prevent any more instabilities to government by pushing an agenda that clearly divided Dutch politics, Drees decided that the topic of WNG would be further avoided. It would mean that for the next few years in government the Dutch stance would be little discussed and the Dutch started to invest heavily in WNG in order to 'bring the country into the modern world'.⁶⁶ Investments were made in infrastructure, education, administration, facilities and exploration of the soil and possible oil reserves.⁶⁷ In 1952 an amount of 12.6 million guilders was reserved for development of WNG. An amount that would increase to 106 million in 1962; 1% of total government spending.⁶⁸ At the same time Indonesia would introduce the matter in the general assembly of the United Nations. Both in 1954

⁵⁹ Bart Stol, *'Een goede kleine koloniale mogendheid.'* *Nederland, Nieuw-Guinea en de Europese tweede koloniale bezetting in Afrika en Melanesië (ca. 1930-1962)* (Utrecht 2017) 462.

⁶⁰ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 170; Jansen van Galen, *Afscheid van de koloniën*, 320.

⁶¹ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 194.

⁶² *Ibidem* 195, 198.

⁶³ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 153.

⁶⁴ Hellema, *De Karel Doorman naar Nieuw-Guinea*, 21; Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 153; Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 39.

⁶⁵ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 201.

⁶⁶ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 153; Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 203.

⁶⁷ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 203, 273-279, 282-289.

⁶⁸ Miljoenennota 1952, Miljoenennota 1962, Ministry of Finance digitized archive: <http://www.rijksbegroting.nl/algemeen/rijksbegroting/archief,1951---1960.html>.

and in 1955 the Indonesian resolution failed to win the required two-thirds majority as the Dutch saw themselves backed by most Western allies and the Western oriented Latin American countries.⁶⁹ Due to rapid decolonisation, however, the body of the UN would drastically change in later years to include more countries that sympathised with the Indonesians.⁷⁰

On December 10th 1955 a final attempt was made to discuss WNG bilaterally when Dutch and Indonesian delegations met in Geneva for a final conference dedicated, in part, on the matter.⁷¹ By this time Joseph Luns had entered the political arena, and he was appointed to lead the Dutch delegation to the conference.⁷² The conference failed due to the unwillingness of both parties to move in each other's direction, yet historians have mostly blamed Luns for refusing any compromise on his part.⁷³ Some mention Luns' awkward practice of breaking the ice by telling risqué jokes which offended the Indonesian delegation.⁷⁴ All, however, mention the fact that Luns probably wanted the conference to fail, as he was thoroughly convinced that Indonesia had no justified claim on WNG.⁷⁵ The failure of the conference would also result in an amendment to the Dutch constitution which included WNG to now be recognized as part of the Dutch Kingdom.⁷⁶

The failure of the Geneva conference would once again introduce the matter to the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in 1957, through Indonesian resolutions in February and November. Again both resolutions failed to get the required majority, but never had it been this close, with the last one only missing two votes.⁷⁷ Frustrated by a fourth failure at the UNGA, Indonesian anti-Dutch sentiments would run high. A public strike led to the occupation of Dutch companies in Indonesia, and in order to secure Indonesia's economy, the Indonesian army took over these occupations.⁷⁸ For the next ten months the Indonesian government stated that the occupied companies would be returned if the Dutch government would be willing to discuss the transfer of authority over WNG. Disappointed by Dutch unwillingness to do so, the Indonesian government in October 1958 nationalised all 100% Dutch owned companies in Indonesia, transforming them into state property.⁷⁹ The loss of Dutch investments were estimated at four billion guilders; around 12 billion euros in current value.⁸⁰

Needless to say, by 1958 the relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands had

⁶⁹ Hellema, *De Karel Doorman naar Nieuw-Guinea*, 24.

⁷⁰ Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen*, 322; Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 155.

⁷¹ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 223-224.

⁷² Ibidem 224.

⁷³ Ibidem 235.

⁷⁴ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 255.

⁷⁵ Ibidem 255, 257-259; Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 235; Jansen van Galen, *Afscheid van de koloniën*, 327.

⁷⁶ Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 189-191; Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta*, 552.

⁷⁷ Hellema, *De Karel Doorman naar Nieuw-Guinea*, 25; Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen*, 424.

⁷⁸ Ibidem; Van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 139; De Geus, *De Nieuw-Guinea Kwestie*, 91.

⁷⁹ De Geus, *De Nieuw-Guinea Kwestie*, 92.

⁸⁰ Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen*, 424.

deteriorated strongly. Sukarno had strengthened his position in Indonesia at the cost of more moderate elements like Mohammed Hatta, who had been first vice-president of the Federal State of Indonesia and later prime-minister of the Republic of Indonesia. Sukarno's firmer grip on power and his unwillingness to break ties with communist countries and the PKI communist party in Indonesia were worrying the Eisenhower administration. Dutch ambassador to the US Van Roijen was asked how the Dutch would feel about the US toppling Sukarno's regime.⁸¹ Van Roijen remained neutral, but in a second meeting did suggest that Hatta might be a replacement for Sukarno that the Dutch government would feel comfortable with. In November the CIA started supplying rebel forces and on the islands of Celebes and Sumatra a full-on rebellion ensued.⁸² The CIA's plans failed and presented Sukarno with an ever stronger grip on the Indonesian government. Subsequently, the U.S. would change its policy to a more pro-Indonesian position, as would become evident when the U.S. started supplying the Indonesians with weapons, to prevent them to be lured by similar Soviet tactics.⁸³ At the same time Indonesia had already received large weapons supplies from communist countries and was in 1958 for the first time deemed strong enough to take WNG by force.⁸⁴ All of these developments led the Dutch policy of retaining the status quo to become more and more difficult from 1959 onwards.

That year, a significant change in Dutch politics occurred when on the 19th of May 1959 a 'centre-right' government was sworn in that for the first time since the Second World War excluded the labour party. Prime-minister Drees was succeeded by Roman Catholic Party member Jan de Quay, who did retain Luns as his foreign minister.⁸⁵ The dispute became an increasingly large dossier for De Quay, who started receiving requests to find a solution through a trusteeship of several countries for WNG, although Luns strongly opposed such suggestions. That such ideas nonetheless occupied De Quay's mind became visible at a cocktail party in September 1960 when he was heard speculating about such a solution, causing significant consternation in the press.⁸⁶

Such suggestions may have occupied De Quay personally, but they did not arrive from the Indonesians, who by then only favoured a complete transfer of authority and who had broken off all diplomatic relations with the Netherlands. Many historians relate this decision to the arrival of the Karel Doorman, a Dutch aircraft carrier, that had arrived in WNG in early August.⁸⁷ The decision to deploy the aircraft carrier had antagonised many Dutch allies and this in turn might have given Sukarno

⁸¹ Ibidem 326.

⁸² Ibidem 327-328.

⁸³ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 155.

⁸⁴ Hiroyuki Umetsu, 'The Impacts of Indonesia's Civil War and the US-Soviet Tug of War over Indonesia on Australia's Diplomacy Towards West New Guinea', *The Journal of Pacific History* 2 (2005) 177, 179.

⁸⁵ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 163.

⁸⁶ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 384-385.

⁸⁷ Hellema, *De Karel Doorman naar Nieuw-Guinea*, 146-147; Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 329; De Geus, *De Nieuw-Guinea kwestie*, 126-127; Meijer, *Jan de Quay 1901-1985*, 294-295.

the courage to decide to break off diplomatic relations in an attempt to put pressure on the Dutch.

According to historian Pieter de Geus the heightened threat of a military conflict and the hardening attitudes of the Indonesians eventually convinced De Quay, and more importantly Luns, that maintaining the status quo was no longer a valid option.⁸⁸ Luns himself, moreover, stated that it was the 'collapse of the home front' that forced him to find a multilateral solution, culminating in the 'Luns plan'.⁸⁹ This plan, consisting of handing over authority of WNG to a UN trusteeship, was well received by parliament, and Luns had full political clearance to present the plan at the UNGA.⁹⁰ There, however, it did not succeed in landing a two-thirds majority, mostly because a number of countries favoured a solution that would include the Indonesians.⁹¹

The position of foreign minister Joseph Luns deserves special mention since it has been the centre of fierce debate. Luns was known in Indonesia and the U.S. alike as a 'hardliner' in his stance on WNG and American historical works depict him as such.⁹² Luns' biographer Albert Kersten suggests that Luns was mostly driven by strong nationalistic sentiments and a fear to see his country lose all international significance.⁹³ Luns was however, perhaps above all, also a pragmatist who thought he could push his views as long as he had the upper hand. For a long time he felt comfortable enforcing an uncompromising stance because of his conviction that the United States would uncompromisingly side with the Dutch, should the WNG dispute culminate in a military conflict. This position was based on a 1958 written commitment, signed by Eisenhower's Secretary of State John Foster Dulles and known in the Netherlands as the 'vodge van Dulles' ('rag' or 'scrap paper' of Dulles). Much research has gone into locating this written statement, to no avail. Albert Kersten claims that a commitment in very general terms was indeed put on paper by Dulles, although being not nearly the specific commitment Luns made it out to be.⁹⁴ A conclusion shared by historian Ronald Gase who also states that Luns was therefore at the very least deceiving both cabinet and parliament. Gase titled his book on the position of Luns during the WNG dispute *Misleiding of zelfbedrog* ('deception or self-deceit'). Luns clearly was a large influence to the dispute's developments, but as Gase also explains, any member of the Dutch government could have known way before 1962 that the U.S. could not with absolute certainty be

⁸⁸ De Geus, *De Nieuw-Guinea kwestie*, 148.

⁸⁹ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 187; De Geus, *De Nieuw-Guinea kwestie*, 148.

⁹⁰ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 191.

⁹¹ Albert Kersten, 'Decolonization of Dutch New Guinea' in: Philip Everts and Guido Walraven ed., *The Politics of Persuasion. Implementation of Foreign Policy by the Netherlands* (Aldershot 1989) 229.

⁹² See for instance: Arthur M. Schlesinger, *A Thousand Days. John F. Kennedy in the White House* (New York 1965) 493; Roger Hilsman, *To Move a Nation. The Politics of Foreign Policy in the Administration of John F. Kennedy* (New York 1967) 374. Incidentally (or perhaps not) both authors were also advisors for Kennedy and, in that function, very close to the matters they later documented. For a more recent anglophone publication see: Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 367-369.

⁹³ Kersten, *Luns*, 74.

⁹⁴ Albert Kersten, *Het vodge van Dulles 1958-1962. Amerikaanse steun of een dagdroom van Luns?* (Farewell address held on October 14th 2005 at Leiden University) 12-13.

counted on for military support.⁹⁵ Luns' strong stance against Indonesian pressure did make him a surprisingly popular politician domestically. Party leader Carl Romme, with good reason, called Luns the 'emperor of New Guinea'.⁹⁶

An important development in the WNG dispute was the inauguration of John F. Kennedy as President of the United States in 1961. Even more than his predecessor, Kennedy viewed the WNG dispute solely in terms of Cold War politics.⁹⁷ This brought along the change to a more openly pro-Indonesian policy as New Guinea was not worth 'losing Indonesia to communism' over. After all, as Robert Komer, member of Kennedy's National Security Council, stated: "As we get closer and closer to a dangerous impasse over that bit of colonial debris, we have simply got to keep our eye on the object of the exercise – which is Indonesia, not West New Guinea."⁹⁸

This policy was quickly threatened when a first direct military encounter between the Dutch and Indonesians took place in New Guinea waters. In the night of the 15th of January 1962 three Indonesian torpedo boats headed for the WNG coast and came into conflict with two Dutch frigates, resulting in one sunken Indonesian vessel and 52 Indonesians captured.⁹⁹ The incident clearly showed how the Indonesians were now seriously preparing to take WNG by force. Highly alarmed, president Kennedy in February sent his brother Robert Kennedy, who was attorney general in the Kennedy administration, first to Indonesia and then to the Netherlands. Robert's mission was to convince the Indonesians to give negotiations guided by the U.S. one last chance, and to show the Dutch that, as historian Christiaan Penders writes, 'the game was up'.¹⁰⁰

Robert's blunt truths, combined with the increasing possibility of the Dutch fighting a war against a now much stronger enemy, resulted in the Dutch government agreeing with bilateral talks chaired by United States diplomat Elsworth Bunker. These talks would commence on March 20th 1962 in Middleburg, Virginia.¹⁰¹ Although by no means smooth, and with president Kennedy personally having to step in at times, these talks would result in the so-called 'Bunker Plan'.¹⁰² The plan would see the Netherlands handing over WNG to an interim trusteeship that within two years would hand over WNG to the Indonesians. At the same time the Indonesians would have to commit to seriously make preparations for eventually giving the Papuans a right to self-determination in a referendum.¹⁰³ On the

⁹⁵ Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 122.

⁹⁶ Kersten, *Luns*, 191.

⁹⁷ Bradley R. Simpson, *Economists with Guns. Authoritarian Development and U.S-Indonesian Relations, 1960-1968* (Stanford 2008) 45.

⁹⁸ *Ibidem*.

⁹⁹ Jansen van Galen, *Afscheid van de koloniën*, 340.

¹⁰⁰ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 353; Kersten, *Vodje van Luns*, 10.

¹⁰¹ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 358.

¹⁰² J.L.R. Huydecoper van Nigtevecht, *Nieuw-Guinea. Het einde van een koloniaal beleid* (The Hague 1990) 155-156).

¹⁰³ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 360.

24th of May the Dutch parliament agreed with the Bunker Plan and on the 15th of August a slightly modified plan was signed by representatives of both governments in what would become known as the New York agreement.¹⁰⁴

Much criticism has later been voiced by historians that the 1969 referendum on Papuan independence was purely symbolical. Penders and historian Jan Pouwer called it a farce and Hans Meijer wrote an article on it with the telling title 'the act of (no) free choice'.¹⁰⁵ Historian John Saltford even states that no party involved in the Bunker talks ever considered it to be a serious option.¹⁰⁶ Whether or not Saltford is right in this, Dutch reactions to the NY agreement were overwhelmingly those of relief. It is true that the Dutch felt that they had failed to ensure the Papuans with their right to self-determination. However, losing their largest political and international dossier for many far outweighed this sentiment.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 227-228.

¹⁰⁵ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 442; Pouwer, 'The Colonisation, Decolonisation and Recolonisation of West New Guinea' 171; Hans Meijer, 'De daad van (geen) vrije keuze' in: Martin Elands and Alfred Staarman ed., *Afscheid van Nieuw Guinea. Het Nederlands-Indonesisch conflict 1950-1962* (Bussum 2003) 94-107.

¹⁰⁶ John Saltford, *The United Nations and the Indonesian Takeover of West Papua. 1962-1969* (London 2003) 180.

¹⁰⁷ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 149; Bijkerk, 'Ressentiment, roeping en realisme', 38.

Chapter 3

In 1949, years before the formation of the Rijkens group and even before the conclusion of the RTC, Paul Rijkens visited Indonesia. He did so in his position of chairman of the Unilever board of directors on a large tour of the 'far east'. In Indonesia he met with many prominent figures and, as stated in his autobiography, he returned to the Netherlands feeling optimistic about the future of the country.¹⁰⁸ However, although not stating so in his autobiography, Rijkens was already in '49 concerned with the discussion around WNG. In a letter to the journalist Marcus van Blankenstein, Rijkens voiced his preferred solution concerning WNG to be a Dutch handover of the region to Indonesia. This, he thought, would only be blocked by sentimental considerations.¹⁰⁹ Something which Van Blankenstein would most likely agree with since in his book *Indonesia Nu* Van Blankenstein stated that a 'country of mud and thick jungle, rich in pestilence' was not worth risking the goodwill of the Indonesians over.¹¹⁰

Rijkens in 1952 again visited the country, accompanied by Unilever president Sidney van den Bergh. By this time the Dutch government had already adopted its 'status quo' policy and the position of WNG within the kingdom was not actively discussed. It quickly became clear to Rijkens, however, that the matter of WNG was highly important for the future of relations between the two countries.¹¹¹ Together with Sukarno, Van den Bergh and Rijkens came up with a possible solution which consisted of a joint commission of supervision with the U.S., Australia, India, Indonesia and the Netherlands over WNG for the next 25 years, after which the commission would present a 'binding advice'.¹¹² It was up to Rijkens and Van den Bergh to convey and advocate this plan to the Dutch government and upon return the two men had several meetings with members of government, parliament and even the royal family.¹¹³ Rijkens in his autobiography claims that the plans resonated well with important members of government, such as minister of foreign affairs Stikker. Prime-minister Drees, however, showed unwilling to negotiate with Sukarno, who had disrupted the agreements of the RTC by dismantling the federal union model of Indonesia. Drees was supposedly so annoyed by this that he deemed Sukarno not suitable for any further negotiations.¹¹⁴ Instead, Drees is said to have favoured a merger of the Dutch and Australian parts of the island into a 'Melanesian union'.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, the fact that Rijkens presented his plan mere weeks before the coming elections was also important.¹¹⁶ Perhaps decisive,

¹⁰⁸ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 162.

¹⁰⁹ Letter Rijkens to Van Blankenstein 11-10-1950, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

¹¹⁰ Marcus van Blankenstein, *Indonesië nu* (The Hague 1953) 114-115.

¹¹¹ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 164-165

¹¹² Ibidem 165; Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta*, 343

¹¹³ Report meeting Rijkens and V.d. Bergh with De Graaf and Janssen 09-05-1952, ROM inv. nr. 80; Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 166.

¹¹⁴ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 166.

¹¹⁵ Hofland, *Tegels lichten*, 49; Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 154.

¹¹⁶ Daalders and Gaemers, *Premier en elder statesman*, 214.

however, for why the new cabinet did not do anything with Rijkens' plans was the new coalition which saw the Roman Catholic Party as the shared biggest party. No historian has previously suggested this, but Drees might have been influenced by Roman Catholic party leader Carl Romme who voiced his strong disagreement with the plans in a letter to Drees.¹¹⁷ Because of the composition of the new government, Romme will most probably have enjoyed a fair amount of influence on Drees' decision-making. Especially since Drees had weathered a governmental crisis over WNG just the previous year. Whatever the reason, it was the failure of this plan that led to Rijkens' conviction that he could not save Dutch-Indonesian relations by himself. He therefore set out to form a group that had as its prime objective to 'bridge the increasing divide that grew between the two countries'. Amicable relations between the two countries were, according to all members of this new collective, more valuable than the possession of WNG could ever be.¹¹⁸

According to Paul Rijkens the Rijkens group came into being in 1953 and, although other historians sometimes mention different years, there seems to be little reason to distrust him on this specific aspect.¹¹⁹ Regardless of the year, all historians seem to agree that what was truly chaotic about the group was the unofficial way in which people were affiliated to it.¹²⁰ Membership was so informal that several members, including Rijkens, even stated that no-one knew who was and was not affiliated.¹²¹ Many historians speak of a group of 'captains of industry'. Yet there is a lot of evidence to confirm that in fact not all members originated from corporate circles. What's more, even if they did they were not always 'captains of industry', but were, for instance, heads of employers' associations or of a works council. Several members can even be said to have had virtually nothing to do with the corporate world at all. The journalist Van Blankenstein is a good example of this, as was professor of criminal law Joost van Hamel. Rijkens himself also claimed that the group never solely existed of members from the business community.¹²² One member, Henk Oosterhuis, was even a member of the Dutch Senate!¹²³ Also adding to the confusion were those corporate figures who acted in the same spirit as the Rijkens group, were close to members of it, but who did not coordinate their actions with

¹¹⁷ Kabinets-formatie 1952, ROM inv. nr. 80.

¹¹⁸ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 163, 169.

¹¹⁹ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 167. Daalders and Gaemers, together with Drooglever, speak of 1954: Daalders and Gaemers, *Premier en elder statesman*, 219; Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 374-375. Historian Hans Meijer even seems to suggest 1956: Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta* 553-554. Historian P.W. Klein, who had access to the Rijkens archives but never published material on the group, also dates the first official meeting to have taken place on August 6th 1956.

¹²⁰ Hofland, *Tegels lichten*, 52; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 47; Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 147.

¹²¹ Letter Kroese to Rijkens 22-06-1961, RYK inv. nr. 177; Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 175.

¹²² Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 168.

¹²³ Author unknown, 'Henk Oosterhuis', website Parlement & Politiek.
https://www.parlement.com/id/vg09ll3vduz3/h_henk_oosterhuis.

the group and who will therefore not be considered members.¹²⁴ Other individuals prove even harder to pinpoint. They seem to have worked with the Rijkens group, but also separately from the Rijkens group. One example is John Loudon, head of Royal Dutch Shell, who discussed WNG with Rijkens and advocated Dutch policy change, but also distanced himself from the group.¹²⁵ Another is Frits Philips who definitely worked together with the Rijkens group at several occasions, but who also at times acted without consulting the group.¹²⁶ The most spectacular example is probably that of prince Bernhard, whose relations to the group will be discussed in chapter 5.

With the above in mind, the following persons can be said to have been clearly affiliated with the group: H.G.W. Van Aardenne (Unilever Indonesia), M. van Blankenstein (journalist/writer), D.A. Delprat (Stoomvaart Maatschappij Nederland), F.J.F.M. Duynstee (University of Nijmegen), J. van Hamel (University of Amsterdam), H. Van Heek (Van Heek & Co), P. Heering (De Nederlanden van 1845), H.M. Hirschfeld (Ministry of Economic Affairs), J.E. van Hoogstraten (Stichting Vertegenwoordiging in Indonesië van de Nederlandse Industrie), W.J. de Jonge (Federatie van Verenigingen van Bergcultuurondernemingen in Indonesië), H.A. van Karnebeek (Stanvac Oil Company), E. van Konijnenburg (Koninklijke Nederlandse Luchtvaartmaatschappij), W.T. Kroese (Koninklijke textielfabrieken Nijverdal-ten Cate), K.P. van der Mandele (Chamber of Commerce Rotterdam), J. van Oldenborgh (Ondernemersraad voor Indonesië), H. Oosterhuis (Nederlands Verbond van Vakverenigingen / PvdA member Dutch Senate), J.J. Oyevaar (Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management), W.G. Peekema (Esso), F. Philips (Philips), P. Rijkens (Unilever), K. Scholtens (Royal Dutch Shell), B.J.M. van Spaendonck (Chamber of Commerce and Factories Tilburg), W.A.F. Stokhuysen (Stichting Vertegenwoordiging in Indonesië van de Nederlandse Industrie), T.J. Twijnstra (Verbond van Nederlandse Werkgevers), W. Veenstra (?), G. van Walsum (burgomaster Rotterdam), G.A.Ph. Weijer (Ondernemersraad voor Nederlands-Indië), K.F. Zeeman (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij).¹²⁷

¹²⁴ One example is the Dutch publisher J. ten Have: Aantekeningen voor de Minister-President 10-08-1961, 30-08-1961, 08-09-1961, KMP inv. nr. 6373; Letter O.W.S. Josephus Jitta to N.S. Blom 04-09-1961, KMP inv. nr. 6373; Aantekening voor Mr. C.L.W. Fock 05-09-1961, KMP inv. nr. 6373.

¹²⁵ Letter Rijkens to Loudon 01-12-1959, RYK inv. nr. 177; Memorandum of Conversation between John Loudon, Walter S. Robertson, Howard P. Jones 11-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68; Howarth and Jonker, *Geschiedenis van Koninklijke Shell deel 2*, 231-232; Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen*, 334, 350, 601; Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 66, 68; Vlasblom, *Papoea*, 272; Vraaggesprek over kabinet De Quay 1959-1963, 1978-1979, QUAY inv. nr. 59; diary Jan de Quay entry 17-06-1961, QUAY inv. nr. 46.

¹²⁶ W. Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 78; Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 402; Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 162; Philips, *45 jaar met Philips*, 294-298; Willem Oltmans, *De Verraders* (Utrecht 1968) 150-151; Willem Oltmans, *Mijn vriend Sukarno* (Houten 1995) 68; Van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 130.

¹²⁷ This list is based on several sources. Most important was a list of names sent to George Weijer by Rijkens and found in Weijer's archives. See: List of Addresses, WEY inv. nr. 46. It should be noted that the list was put together rather early as later members, like Scholtens and Van Hamel, were not mentioned. Furthermore Paul Rijkens lists several people in his autobiography. See: Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 167.

Before continuing, one last remark should be made with respect to listing Frans Duynstee as a group member. Although Duynstee's affiliation with the Rijkens group seems straightforward, discussions with historian Hans Meijer have made it clear that he disagrees. Because Duynstee's archives form an important part of the source material for this thesis some short arguments for Duynstee's affiliation should be presented. First off, Duynstee exchanged a vivid correspondence with several members of the Rijkens group, discussing the WNG dispute and possible actions to be undertaken.¹²⁸ Secondly, Duynstee was paid by Van Konijnenburg and Rijkens for expenses he made regarding actions concerning WNG.¹²⁹ Furthermore the group paid for the publication of Duynstee's book on WNG.¹³⁰ A 400 page publication that advocated transferring WNG to the Indonesians and that is still used by historians for its extensive history of the WNG dispute.¹³¹ Yet if all of this does not convince the truly sceptical historian, Duynstee's archives also contain letters specifically addressed to 'the members of the Rijkens group' which carried invitations by Paul Rijkens for the group to come together.¹³² Because of all this Duynstee should be considered an obvious member of the Rijkens group and any future researcher will hopefully do so.

The first few years since 1953 saw little activity by the group, perhaps because of Rijkens' position as chairman of the board of directors of Unilever until 1955.¹³³ Furthermore, international developments in those years were also rather slow, with the Dutch clinging to their 'status quo' policy and with Indonesia seeing every resolution introduced to the UNGA fail to get the required majority.

Lastly an important addition came from a memorandum of conversation between a U.S. embassy employee in The Hague and group member Peekema. See: Memorandum of conversation between Robert W. Barnett, Dr. de Vries and Mr. W. Peekema 14-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68. Besides that, certain names, like P.W.M. Hoegen van Hoogelande of the Zuid-Preanger Rubber Maatschappij, pop up here and there, but are not verified to have been related to the group. See for instance: Office Memorandum from G. Edward Clark to US Embassy The Hague 25-08-1959, WIE inv. nr. 47; Memorandum N.S. Blom to J.M.A.H. Luns 05-02-1953, LUNS inv. nr. 234.

¹²⁸ Some examples are: Diary Jan de Quay entry 28-08-1962, QUAY inv. nr. 47; Letter De Jonge to Duynstee 29-12-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder December '61); Letter Oltmans to Duynstee 07-01-1962, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder January '62); Letter Rijkens to Duynstee 26-02-1962, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder February '62).

¹²⁹ Letter Van Konijnenburg to Duynstee 20-12-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder December '61); Letter Duynstee to Rijkens 26-10-1961, RYK inv. nr. 178.

¹³⁰ This statement is partly based on the unpublished material of the historian P.W. Klein. Copies of his lecture *Een ondernemer in de politiek. Paul Rijkens (1888-1965) en de kwestie Nieuw-Guinea* can be found in the Rijkens archives and in the archives of historian Cees Wiebes at the International Institute for Social History, (inventory number 212 folder 1). Since Klein's work was never published, and very limited in its annotation, citing it as a source is perhaps methodologically problematic, yet it should be noted that Klein was a renowned historian and that he is the only one who produced a study solely on the Rijkens group. Furthermore he was one of the very few who actually studied Rijkens' archives. Historian Hans Meijer refers to his work without special mention and, apart from the above, so will I. Regarding Duynstee getting paid by the Rijkens group see also: Kersten, *Luns*, 281.

¹³¹ F.J.F.M. Duynstee, *Nieuw-Guinea als schakel tussen Nederland en Indonesië* (Amsterdam 1961) 408-412; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 30.

¹³² Letter Rijkens to 'de leden van de groep Rijkens' 23-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (Folder June '61).

¹³³ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 133.

Yet it is important to understand the close connection between Rijkens and the Dutch government even before the De Quay cabinet took office in 1959. Besides receiving an honorary doctorate together with prime-minister Drees, Rijkens also maintained contacts with Joseph Luns. Luns met Rijkens several times in 1953 when Luns was still minister without portfolio (linked to the ministry of foreign affairs).¹³⁴ When Luns became responsible for government policy on the WNG dispute as the official minister of foreign affairs these contacts intensified. Between 1955 and 1959 Luns' agendas show five appointments with Rijkens.¹³⁵ Additionally, Luns also met with other members of the group on several occasions. He saw Duynstee at least four times between 1956 and 1961.¹³⁶ And in the same period he also saw Van Hamel four times.¹³⁷ He also saw Scholtens at least twice, and explicitly discussed contacts between the group and Sukarno with him.¹³⁸ This is especially interesting because Luns is in historiography often depicted as Rijkens' 'archenemy' and is himself highly negative of the endeavours of the group in later interviews.¹³⁹ It seems that he was much more willing to discuss the matter with members of the group than he himself proclaimed.

Historian Chris van Esterik writes that the group showed little activity before 1957, but the above indicates that even before that year Luns was already approached several times by members of the group. Van Esterik is right, however, that from 1957 onwards the activities of the group become easier to trace. This coincides with the Indonesian nationalisations of Dutch companies after a fourth Indonesian UN resolution failed, causing the entire dispute to resurface as a major political dossier. A good example of the group's increased activities is a pamphlet written by journalist Leo Hanekroot and commissioned by the Rijkens group. This pamphlet called for a revision of Dutch policy concerning WNG and was published in 1958.¹⁴⁰ It was available for two cents at bookstores and also handed to members of parliament.¹⁴¹ The pamphlet is especially interesting since it gives a more complete image of the activities of the group. Often being accused of 'backroom politics' the group actually interacted (albeit through hired pens) with a larger public. Group member Weijer admitted that he did not expect the publication to influence policy overnight. At the same time the goal was to get a discussion going and ultimately prepare the larger public for the 'inevitable'. This was all part of what Weijer called

¹³⁴ 14-02-1953 and 16-02-1953 agenda 1953, LUNS inv. nr. 816.

¹³⁵ 21-01-1955 agenda 1955, LUNS inv. nr. 818; 28-12-1956 agenda 1956, LUNS inv. nr. 819; 29-03-1957 and 08-04-1957 agenda 1957, LUNS inv. nr. 820; 12-11-1959 agenda 1959, LUNS inv. nr. 822.

¹³⁶ 27-09-1956 agenda 1956, LUNS inv. nr. 819; 24-11-1958 agenda 1958, LUNS inv. nr. 821; 06-02-1961 and 24-02-1961 agenda 1961, LUNS inv. nr. 1147.

¹³⁷ 08-02-1955 and 12-03-1955 agenda 1955, LUNS inv. nr. 818; 28-07-1961 and 18-10-1961 agenda 1961, LUNS inv. nr. 1147.

¹³⁸ 06-05-1961 and 05-06-1961 agenda 1961, LUNS inv. nr. 1147.

¹³⁹ Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 205; Kikkert, *De wereld volgens Luns*, 82, 87.

¹⁴⁰ Leo Hanekroot, *Nieuw-Guinea. Tijd voor een hernieuwd politiek onderzoek* (The Hague 1958) 3.

¹⁴¹ Letter Van Oldenborgh to Weijer 13-08-1958, WEY inv. nr. 46.

'opération vérité'.¹⁴² Regardless of the effect on a larger public, Luns deemed the pamphlet to be harmful to the Dutch international position.¹⁴³

It need not necessarily have anything to do with the Hanekroot pamphlet in particular, but two events seem to suggest that the government felt more pressured by the group in 1958. The first is a proposal by Drees to bring the matter before the UN. This was a clear break away from earlier policy and the U.S. ambassador in The Hague had but one explanation: "Drees reportedly wishes give appearance, at least for moment, of Govt action in order head off lobby being developed by business community, which UN Director said is now becoming somewhat more effective in its criticism of and opposition to Govt's stand an action to date."¹⁴⁴ Whether or not true, the fact that the U.S. thought Drees was bending before the criticism voiced by the Rijkens group is noteworthy. It also shows that the U.S. was keeping a clear eye on the activities of the group. A second signal that the government was influenced by the group's activities is the fact that, around the same time, Luns was frantically looking for a U.S. commitment to protect the Dutch if Indonesia turned the dispute into a military conflict. In a conversation between Luns and U.S. ambassador Philip Young Luns explained that he would very much like such a written commitment since he felt that public opinion was beginning to shift.¹⁴⁵ This was in fact not the case as polls produced in December 1958 by NIPO, a public opinion research institution, show how 61% of the population preferred sole Dutch authority over WNG, completely in line with Luns' policy. Only 4% favoured transferring the area to Indonesia.¹⁴⁶ This too shows the pressure the government experienced from the Rijkens group as Luns clearly perceived the group to represent a much larger part of public sentiments than it actually did.

The replacement of Willem Drees in 1959 with Jan de Quay as prime-minister must have provoked a joyous response by the group since, other than with Drees and Luns, De Quay was a close personal contact of several members of the group. A long-time friend of Frits Philips, De Quay was visited by Philips many times to discuss the WNG dispute, even before he had taken office. On such occasions De Quay proved highly receptive, stating his agreement with Philips on the matter.¹⁴⁷ These discussions with Philips raised important doubts with De Quay concerning Luns' policy and made the prime-minister hesitate to re-elect Luns as minister of foreign affairs.¹⁴⁸ Besides these contacts with Philips, De Quay also knew Paul Rijkens well, having worked with him on several committees.¹⁴⁹ The

¹⁴² Letter Weijer to van Oldenborgh 18-08-1958, WEY inv. nr. 46.

¹⁴³ 'Reis van minister Luns naar Amerika' (undated), WIE inv. nr. 48.

¹⁴⁴ Telegram US Embassy The Hague to Secretary of State 14-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68.

¹⁴⁵ Department of State Memorandum of Conversation between Joseph Luns, Jan Meijer, Van Roijen, Mr. Elbrick, Philip Young and Mr. Stabler 30-09-1958, WIE inv. nr. 46 (folder 3).

¹⁴⁶ NIPO, *Zo zijn wij. De eerste vijftientig jaar NIPO-onderzoek* (Amsterdam 1970) 88-89.

¹⁴⁷ Diary Jan de Quay entry 04-04-1959, QUAY inv. nr. 43.

¹⁴⁸ Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen*, 342.

¹⁴⁹ Nederlands Instituut voor Internationale Culturele Betrekkingen: Diary Jan de Quay entry 09-10-1958 and 12-02-1959, QUAY inv. nr. 43; Atoom Centrale: Diary Jan de Quay entry 13-02-1959, QUAY inv. nr. 43.

same also goes for his relation to group member Van Spaendonck.¹⁵⁰ All in all, to get a grasp of the scope of the quantity of activities the group put to work, one can get quite far by simply reading the diaries of prime-minister De Quay. In his first seven months in office De Quay was visited by members of the group at least six times and these visits would continue till 1962, with contacts between government and the group now much more frequent.¹⁵¹

The fact that De Quay was more receptive to the group's arguments is not only shown by his hesitation to pick Luns as foreign minister or by his willingness to receive Rijkens' delegations time and time again. It is also voiced through his appreciation of Duynstee's opinion pieces in national newspapers which he expressed to Duynstee both in letters and in person.¹⁵² What's more, De Quay explicitly states in correspondence with Duynstee that he will make use of Duynstee's advice and will bring up his arguments in government debates.¹⁵³

All in all, there is no doubt that the new prime-minister was much more open to, and approached by, members of the group than his predecessor was, while meetings by the group also intensified.¹⁵⁴ An important question, however, is what the results of these activities were. There is no doubt that Luns and De Quay were divided on the matter. Such had already become apparent through De Quays statements at the infamous cocktail party in 1960. At the same time, the Dutch government, until Robert Kennedy's visit to The Hague in 1962, attempted to prevent any solution to the conflict that saw authority of WNG (partly) transferred to Indonesia. It seems therefore that most of what the group tried to achieve through De Quay was in effect blocked by Luns and his equally fanatic undersecretary Bot.¹⁵⁵ Likewise, it is true that Luns was willing to meet with members of the group and even requested meetings with Duynstee, but Luns and the group's objectives remained miles apart.¹⁵⁶ Luns, both in meetings and in correspondence voiced his disagreement with the group's activities. He even tried to personally halt them by 'punishing' Rijkens and Van Konijnenburg for their involvement. He asked president of KLM Ernst van der Beugel to force Van Konijnenburg to give up his involvement with the group and also asked Van der Beugel to, in his position as secretary-general of the Bilderberg conferences, have Rijkens resign as treasurer.¹⁵⁷ Over time Luns would get more and more paranoid,

¹⁵⁰ E.g.: Diary Jan de Quay entry 09-01-1959, 07-02-1959, 12-02-1959 and 16-02-1959, QUAY inv. nr. 43.

¹⁵¹ See: Diary Jan de Quay 1959, QUAY inv. nr. 44-45. See also: Gesprek met enkele vertegenwoordigers uit het bedrijfsleven inzake Nieuw Guinea 25-11-1959, KMP inv. nr. 4258.

¹⁵² Diary Jan de Quay entry 20-10-1960, Quay inv. nr. 45.

¹⁵³ Letter De Quay to Duynstee 29-01-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder January '61).

¹⁵⁴ Telegrams and letters reveal the following dates: 11-08-1959, 06-04-1961, 22-06-1961, 14-07-1961, 07-08-1961, 05-09-1962, WEY inv. nr. 46.

¹⁵⁵ Bot was actually undersecretary of domestic affairs, but, tasked with the development of WNG, reported directly to Luns. For Bot's opinion of the group see: Report conversation between Bot en Duynstee 21-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61).

¹⁵⁶ Letter Duynstee to Luns 20-2-1961, LUNS inv. nr. 385; letter Luns to Duynstee 20-09-1960, LUNS inv. nr. 385.

¹⁵⁷ Kersten, *Luns*, 289; Oltmans, *Mijn vriend Sukarno*, 117.

suspecting his U.S. ambassador to also collaborate with the group.¹⁵⁸ Something about which he was not completely mistaken as this ambassador too had a number of meetings with different members of the group in 1962.¹⁵⁹ Ultimately the key to the group's success was the extent to which it could convince De Quay of its views, despite Luns' efforts to counter them. As it seems, many of the group's suggestions were initially welcomed by De Quay to be then blocked by Luns.

A telling example of this is a letter written by Van Blankenstein to the Indonesian ambassador in Washington in January 1961. Blankenstein wrote that he was now convinced that the Dutch government was willing to cede WNG in exchange for normalisation of relations between the two countries. In exchange for this the Indonesians should also take serious the Papuan right to self-determination and grant the Papuans a possibility to exercise it. If the Indonesians would accept these preliminary conditions talks could start immediately.¹⁶⁰ Later that year, in a conversation with former prime-minister Drees, Van Blankenstein recalls the episode and explains how this letter was co-written with Rijkens, after which Rijkens at the end of January showed it to De Quay. De Quay then according to Van Blankenstein responded favourably to it.¹⁶¹ This was in fact the case as can be read in De Quay's diary.¹⁶² Remarkable, therefore, was De Quay's eventual disapproval of the initiative after having discussed it with a highly negative Luns.¹⁶³ This anecdote clearly showcases the effect to which the Dutch government was divided in the later years of the dispute. De Quay was willing to give up WNG if a face-saving formula could be found, but Luns opposed every such initiative. In these confrontations Luns turned out to be the stronger character. At the same time Rijkens personally never lost hope that Luns could in fact be converted, 'as De Quay already had been'.¹⁶⁴

There have been instances where the group was able to play a role in government policy. An important success for the group was gained by Duynstee, who throughout the course of the dispute kept contact with high Indonesian officials such as Sukarno and the Indonesian military general Abdul Harris Nasution. At the beginning of 1962, nine days before the navy battle between Dutch and Indonesian ships in WNG waters, Duynstee informed both De Quay and Queen Juliana of the possibility to have secret talks by approaching the Indonesian ambassador in Bonn, Lukmam Hakim. Duynstee explained that he had received news that a full-blown military conflict had become almost imminent, but that, in a final attempt to prevent escalation, the Indonesians could be approached through Hakim.¹⁶⁵ In this way Duynstee facilitated an important diplomatic exchange. Prove that the

¹⁵⁸ Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen*, 388.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibidem* 367, 605, 612.

¹⁶⁰ Letter Blankenstein to Soekardjo Wirjopranoto 28-01-1961, LUNS inv. nr. 234.

¹⁶¹ Memorandum of conversation between Blankenstein and Drees 24-07-1961, DRE inv. nr. 1024.

¹⁶² Diary Jan de Quay entry 30-01-1961, QUAY inv. nr. 46.

¹⁶³ Memorandum of conversation between Blankenstein and Drees 24-07-1961, DRE inv. nr. 1024.

¹⁶⁴ Memorandum of conversation between Rijkens and Van Hamel 29-06-1961, HAM inv. nr. 177.

¹⁶⁵ Letter Duynstee to De Quay and Queen Juliana 06-01-1962, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder January '62).

government actually made use of this possibility is given by historian Pierre Heijboer who writes that De Quay, with Luns' approval, sent a 'father Van Hees' to Bonn to contact Hakim.¹⁶⁶ Heijboer concluded that sending Van Hees to Bonn yielded no measurable results.¹⁶⁷ Much evidence, however, points in the opposite direction. Talks between Indonesian and Dutch delegates in Bonn did take place and out of these talks came the agreement that, before any official bilateral discussion, secret talks hosted by a third party should be held. This host would preferably be the United States and these talks would preferably be chaired by a U.S. diplomat.¹⁶⁸ Six weeks later secret deliberations between Indonesian and Dutch delegates near Washington would take place, hosted by the U.S. diplomat Elsworth Bunker. In this sense the Rijkens group was of essential importance in facilitating the conditions in which talks commenced.

Another way in which the influence of the group affected the developments of the dispute was the sudden shift of government policy in 1961, culminating in the 'Luns plan'. No conclusive explanation of this mysterious change of heart has yet been given and in all likelihood a number of factors played a role. Luns himself stated in cabinet meetings that this shift was due to a 'collapse of the home-front'.¹⁶⁹ As will be concluded in the end of this chapter however, Luns' policy remained highly popular with the majority of the Dutch electorate and Luns subsequently was highly popular for it. The pressure that Luns described must have originated elsewhere. As the single biggest opponents of Luns' politics besides the communist party, the Rijkens group must have played a vital role in convincing Luns that support for his line of policy was quickly diminishing.

This chapter has presented some examples of ways in which the group acted towards, and was received by, Dutch government officials. Of this only a tiny fraction could here be discussed. Contact between members of the group and members of government took place incredibly frequently. Van Hamel corresponded with De Quay.¹⁷⁰ Duynstee addressed every government minister.¹⁷¹ Van Blankenstein and Rijkens discussed WNG with former prime-minister Drees.¹⁷² Drees subsequently visited Luns with messages largely inspired by, and specifically discussed with, the Rijkens group.¹⁷³ Scholtens, Konijnenburg and Rijkens requested De Quay to alter the annual 'Queen's speech'.¹⁷⁴ Many

¹⁶⁶ Heijboer, *De eer en de ellende*, 100.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁶⁸ Letter Duynstee to Queen Juliana 03-02-1962, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder February '62).

¹⁶⁹ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 187.

¹⁷⁰ Letter Hamel to De Quay 20-05-1961, QUAY inv. nr. 1690.

¹⁷¹ Letter Duynstee to De Quay and "de Heren Ministers en Staatssecretarissen" 09-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61).

¹⁷² Letter Rijkens to Drees 24-08-1961, DRE inv. nr. 1024; Notes conversation between Drees and Rijkens 24-08-1961, DRE inv. nr. 1024.

¹⁷³ Memorandum O.W.S. Josephus Jitta to De Quay 30-06-1961, KMP inv. nr. 6371; Daalders and Gaemers, *Premier en elder statesman*, 219.

¹⁷⁴ Letter Rijkens, Scholtens, Konijnenburg to De Quay 08-09-1961, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

more of such examples could here be listed, but due to spatial limits will not.

What does require special attention are the activities the group endeavoured upon outside of government and parliament. Above, the pamphlet of Hanekroot and the book written by Duynstee have already been mentioned. They showcase an aspect of the group that many historians have denied: the tendency to also act in the public sphere.¹⁷⁵ What is more, it shows the understanding of the group that public opinion mattered. Besides publishing material that advocated the secession of WNG, the group also worked on a number of petitions.¹⁷⁶ All of this did gain the group some attention, yet it wasn't until a publication by former affiliate of the group Willem Oltmans that the group really gained mass media recognition.¹⁷⁷ Published on June 17th 1961, this 'open letter' to the group highlighted several of the group's contacts with high ranking Indonesians, as well as the discussion of these matters with members of the Dutch government. Much of the press was critical of these revelations and some members of parliament even asked questions about it in parliamentary meetings.¹⁷⁸ At the same time, several historians have concluded that the publication actually worked to the group's advantage. According to Lijphart the added effect was that the matter of WNG gained a more central position in the press and public debate than it had in years. This led many newspapers to reorient their views and advocate renouncing any Dutch claim on WNG.¹⁷⁹ More recent scholars have followed this line of reasoning, convincingly showcasing how in the months after Oltmans' publication almost every newspaper changed their narrative to one more in line with the Rijkens group.¹⁸⁰ To this effect, several historians have also claimed that this sudden shift in editorial opinion was more directly influenced by members of the group. Historian Albert Kersten states that Van

¹⁷⁵ E.g.: Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 402.

¹⁷⁶ E.g.: 'address to the Queen' (undated), HAM inv. nr. 178. This petition seems to have made an impression on the queen who in a conversation with De Quay offered to discuss the WNG dispute with Sukarno himself. A suggestion that was ultimately blocked by Luns' ministry: Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 404. For other addresses and petition projects see: Letter Rijkens to Duynstee 26-02-1962, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder February '62); Letter Duynstee to Rijkens (undated), DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder March-July '62); Memorandum of visit Rijkens at Van Hamel 21-08-1961, HAM inv. nr. 177; Petition to the Queen 17-12-1961, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2). One particular address that gained a lot of attention was a 1957 collected list of signatures of Dutchmen living in Indonesia which criticized the Dutch political stance. Some historians state that this address was organized by the Rijkens group (Van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 129; Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 221), but others state that the group ultimately pulled away from the initiative (Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 53-54).

¹⁷⁷ For early media attention see: Author unknown, 'Bedrijfsleven streeft naar oplossing. Informeel contact met Indonesië buiten politiek basis gezocht', *De Telegraaf* (16-06-1956) 1. The newspaper's mildly positive publication is surprising seeing as it had in the same year strongly criticized a publication of the Dutch Catholic Church which also propagated a reflection on current policy. See: Lijphart, *The trauma of Decolonization*, 232. For Oltmans' publication see: Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 403; Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 109; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den-Haag*, 104; Bijkerk, 'Resentiment, roeping en realisme', 54-55; Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 225.

¹⁷⁸ Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den-Haag*, 104.

¹⁷⁹ Lijphart, *The Trauma of Decolonization*, 227.

¹⁸⁰ Vlasblom, *Papoea*, 227-249, 301. Lijphart's findings were again researched and evaluated by historian Rein Bijkerk who reached the same conclusion: Bijkerk, 'Resentiment, roeping en realisme' 54-55.

Blankenstein in 1960 convinced a number of editors in chief of large national newspapers that Sukarno favoured a restoration of Dutch-Indonesian relations when WNG was ceded, which made many of them reevaluate their stance on the issue; something De Quay also noticed.¹⁸¹ The chief editor of *Het Parool* even contemplated joining the Rijkens group.¹⁸²

Moreover, a number of journalists from the *NRC*, a large liberal national daily, had met with Rijkens and Van Blankenstein in December 1960.¹⁸³ Perhaps most illustrative of the fact that the *NRC* and the group indeed worked together is a mail exchange between chief editor Lex Stempels and the author B. Huizer, who wanted to publish an opinion piece that was very much harmonious with the Rijkens group's message. Crucial here is Stempels' statement that: 'For now, it is better to not be too vocal in considerations and goals like yours. The Rijkens group has already suffered a lot from the publicity started by Mr. Oltmans.'¹⁸⁴ This editor in chief was prepared to not publish certain articles with the most important motivation being that it would hinder the activities of the Rijkens group. It shows the real extent to which the group in 1961 influenced (at least parts of) the national press.

To be sure, the Oltmans publications did also hinder the group. Two days after the publication Rijkens visited De Quay. In his diary De Quay noted that he told Rijkens to sit tight and abstain from any public response for the moment. Yet that same evening a spokesman of the ministry of foreign affairs told the press that the government condemned any private diplomatic initiatives and completely distanced itself from any activities undertaken by the group. This forced Rijkens to release a press statement after all, in which he promised to follow the wishes expressed by government and would abstain from any further activities.¹⁸⁵ After meeting with De Quay, the press conference by the ministry took Rijkens by surprise. Yet it is easy to see the hand of Luns in all of this and it seems that the events did not seriously hurt the relation between Rijkens and De Quay. Rijkens himself in his memoirs writes how the group completely stopped all its activities and some historians have made similar claims.¹⁸⁶ Two days after the press release however, Rijkens already visited De Quay again together with Van Konijnenburg to report about discussions the latter had had with Sukarno in Rome.¹⁸⁷ What's more, a month later Rijkens would answer De Quay's request to report on a meeting Rijkens had had with general Nasution.¹⁸⁸ All in all, the event forced Rijkens to be more careful in preventing further publications. It also meant that De Quay was now forced to be more secretive about his discussions with the group and about his contacts with Rijkens in general. To state that either the

¹⁸¹ Kersten, *Luns*, 281; Diary Jan de Quay entry 30-01-1961, QUAY inv. nr. 46.

¹⁸² Mulder and Koedijk, *Léés die krant!*, 404.

¹⁸³ Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 72-73; Van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 130.

¹⁸⁴ Letter Stempels to Huizer 15-07-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder July '61).

¹⁸⁵ Diary Jan de Quay entry 19-06-1961, QUAY inv. nr. 46; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 103.

¹⁸⁶ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 178-179; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 103.

¹⁸⁷ Diary Jan de Quay entry 21-06-1961, QUAY inv. nr. 46.

¹⁸⁸ Letter Rijkens to De Quay 09-08-1961, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

group's activities or De Quay's involvement ceased would, however, be blatantly untrue.

One important remark should here be made. As stated before, although much of the press by 1961 favoured ceding WNG, the actual larger public did not at all. Several surveys of the time, executed by NIPO, indicated that a large public majority favoured a conservative WNG policy and that it did not accept a transfer of authority over WNG to the Indonesians.¹⁸⁹ In October 1961 56% still preferred sole Dutch authority at least until the Papuans would be ready to govern themselves (which was thought to be a development that would take several decades) and only 20% thought the Dutch should leave as soon as possible.¹⁹⁰ This also explains how Luns, as the fiercest proponent of anti-Sukarno sentiments, remained highly popular.¹⁹¹ When the WNG dispute was concluded by the NY agreement, Luns was saluted and applauded by a large crowd of admirers that had gathered in the pouring rain on the square before parliament. He would also receive hundreds of expressions of support, flower pieces and other gifts.¹⁹² As shall be explained in chapter 4 and 5, this difference between press and public is highly important because not everyone was aware of it.

In conclusion the Rijkens group was a highly active collective that attempted to influence official Dutch WNG policy both inside and outside of parliament and government. It did so in many different ways, but also faced strong opposition, especially by members of government such as Luns and Bot, which seems to have overruled more receptive elements like De Quay. Yet the group was in important ways involved in or responsible for developments that took place in later years of the dispute. The group functioned as a go between that would ultimately bring together the Dutch and Indonesian government in a way that would make the later Bunker talks possible. In this sense a non-state diplomatic collective was actively involved in shaping the nature of diplomatic exchanges between two governments. The group also influenced the press to such a degree that the Dutch government saw itself forced to 'internationalize' the dispute with the so-called 'Luns plan'. This shift in the opinionated press ultimately proved decisive in important ways. Although having been little able to influence Dutch government policy directly, the next two chapters will explain how the group was in important ways influential by convincing other governments of the isolationist direction the Dutch government was heading towards.

¹⁸⁹ Brouwer and Ramakers, *Regeren zonder rood*, 184; Bijkerk, 'Resentiment, roeping en realisme', 57; NIPO, *Zo zijn wij*, 89-90.

¹⁹⁰ NIPO, *Zo zijn wij*, 88-89.

¹⁹¹ Bijkerk, 'Resentiment, roeping en realisme', 60.

¹⁹² Kersten, *Luns*, 315.

Chapter 4

After the RTC, the new president of the young Indonesian republic would, for the next fifteen years, prove its most powerful figure. Paul Rijkens, while first meeting Sukarno in 1952, already recognized the importance of WNG to Sukarno and would come to understand that better relations with Indonesia would be impossible before the dispute over WNG was settled. Something Sukarno had told both Rijkens and Van Konijnenburg explicitly.¹⁹³ Over the years several group members had met with Sukarno, but two were considered by him as actual friends. One of these was the first president of Garuda Indonesia airlines and former president of the Koninklijke Nederlands-Indische Luchtvaartmaatschappij, Emile van Konijnenburg. Having spent many years in Indonesia, Van Konijnenburg had come to be a 'friend of the family'.¹⁹⁴ What's more, according to Sidney van den Bergh, an introduction by Van Konijnenburg was the best way for any Dutchman to get into contact with Sukarno.¹⁹⁵ Sukarno biographer Lambert Giebels even stated that during the 1965 coup Van Konijnenburg was Sukarno's best friend as the President became more and more isolated.¹⁹⁶

The other Dutchman Giebels considered close to Sukarno was the previously mentioned journalist Willem Oltmans.¹⁹⁷ At this stage special attention should be paid to Willem Oltmans, as Giebels highlighted his close relations with Sukarno and since certain historians have extensively used his writings for their own research.¹⁹⁸ Using Oltmans as a source brings forth some methodological difficulties. Having been repeatedly denounced as untrustworthy and sensationalistic by the press and by government officials, Oltmans in 2000 won a major lawsuit in which he was proven right that the Dutch state had at several important moments in his career intervened in such a way as to make his work more difficult and to damage his reputation. Yet Oltmans' judicial victory might not be enough to simply accept that his recollection of his own involvement with the dispute is a completely trustworthy one. His writings have been often proven correct, but certain smaller details have been proven wrong.¹⁹⁹ For this topic, however, Oltmans probably dedicated more attention to the Rijkens group than the group did to him. Van Konijnenburg seems to have thought that both Oltmans' publications and his Indonesian relations could prove useful, whereas both Rijkens and Van Blankenstein seemed unhappy with Oltmans' involvement.²⁰⁰ Rijkens apparently never even wanted to receive Oltmans.²⁰¹ At the same time, Oltmans involvement has been important. Especially his

¹⁹³ Oltmans, *Mijn vriend Sukarno*, 41; Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 165.

¹⁹⁴ Lambert Giebels, *Soekarno President. Een biografie 1950-1970* (Amsterdam 2001) 250.

¹⁹⁵ Jouke Mulder, *Sidney van den Bergh. Een liberaal* (Utrecht 1975) 62-63.

¹⁹⁶ Giebels, *Soekarno President* 481.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibidem* 250.

¹⁹⁸ E.g.: Van Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 130-131.

¹⁹⁹ For two errors Oltmans did make see: Giebels, *Soekarno president*, 201; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 88.

²⁰⁰ Letter Rijkens to Hirschfeld 25-01-1961, UNI RYK inv. nr. 177.

²⁰¹ Letter Oltmans aan Rijkens 08-08-1961, UNI RYK inv. nr. 177.

activities in the U.S. have been influential, about which more in chapter 5.

Oltmans himself refers to his role in the group as that of a 'courier'.²⁰² Apart from some expenses such as airplane tickets and accommodation costs he claimed to have been paid no money by the group and he was no ordinary employee.²⁰³ Yet with the group having already several 'ways in' with both Sukarno and other high-level Indonesians one might wonder why Oltmans was needed to convey any messages in the first place. Such questions become especially important when Oltmans' and the group's accounts diverge. Oltmans himself for instance claimed responsibility for a meeting between Van Konijnenburg, Scholtens and Sukarno in the U.S..²⁰⁴ However, in an account of this meeting, circulated between members of the group, Van Konijnenburg is said to have actually laid first contact with Sukarno.²⁰⁵ The true position of Oltmans in the group should therefore not be overstated.

Besides Oltmans and Van Konijnenburg, several other members of the group were able to maintain important contacts with high-ranking Indonesians. Koos Scholtens went along with Van Konijnenburg to meet Sukarno several times. The two in 1961 'tagged along' for Sukarno's 'world tour' and spoke with Sukarno in Washington, Vienna, Rome and Belgrade, returning in between to the Netherlands to discuss the matter with Luns and De Quay.²⁰⁶ These talks, as did previous attempts to further a more formal conversation by Oltmans in Ankara and Van Konijnenburg, Oltmans and (separately) Philips in Copenhagen two years earlier, seem to have yielded little concrete results.²⁰⁷ Even though by then De Quay had already had his famous slip of the tongue at the previously described cocktail party. Continuously members of the group tried to incentivise informal talks between the two governments and it seems the Indonesians were to a large degree willing to have such talks. The group would however also function as a bearer of bad news or even threats. Van Konijnenburg in 1957, for instance, was tasked with conveying to The Hague the urgent message that if it would continue to refuse any talks about WNG the Netherlands 'would suffer the consequences'.²⁰⁸ Later that year the

²⁰² Oltmans, *De verraders*, 9.

²⁰³ Oltmans' strong opinion on this matter is reflected in a complaint Oltmans filed at the Dutch Press Council against the editor in chief of the *Friesch Dagblad* who had in 1970 written an editorial that stated Oltmans was paid a wage for his services for the Rijkens group. Oltmans' outrage was recognized as justified by the Council and it would publish a reimbursement of Oltmans' original position. See: <https://www.rvdj.nl/uitspraken/19713>.

²⁰⁴ Oltmans, *De verraders*, 166; Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 75, 78.

²⁰⁵ Bezoek aan de USA 23/27-04-1961, UNI RYK inv. nr. 178.

²⁰⁶ Telegram US Embassy London to Secretary of State 19-09-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 2); Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 403; Telegram Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs to embassy Washington 22-06-1961, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2); Letter undersecretary of Foreign Affairs [Bot] to Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Undersecretary of Foreign Affairs 20-06-1961, WIE inv. nr. 50; Minutes cabinet meeting 23-06-1961, WIE inv. nr. 50; Letter Duynstee to De Quay 17-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61); Letter Scholtens and Van Konijnenburg to De Quay 13-09-1961, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2); Oltmans, *De verraders*, 168.

²⁰⁷ Oltmans, *Mijn vriend Sukarno*, 68-70; Oltmans, *De verraders*, 149; Philips, *45 jaar met Philips*, 294-296.

²⁰⁸ Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta*, 559.

Indonesians would occupy all completely Dutch-owned companies in the country. The majority of messages were, however, focused around resolving the dispute through bilateral dialogue. Such becomes once more apparent when Rijkens is in 1960 approached by Soekardjo Wirjopranoto (Indonesian ambassador to the UN) with the question to convey to the Dutch government an offer to discuss the WNG dispute with Wirjopranoto's Dutch colleague Carel Schürmann. A message Rijkens delivered to De Quay on the 28th of July; less than a month before the Indonesians would break off all diplomatic relations.²⁰⁹ About this message from Rijkens De Quay notes in his diary: 'Today Rijkens about Indonesia; same story; maybe right after all?'²¹⁰ This exemplifies how an offer to talk by the Indonesians is regarded as 'old news' by De Quay and provides an indication of the amount of attempts Rijkens and others have undertaken to initiate such talks. It also shows that De Quay was receptive to such suggestions, yet before 1962 such talks seem to not have taken place. This once again showcases De Quay's failure to alter Luns' stance. Besides physical meetings between the group and Indonesians, a lot of correspondence was also exchanged. The Rijkens archives form a proverbial treasure when it comes to this.²¹¹

What is, however, truly interesting is the actual influence the group has had on the Indonesian government's WNG policy and, through contacts with Indonesia, on the dispute itself. The group, for instance, acted as a source of information for the Indonesian government. Such was the case when in 1952, before even the formation of the group, Van Blankenstein wrote a letter to Sukarno warning that, although foreign secretary Beyen, much like his predecessor Stikker, was receptive to the Indonesian stance, Drees was not willing to negotiate the authority of WNG. Although the labour party was siding with Beyen, Drees as prime-minister would be the biggest obstacle for the Indonesian cause.²¹² Later on, Van Blankenstein would describe Luns in even stronger (and more negative) phrases.²¹³ Such information provided the Indonesians with a position to better formulate their stance and ultimately use their advantages more effectively. There were numerous reasons for the dispute to intensify from 1959 onwards, but a contributing factor without a doubt was the disappearance of Drees from the political realm and the Indonesians seemingly feeling more confident with his replacement.

One member of the group who definitively contributed to the Indonesian views on the dispute was Duynstee, who kept contacts with a number of Indonesian high officials, of which the most

²⁰⁹ Letter Rijkens to Van Konijnenburg 28-07-1960, UNI RYK inv. nr. 177.

²¹⁰ Diary Jan de Quay entry 28-07-1960, QUAY inv. nr. 45.

²¹¹ Examples just from 1961 are: Letter Hatta to Van Konijnenburg 22-12-1961, UNI RYK inv. nr. 177; Letter Van Blankenstein to Soekardjo 25-01-1961, UNI RYK inv. nr. 177; Letter Rijkens to Sukarno 25-05-1961, UNI RYK inv. nr. 177.

²¹² Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta*, 403.

²¹³ *Ibidem* 416.

extensive where with general Nasution. Duynstee was tasked with advising Nasution on matters of public diplomacy. In a meeting the professor had with Nasution in Paris in 1961 the latter was contemplating appearing on Dutch television in order to sway the Dutch public into a more positive and open attitude towards the Indonesians and their claims on WNG. Duynstee, according to himself in a letter to De Quay, had responded positively to this suggestion.²¹⁴ Nasution would indeed appear on Dutch national tv a week later expressing the Indonesian wish of restored relations between the two countries; of course in exchange for WNG.²¹⁵ Duynstee would also provide the general with suggestions for a possible solution of the dispute that would entail a Dutch secession of the area to the Indonesians and in return many guaranties for Papuan development.²¹⁶ Besides this, Duynstee would also stress that the Dutch government was highly divided on the matter, but that Luns was able to suppress any opposing views in cabinet meetings.²¹⁷

Duynstee's primary role for the Indonesians would remain that of public diplomat and important informant. He consciously placed himself in this position by urging Sukarno in a letter on the 28th of January 1961 to focus on influencing the Dutch public opinion and consider this key to a possible Indonesian success.²¹⁸ Two months later an unofficial Indonesian delegate named Oejeng Suwargana would come to the Netherlands with the sole task of studying the Dutch opinion, expressed both in parliament and in the press.²¹⁹ At the same time the threat of a military conflict increased significantly, with Indonesian infiltrations into the New-Guinean jungle becoming more frequent. This indicates that Sukarno was by then exploring a wide range of options. Duynstee, tasked with informing Suwargana on these matters of public opinion, sent him extensive summaries both of current opinion and the history thereof.²²⁰ Suwargana's final conclusions were unsurprisingly along the same lines as Duynstee's views. After talks with a number of parliamentarians and others (among whom Rijkens), Suwargana concluded that any failure to obtain a solution for the dispute would be caused by Dutch 'die-hard' politicians.²²¹ Duynstee would continue updating the Indonesians on Dutch sentiments and would accompany his statements of Dutch willingness to cede WNG with newspaper articles that implied such.²²² That these views were quite far besides the truth was clear to whoever paid attention to the queries regarding actual public sentiments as executed by NIPO. However, the Indonesians took

²¹⁴ Letter Duynstee to De Quay 23-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61).

²¹⁵ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 404.

²¹⁶ Letter Duynstee to Nasution 25-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61).

²¹⁷ Letter Duynstee to D. Pandjaitan (undated), DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder December '61).

²¹⁸ Letter Duynstee to Sukarno 28-01-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder January '61).

²¹⁹ Suwargana would in later years also play an important role in ameliorating the relations between the Dutch government and the new Suharto regime in Indonesia. See: Giles Scott-Smith, *Western Anti-Communism and the Interdoc Network. Cold War Internationale* (London 2012) 202.

²²⁰ Letter Duynstee to Suwargana 22-03-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder March '61).

²²¹ Letter Suwargana to Duynstee 10-05-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder May '61).

²²² E.g. Letter Duynstee to Suwargana 30-05-1962, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder May '62).

Duynstee's and Suwargana's impressions to hart and adjusted their policy accordingly. A very telling example of this is found in the report of a conversation between Nasution and the American ambassador to Djakarta Howard P. Jones from August 1961. After the Indonesian tone on the dispute took a more violent turn, Jones asked the general about this "muffled sabre-rattling". Nasution replied by "stating that an important cross-section of Dutch leaders is coming to the conclusion that unification of WNG with INDO is the best solution 'or at least not worst for Dutch, West Irian and Indonesia...'"²²³ Another example is the Indonesian foreign secretary Subandrio about whom Jones wrote that: "while it might be wishful thinking, he [Subandrio] had the impression that the Dutch Government today was 'more inclined' or, correcting himself, 'perhaps less disinclined' to heed pressures from Dutch businessmen in favour of settlement."²²⁴ Subandrio would use the same argument again in 1962.²²⁵ Nasution and Subandrio in all likelihood based such views for an important part on the information Duynstee and other group members provided them with.

Besides Duynstee's undertakings, several other members of the group were able to strengthen the Indonesian position. Sukarno would be able to refer to his many contacts with the Rijkens group, and the messages he conveyed through it to The Hague, to underline his attempts at reconciliation with the Dutch; improving the U.S.' view of the Indonesians.²²⁶ Sukarno would also use the Rijkens group to his own advantage in public gatherings. In his speech on the Indonesian independence day in 1961 he would read from his correspondence with Rijkens, stating that he wished nothing more than to renew the bonds with his 'Dutch friends', all the while increasing military pressure.²²⁷ In a publication released by the Indonesian military titled *West Irian. An essential part of Indonesia* quotes from Dutchmen favouring an Indonesian take-over of WNG were included, among which were also quotes from Paul Rijkens. This publication would be spread by Indonesian embassies abroad in the hope of creating an international sympathy for the Indonesian stance by showing that the Dutch were also deeply divided on the issue.²²⁸ Related to this, De Quay thought the Rijkens group to have convinced the Indonesians that the Dutch government would give way to increasing pressure if it lost the vote over the 'Luns plan' in the UN in 1961 and could afterwards be forced into bilateral talks. Because of this the Indonesians had directed all their resources at preventing the plan from getting the required majority; even hiring an American consultancy group. The actual discussion in the general assembly was a highly chaotic one with several resolutions being introduced by different nations. In the end

²²³ Telegram from US embassy Djakarta to Department of State 03-08-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 2).

²²⁴ Telegram from US embassy Djakarta to Secretary of State 13-08-1959, WIE inv. nr. 47.

²²⁵ Telegram from US Embassy Djakarta to Secretary of State 04-02-1962 (microform), WIE inv. nr. 46 (folder 4).

²²⁶ Memorandum for the President from Dean Rusk 09-09-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 2).

²²⁷ Giebels, *Soekarno president*, 253.

²²⁸ Vlasblom, *Papoea*, 307.

none of these gained a two-thirds majority and the Luns plan was therefore blocked.²²⁹

One last point should here be addressed, which is the question of why the group undertook all of the actions and undertakings described above. As stated before, the goal of the group was to help improve relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands. The motivations for doing so might have differed among different members, but most seemed to have simply disagreed with the notion that the loss of Indonesia should be compensated by retaining WNG. Quite the opposite, improved relations with Indonesia were considered much more valuable than a 'country of mud and thick jungle, rich in pestilence'.²³⁰ Since the group was for an important part affiliated with the Dutch business community speculation might arise of how members might have been more personally motivated by specific commercial deals with Indonesian high officials in return for their services than by genuine public interest. No documents have been discovered that support speculations about such deals and no historian has claimed there to have been such deals. With regard to its motivation, the group seems to have had sincere intentions and simply disagreed with a policy that hurt both Dutch international prestige and the Dutch economy at large.

Whether or not De Quay is right in mentioning the Rijkens group as the largest reasons for the Dutch UN failure, the outcome did eventually result in bilateral talks and a U.S. that clearly favoured Indonesian authority over WNG. The reasons for this American stance will be the focus of chapter 5. For now it should suffice to state that, as part one of this chapter showed, contacts between members of the group and the Indonesians were abundant. These contacts served to convey messages between governments as well as inform the Indonesians of Dutch sentiments and of tactics to approach these sentiments. Especially in this latter role the group was able to influence in important ways the development of the dispute. With the Indonesians being convinced of a divided Dutch government and favourable public sentiments, their confidence grew and they started to increasingly pressure the Dutch government, both in and outside the UN.

²²⁹ Kersten, *Luns*, 290-291.

²³⁰ Van Blankenstein, *Indonesië nu*, 114-115.

Chapter 5

The U.S.' policy on WNG varied over different administrations. The Eisenhower administration seemed to be, on the whole, leaning towards a support of Dutch claims over the region. Officially remaining neutral, the U.S. did recognize Dutch administrative control and, more importantly, its sovereignty over the area.²³¹ Although Luns' emphasis of the U.S.' commitment to aid the Dutch in a military conflict is these days considered by many historians to have been overvalued and exaggerated, the U.S. could till the end of the Eisenhower presidency, be viewed as leaning towards a supportive stance of their NATO ally. All this changed when Kennedy ascended to the presidency. He, more than his predecessor, stressed the importance of preventing an expansion of communist influences in Indonesian politics and consequently adopted a more pro-Indonesian position. This alone would have been reason enough for members of the Rijkens group to celebrate the outcome of the 1960 presidential election. However, what must have been especially cheerful news for Rijkens personally, was the fact that many of the top positions on foreign policy in the new administration were filled with participants of the Bilderberg conferences. These included: Dean Rusk, George Ball, George McGhee, William Bundy and Walt Rostow.²³²

The Bilderberg conferences have created an abundant, often polemical, amount of literature.²³³ Often the subject of sensational theories, these conferences (first set-up by Rijkens, the Pole Józef Retinger and Prince Bernhard) have played an actual and valuable role in post-war trans-Atlantic diplomacy and contributed to the vast increase in commerce and investment across the Atlantic in this period.²³⁴ Recent historical research has brought to light that in fact the WNG dispute too was discussed at the conferences, with Prince Bernhard in 1962 proclaiming that Luns enjoyed limited support domestically for his 'hardline' policy.²³⁵ More than the conferences themselves however, it was the fact that Bilderberg offered access to a network of influential Americans that presented the Rijkens group with their biggest chances. Rijkens used his Bilderberg contacts to discuss the dispute with the highest circles of American government. He sent letters to both Dean Rusk (Secretary of State) and George Ball (Under Secretary of State), inquiring whether it was possible for the U.S. to take an initiative in organizing bilateral talks between the Dutch and Indonesian

²³¹ Telegram Secretary of State to US embassies The Hague and Djakarta 10-04-1954, WIE inv. nr. 44 (folder 5); Office memorandum US Government from PSA Kenneth T. Young jr. to FE Mr. Robertson 29-11-1954, WIE inv. nr. 44 (folder 5).

²³² Aubourg, 'Organizing Atlanticism', 97; Koster, *Een verloren land*, 104; Esterik, *Nederlands laatste bastion in de Oost*, 131.

²³³ Aubourg, 'Organizing Atlanticism', 92.

²³⁴ Thomas Gijswijt, 'The Bilderberg Group and Dutch-American Relations' in: Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen and Giles Scott-Smith ed., *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations* (Amsterdam 2009) 808.

²³⁵ Gijswijt, 'The Bilderberg Group and Dutch-American Relations', 814.

government.²³⁶ Ball replied by stating that “things are moving pretty fast” and that they would do everything “to bring about the start of a discussion”.²³⁷

Besides these Bilderberg contacts, Rijkens was also connected to the U.S.’ foreign policy in other ways. He, for instance, in March 1961 received a letter from the American lawyer Henry G. Walter Jr. with a draft resolution written by the U.S. delegation to the UN (headed by former presidential nominee Adlai Stevenson) and the White House, asking Rijkens whether he could suggest any modification that would make the resolution more acceptable to the Dutch government.²³⁸ This anecdote is significant as it shows the extent to which Rijkens was able to influence American policy on the matter; basically dictating what the U.S. should state so as to ‘sway’ the Dutch government. The connection between Rijkens and Stevenson is also confirmed on another occasion in a meeting between Rijkens and Van Hamel where they briefly discuss the position the U.S. could take to mediate between the Dutch and Indonesians. Rijkens claimed that he could, if necessary, reach out to President Kennedy through Stevenson.²³⁹

Rijkens, however, wasn’t the only one who reached out to the American government. Van Hamel too visited the U.S. embassy in The Hague in December 1961 to plead a similar case. Presenting a recent address to the Queen to the First Secretary of the embassy, Van Hamel stressed how large parts of Dutch society were now of the opinion that the Netherlands should revoke any claim on WNG. The American diplomat, supposedly deeply impressed by the list of signatures under the address, promised that he would forward Van Hamel’s message to the U.S. government.²⁴⁰ Van Hamel’s approach to a U.S. diplomat was far from the only one undertaken by the group. Even the American ambassador to Indonesia was approached in Djakarta in an attempt to convince the U.S. that Dutch government policy lacked any public support domestically.²⁴¹

The U.S. embassy in The Hague reported on the undertakings of the group several times.²⁴² More importantly, the American embassy sought to actively get in contact with members of the group. Even before the De Quay cabinet several meetings were had between group member Peekema and an employee of the American embassy, in which the coming actions and further plans of the group were

²³⁶ Letter Rijkens to Ball and Rusk 16-01-1962, RYK inv. nr. 178.

²³⁷ Letter Ball to Rijkens 31-01-1962, RYK inv. nr. 178.

²³⁸ Memorandum 22-03-1961, RYK inv. nr. 178.

²³⁹ Memorandum visit Rijkens to Van Hamel 21-08-1961, HAM inv. nr. 177.

²⁴⁰ Report visit U.S. embassy 19-12-1961, HAM inv. nr. 177.

²⁴¹ Howard P. Jones, *Indonesia. The Possible dream* (New York 1971) 185.

²⁴² Telegram U.S. embassy The Hague to Secretary of State 14-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68; Foreign service dispatch U.S. embassy The Hague to Department of State 25-08-1958, WIE inv. nr. 46 (folder 2); Foreign service dispatch U.S. embassy The Hague to Department of State 03-09-1958, WIE inv. nr. 47; Foreign service dispatch U.S. embassy The Hague to Department of State 04-09-1959, WIE inv. nr. 47; Telegram U.S. embassy The Hague to Secretary of State 22-09-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 2).

discussed.²⁴³ Furthermore, enquiries in 1959 by employees of both the American consulate in Amsterdam and in Rotterdam resulted in a number of interviews with Dutch businessmen including group member De Jonge who, unsurprisingly, explained that the Dutch should take a less rigid stance and “should give ground”.²⁴⁴ These encounters later also reached the oval office as President Kennedy in 1961 was informed on contacts between the group and Indonesian high officials, stressing the less than uniform public opinion on the dispute.²⁴⁵ All of this showcases a clear mutual interest between the group and the American government, which up till now had not been documented. Two interactions between the group and the U.S. government have been described before, but their significance has not yet been specified. As the following paragraphs will describe, both encounters strongly influenced the American view of the dispute.

In 1957 Willem Oltmans moved to the United States.²⁴⁶ There he held a series of lectures and public debates, one of which in 1960 was with Walt Rostow, who would become a member of Kennedy’s National Security Council (NSC).²⁴⁷ The next year, when the new Kennedy administration started searching for ways to solve this possible Cold War catastrophe, Oltmans managed to arrange a meeting with Rostow at which he presented a memorandum on the dispute.²⁴⁸ In this twelve page document Oltmans stressed the importance for the U.S. of breaking with the ‘neutrality principle’ in favour of clearly siding with the Indonesians. Furthermore he stated that the U.S. should put more pressure on the Dutch government as it was divided internally and would succumb to such pressure if the Americans chose to enforce it. Also very useful for the actual implementation of these ideas, according to Oltmans, would be a discussion with Dr. Paul Rijkens who could be invited to Washington.²⁴⁹ There is, however no evidence to suggest that he was.

Oltmans’ memorandum is mentioned by several historians and he has himself in several publications described it. Yet the historians who mentioned Oltmans’ memorandum did not think it to have been very influential.²⁵⁰ Only the historian Pieter Drooglever remains more neutral in his description of the event, stating that the memorandum was studied by the White House and State

²⁴³ Memorandum of conversation between Robert W. Barnett, Dr. de Kat Angelino, Dr. de Vries and Mr. W. Peekema 02-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68; Memorandum of conversation between Robert W. Barnett, Dr. de Vries and Mr. W. Peekema 14-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68; Memorandum of conversation between Robert W. Barnett, Dr. de Vries and Mr. W. Peekema 16-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68.

²⁴⁴ Office memorandum American consul General Amsterdam to U.S. embassy The Hague 24-08-1959, WIE inv. nr. 47; Office memorandum American Consul General Rotterdam to U.S. embassy The Hague 27-08-1959, WIE inv. nr. 47.

²⁴⁵ Memorandum for the President from Dean Rusk 09-09-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 2).

²⁴⁶ Letter Oltmans to Van Blankenstein 15-12-1957, BLA inv. nr. 288.

²⁴⁷ Oltmans, *Mijn vriend Sukarno*, 86-87.

²⁴⁸ Ibidem 87.

²⁴⁹ Memorandum Oltmans to W.W. Rostow 05-04-1961, POF inv. nr. 122a (folder 3).

²⁵⁰ Koster, *Een verloren land*, 53; Meijer, *Ze zijn gek geworden in Den Haag*, 93.

Department.²⁵¹ This formulation, of the effects Oltmans' memorandum enjoyed is greatly underappreciative and does little justice to the way the document was actually received. A number of governmental documents clearly show that it was valued highly. Rostow transferred the memorandum to Kennedy with an accompanying note saying that "it's so good" and that it's worth "urgent exploration".²⁵² Furthermore, the State Department also responded positive to Oltmans' notes, with Executive Secretary L.D. Battle writing that "Mr. Oltmans may well be correct [...] the US cannot afford to remain aloof from the dispute; quiet, friendly but firm diplomatic pressure from the US will be required [...] a solution of the dispute has become imperative."²⁵³ Only a few days later Secretary of State Dean Rusk advised Kennedy that, indeed, the Netherlands should be forced to retreat by denying any American military aid, should a military conflict ensue.²⁵⁴ Something that is confirmed in a memorandum from the State Department where Rusk's suggestions are being repeated with the addition that "this might be accompanied, as Mr. Oltmans suggested in his memorandum, by certain face-saving measures for the Dutch such as UN supervision of the well-being and advancement of the Papuans."²⁵⁵ The State Department, and thus Rusk, were strongly inspired in their shift of policy by Oltmans.

Perhaps most important was the division within the Dutch government Oltmans hinted at, as well as the fact that public opinion sided with De Quay and not Luns. Oltmans stated that (with the exception of Luns) "Holland is prepared to go".²⁵⁶ This notion of the Dutch public wishing to be released from WNG was seemingly accepted without much hesitation by the American government. Illustrative of this is a report of a conversation (twelve days after Oltmans presented his memorandum) between several high officials of the State Department which reads that "they do not believe that Luns accurately reflects Dutch opinion. They consider that there is a good deal of evidence indicating that there may be more ultimate flexibility in the Dutch position than is apparent at present."²⁵⁷ As stated before, public opinion was not at all reflective of such sentiments, as was obvious through several inquiries by NIPO and Luns' popularity domestically. The results of the NIPO inquiries were even transferred to Washington by the U.S. embassy in The Hague, three days before Oltmans presented his memorandum to Rostow.²⁵⁸ Yet stories of De Quay being much more flexible than was apparent, as well as more representative of public opinion, were valued higher than those actual inquiries. All

²⁵¹ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 394-395.

²⁵² Memorandum from Rostow to the President 06-04-1961, POF inv. nr. 122a (folder 3).

²⁵³ Department of State memorandum for Dr. Walt W. Rostow 07-04-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 1).

²⁵⁴ Penders, *The West New Guinea Debacle*, 333.

²⁵⁵ Memorandum State Department on Dutch-Indonesian dispute, POF inv. nr. 122a (folder 3).

²⁵⁶ Memorandum Oltmans to W.W. Rostow 05-04-1961, POF inv. nr. 122a (folder 3).

²⁵⁷ Memorandum of conversation between R.H. Johnson, James D. Bell and Robert S. Lindquist 17-04-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 2).

²⁵⁸ Foreign service dispatch U.S. embassy The Hague to Department of State 02-04-1961, POF inv. nr. 122a (folder 3).

the above strongly conflicts with those authors that stated that Oltmans' memorandum was of little historical significance. A large amount of archival material, mentioning Oltmans explicitly, proves that his memorandum was well received and actually influenced the views of many, both at the White House and the State Department. This might have been strongly aided by the fact that Oltmans' memorandum contained many elements that, if true, would have been welcome news to the American government. Yet the decision to ignore strongly conflicting reports from its own embassy remains remarkable.

That same month Prince Bernhard, accompanied by ambassador Van Roijen, visited President Kennedy.²⁵⁹ In his preparatory briefing for this visit Mr. McBride of the State Department told the President that no serious discussion of any matter was expected. Bernhard's interests, the President was told, lay (apart from tulips and Dutch gin) primarily with Europe, and the Prince was not kept informed on Dutch policy regarding WNG. Discussing this matter would not be useful.²⁶⁰ The actual meeting was indeed primarily on KLM landing rights, only discussing WNG briefly.²⁶¹ A week later, however, the American lawyer Henry G. Walter Jr. (the same lawyer that had contacted Rijkens for advise on the American UN proposal) delivered a document to State Department official Robert H. Johnson, containing an overview of a discussion Walter had had with the Prince after he had returned home. Johnson quickly passed this 'P.B. proposal' to NSC members Rostow and Bundy.²⁶² In the document, echoing Oltmans, the Prince explained that "the predominant Dutch view is that Holland should withdraw from WNG and concentrate Holland's efforts on supporting NATO. [...] The chief – and almost sole – obstacle is the strong personal view of the Dutch foreign minister Mr. Luns". What's more, even in government, Bernhard explained, Luns found little support for his policy.²⁶³ Bernhard also presented a possible solution which consisted of the Dutch handing over WNG to a temporary multi-nation trusteeship of which it would itself not be a part after which a plebiscite will be held to determine the long-term future of the Papuans. A return to the Netherlands would not be an option.²⁶⁴ An explanation for why Bernhard did not offer these views in his previous visit with the President was also offered: because of his constitutional position Bernhard could only offer his advice informally and Van Roijen should be left in the dark regarding the Prince's proposal.²⁶⁵

There are convincing reasons for interpreting Bernhard as a Rijkens group member. Bernhard was for instance often listed as one of the recipients of articles and newspaper pieces on WNG which

²⁵⁹ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 401.

²⁶⁰ Memorandum from Robert H. Johnson for W. Rostow 25-04-1961, WIE inv. nr. 51 (folder 2).

²⁶¹ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 401.

²⁶² Memorandum for Rostow and Bundy by Robert H. Johnson 03-05-1961, NSF inv. nr. 205 (folder 4).

²⁶³ The P.B. proposal 03-05-1961, NSF inv. nr. 205 (folder 4).

²⁶⁴ *Ibidem*.

²⁶⁵ *Ibidem*.

Rijkens sent to different group members. Furthermore Bernhard did in at least one instance concern himself with the group's actions when he, in a letter to Rijkens, strongly objected to the choice of Werner Verrips as delegate of the group to the U.S..²⁶⁶ Yet the best argument for interpreting the P.B. proposal solidly as a product of the Rijkens group comes from the proposal itself. In the very last paragraph, Walter concludes that: "the undersigned acts as a conduit as a result of working on the question for some time with some Dutch business people headed by Dr. Paul Rijkens, all of whom share P.B.'s views."²⁶⁷

As is often the case with NDH research, actual influence remains hard to measure. Yet, as with the Oltmans memorandum, it is possible to study the way the proposal was received by the U.S. government. In a memorandum to Walt Rostow Assistant Secretary of State Walter McConaughy writes that "Bernhard's views deserve careful study" as they "constitute an important further indication that Dutch opinion is shifting very rapidly and that foreign minister Luns is in danger of political isolation."²⁶⁸ These views were repeated by journalist Charles Murphy, a friend of Bernhard and Rostow, who wrote Rostow saying that "all that is suggested is that we supply a gentle push on a stubborn man to produce an outcome according generally with U.S. objectives and with those (so Bernhard assures us) of most of the Dutch."²⁶⁹ The topic of a Dutch people led astray by one stubborn foreign minister left a strong image within the American government and Bernhard's role in influencing these viewpoints was emphasised again and again. This was the case, for instance, when one employee at the State Department wrote a memorandum stating that "the existing division in the Dutch government and the views of Prince Bernhard suggest that there might be real value in our putting considerable pressure on the Dutch".²⁷⁰ Furthermore, initial recipient of the proposal Robert Johnson, too wrote that to him it seemed "most important that we take this proposal very seriously and make a real effort to float it."²⁷¹ Bernhard, like Oltmans, in this instance seems to have strongly influenced U.S. policy.

Most historians don't mention Bernhard's initiative, and those who do state that the actual influence the proposal had on the WNG dispute's developments remains uncertain.²⁷² Drooglever, as one of the only historians mentioning the P.B. proposal, only states that the State Department made

²⁶⁶ Letter Bernhard to Rijkens 13-06-1962, RYK inv. nr. 178.

²⁶⁷ The P.B. proposal 03-05-1961, NSF inv. nr. 205 (folder 4).

²⁶⁸ Memorandum Walter P. McConaughy to Walter Rostow 09-05-1961, NSF inv. nr. 205 (folder 4).

²⁶⁹ Letter Charles J.V. Murphy to Walt Rostow 04-05-1961, NSF inv. nr. 205 (folder 4).

²⁷⁰ Memorandum for U. Alexis Johnson 12-05-1961, NSF inv. nr. 205 (folder 4).

²⁷¹ Memorandum Robert H. Johnson for Rostow and Bundy 03-05-1961, NSF inv. nr. 205 (folder 4).

²⁷² The first to describe Bernhard's involvement were the historians of the Dutch television show *Andere Tijden*. They insinuated that the P.B. proposal might have swayed the Kennedy administration, but never mention the documents described above and leave the question of the proposal's actual influence largely unaddressed. See: *Andere Tijden, Het einde van Nieuw-Guinea: een prins in de wereldpolitiek* (19-03-2002) <https://anderetijden.nl/aflevering/554/Het-einde-van-Nieuw-Guinea-een-prins-in-de-wereldpolitiek>.

sure to note Bernhard's suggestions.²⁷³ This chapter, for the first time presented the way in which the proposal was actually received, showcasing how the proposal was important in convincing the American government that Dutch public opinion, as well as the majority of the Dutch government, was on their side and that this gave them all the merit they needed to increase pressure on Luns. This notion of a Dutch people excited to revoke any claim over WNG of course was a completely false one.

One last Rijkens group affiliate who laboured in the U.S. to convince the American government of the group's viewpoints was Werner Verrips. Verrips is by far the most ambiguous character that can be linked to the group and his name is seldom mentioned. The first to write about him was the Labour Party member Frans Goedhart in his accounts of a trip to Indonesia. Verrips at that time was serving six years in an Indonesian prison for bank robbery, yet Goedhart describes him in surprisingly laudatory terms.²⁷⁴ In later writings, however, Goedhart describes Verrips as a 'remarkable figure' who in all likelihood was a mental patient suffering from megalomania.²⁷⁵ A description which is echoed by a report from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in which the Indonesia office described Verrips as an 'adventurer with a psychopathic touch' and a 'pathological fantasizer'.²⁷⁶

The origins of Verrips' association with the Rijkens group remains uncertain. Oltmans claimed that Verrips stole a confidential report on Indonesian political developments from Goedhart and presented it as his own to a deeply impressed Rijkens, who immediately asked him to collaborate with the group. Yet Oltmans relationship with Verrips (about whom he wrote in several books and articles) is peculiar to say the least, starting with death threats and ending in friendship.²⁷⁷ Whatever the origins of the relation, several documents indicate that Verrips at the end of the dispute worked for the group. Goedhart's biographer Madelon de Keizer writes that Verrips joined the Rijkens group in 1960 and a police report states that Verrips worked together with the group from '61 onwards.²⁷⁸ In January 1962 Verrips was sent by the group to Bonn to investigate father Van Hees' visits to Lukmam Hakim, although Duynstee was very disappointed in his results.²⁷⁹ Further documents reveal a continuing story of failure. Verrips was sent to the U.S. to discuss the WNG dispute privately with Dean Rusk, who declined to see him but who did send the American embassy in The Hague a request for further information on him.²⁸⁰ Similarly, two weeks later Verrips tried unsuccessfully to meet with Assistant Secretary of State George McGhee. In a letter to McGhee Verrips, in very poor English, complains that

²⁷³ Drooglever, *Een daad van vrije keuze*, 402.

²⁷⁴ Frans Goedhart, *Een revolutie op drift* (Amsterdam 1953) 68; Madelon de Keizer, *Frans Goedhart. Journalist en politicus 1904-1990* (Amsterdam 2011) 467.

²⁷⁵ Introduction to Verrips dossier, GOED inv. nr. 64.

²⁷⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs dossier W. Verrips 1961-1966, WIE inv. nr. 212.

²⁷⁷ Oltmans mentions Verrips in his books *Verraders*, *Mijn vriend Sukarno* and *Den vaderland getrouwe*.

²⁷⁸ Keizer, *Frans Goedhart*, 467; Rapport politie afd. criminele zaken Ministerie van Justitie (undated), WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

²⁷⁹ Letter Duynstee to Rijkens (undated), DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder January '62).

²⁸⁰ Telegram Department of State to U.S. embassy The Hague 24-02-1962, WIE inv. nr. 52 (folder 2).

he was instead sent to the Department's head of the Benelux office who knew little to nothing about WNG or the dispute.²⁸¹ Verrips' files produced by the domestic intelligence agency (BVD) show a tendency towards dark attempts at sensationalistic attention seeking. He, for instance, once entered the U.S. embassy in The Hague with the story that he had obtained a letter with proof that minister Luns had accepted 1.5 million guilders from a German banker for helping to reclaim a German company in Indonesia. This fantastical story did spark the interest of the U.S., which after careful research could however not find any supportive evidence.²⁸² Verrips seems to have also been suspected of writing anonymous threat letters to Luns, and even his death in 1964 sparked controversy, with both Oltmans and a regional newspaper questioning the accidental nature of it.²⁸³

In May 1962, with the Bunker talks well under way, the Dutch national weekly *Elsevier* published a long cover story on Verrips. The authors of this article, citing Oltmans as their source, stated that Verrips had had many meetings with high ranking American politicians and officials from the State Department, and was often seen at the Dutch embassy in Washington. Verrips supposedly also remained in close contact with Indonesian ambassador to Moscow Adam Malik, who had travelled to Washington as part of the Indonesian delegation attending the Bunker talks.²⁸⁴ Whether or not Verrips actually was able to meet those at the State Department he was refused to see just a few months earlier remains unsure. Yet the U.S. embassy in The Hague did take the *Elsevier* article serious enough to send a full translation of it to Washington, stressing the question of who introduced Verrips to the Department.²⁸⁵

In a work on the Rijkens group Werner Verrips deserves a place simply because he sparked such controversy. There is no doubt that Verrips worked for the Rijkens group. Furthermore, certain statements on Verrips verge on truthful conclusions. An undated letter of Malik to Verrips, requesting Verrips to advise him and his colleagues on matters of economic development in the 'broadest possible sense', seems to indicate that Malik and Verrips indeed maintained contact.²⁸⁶ Furthermore, the BVD report on Verrips does cite at least one telegram Van Roijen sent Luns in which he reports on a conversation with Verrips, and when Van Roijen visited the Netherlands his agenda does show two further meetings with Verrips.²⁸⁷ Oltmans himself goes one step further by stating that Verrips also

²⁸¹ Letter Verrips to McGhee 06-03-1962, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2, subfolder 'CIA-agent').

²⁸² BVD report Werner Verrips, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

²⁸³ Ibidem; Willem Oltmans, *Den vaderland getrouwe. Uit het dagboek van een journalist* (Utrecht 1973) 234, 237; Author unknown, 'Vragen rond dood van een trouble-shooter. Werd man met veel relaties en veel vijanden vermoord?', *Leeuwarder courant* (25-09-1965) 29.

²⁸⁴ D. van Rosmalen and J.H. Barkey Wolf, 'Blamage voor Nederland. Nieuwe activiteiten van de groep-Rijkens', *Elsevier* 20 (1962) 1.

²⁸⁵ Airgram U.S. embassy The Hague to Secretary of State 23-05-1962, WIE inv. nr. 53 (folder 1).

²⁸⁶ Letter Adam Malik to Verrips (undated), WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

²⁸⁷ BVD report Werner Verrips, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2); Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen*, 612.

met with Walt Rostow and even Robert Kennedy.²⁸⁸ For all this laborious work Verrips would be well paid by Rijkens, who, according to Oltmans, financed Verrips' costly estate close to the city of Utrecht.²⁸⁹ Something which is indeed confirmed by Verrips' BVD files.²⁹⁰ Because of all of this it is certainly strange that Rijkens never mentioned Verrips in his autobiography. Something mentioned by Oltmans and the journalist Henk Hofland as well.²⁹¹ What Verrips would discuss in his visits while so intensely working around Washington during the times of the Burger talks is also unclear. The question remains why Rijkens would even affiliate himself with a figure so clearly unstable (and in several accounts violent) as Verrips. Surely there were better condottieri to be found.

While addressing the more obscure and speculative aspects of the Rijkens group, two more claims should here be mentioned. Almost two years after the NY agreement, an anonymous source that 'joined the group in 1961 to replace Oltmans' functioned as an informant for an article in the national newspaper *Algemeen Handelsblad*. The group had, according to the article, financed and organized a meeting between Dutch and Indonesians near Rome in February 1962 which had in total cost more than 100.000 guilders. Furthermore, the group from the end of 1961 onwards would donate to the election campaigns of those U.S. senators and representatives that sat on commissions concerned with foreign affairs, and that would subsequently argue for a more active U.S. approach to the WNG dispute.²⁹² These claims match closely with Oltmans' and Goedhart's writings that Verrips (who seems the obvious suspect as a source for the article) was in charge of arranging meetings between Indonesians and the Dutch in Rome.²⁹³ Yet as mentioned before, both were personally closely connected to Verrips and should not be viewed as fully impartial.

At the end of August 1962, with the NY agreement signed, the group in a final meeting decided to abolish itself, although relations between Indonesia and the Netherlands were not nearly as good as they were after the RTC in 1949.²⁹⁴ Several newspapers reported the dissolution of the group, stating that Rijkens personally was little satisfied with the actual NY agreement since an earlier solution would have probably resulted in a more beneficial arrangement for the Dutch.²⁹⁵ This might be true, but the group had added in significant ways to the eventual conclusion by its activities in the U.S.. Rijkens' own involvement and contact with high ranking U.S. officials from the State Department, as well as his advice on UN matters, seems to have inspired the U.S. to involve themselves in the matter

²⁸⁸ Oltmans, *De verraders*, 194.

²⁸⁹ Oltmans, *De verraders*, 200; Oltmans, *Mijn vriend Sukarno*, 129.

²⁹⁰ BVD report Werner Verrips, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

²⁹¹ Oltmans, *De verraders*, 191; Hofland, *Tegels lichten*, 61.

²⁹² Author unknown, 'Nederlanders en Amerikanen in het conflict om Nieuw-Guinea', *Algemeen Handelsblad* (25-04-1964) 3.

²⁹³ Oltmans, *De verraders*, 226; Mulder and Koedijk, *Léés die krant!* 428-429, 585.

²⁹⁴ Letter Rijkens to Weijer 06-09-1962, WEY inv. nr. 46.

²⁹⁵ Author unknown, 'Groep-Rijkens gaat uiteen', *De Tijd-Maasbode* (06-09-1962) 2; Author unknown, 'Groep-Rijkens is opgeheven', *Het vrije volk* (06-09-1962) 13.

more directly. Furthermore, Bernhard and Oltmans' memoranda seem, based on internal correspondence and memoranda both from the State Department and the White House, to have strongly convinced the American government of a Dutch people eager to lose any responsibility over WNG, although its own The Hague embassy argued against such views by providing several opinion polls. This embassy itself did attempt to discuss the matter with group members several times, showing an active interest in any opposition to official Dutch policy. Finally there are, albeit highly speculative, indications that even during the Bunker talks the group was actively lobbying, bribing and discussing the matter with high ranking U.S. officials.

Chapter 6

When Labour Party leader Jaap Burger suffered his famous breakdown in the Dutch parliament, he accused minister Cals and the entire government of colluding with the Rijkens group. Many historians have since also noted the supposed willingness of De Quay and several other politicians to discuss WNG with the group, and as we saw in chapter 3 they were partly right. De Quay, especially in the beginning of his administration, proved receptive to the group's ideas. Yet the question of whether the group and Dutch government actually cooperated remains unanswered. The final part of this thesis will attempt to present an answer as to what extent the Rijkens group was granted permission for their actions. The government statement after Oltmans' 'open letter', in which the Dutch government distanced itself completely from any future undertakings by the Rijkens group, stated that the Dutch government had always advised against the group's actions, yet more informal documents suggest a less disapproving attitude.

In June 1961 the Northern regional newspaper *De Friese Koerier* researched the question of whether a mandate was provided by the Dutch government, since different members of the group had requested this several times.²⁹⁶ In line with De Quay's own account, documented by the historian Ronald Gase, the article concluded that such a mandate was never given.²⁹⁷ At the same time Rijkens in his autobiography recalls a completely different history with both De Quay and Luns stating that what the group suggested 'was worth a shot'.²⁹⁸ The historian Klein also states that at least Scholtens and Van Konijnenburg were granted a 'semi-official' fiat for their visits with Sukarno.²⁹⁹

Permission for the group's activities has certainly at times been granted, such as for example when Duynstee requested permission to discuss the dispute with General Nasution in Paris. Luns was advised by his ministry to grant Duynstee permission, albeit under very clear conditions of what was non-negotiable.³⁰⁰ With regards to Scholtens and Van Konijnenburg, Duynstee in a letter to Luns also writes how he understands that Luns had given the two permission to go to Sukarno.³⁰¹ A response by Luns to Duynstee remains to be found. However, with some caution, it is possible to accept this letter by Duynstee as prove enough, as correspondence between Luns and Duynstee was generally both amicable and honest. Such unofficial approval by Luns is also slightly confirmed by the minutes of the ministerial council on the 23rd of June 1961, in which the Rijkens group is discussed. De Quay and Luns stated that they had not granted permission but that Luns had also not explicitly prohibited the group

²⁹⁶ Author unknown, 'Leden groep-Rijkens in nieuw contact met president Soekarno', *Friese Koerier* (20-06-1961) 1, 7.

²⁹⁷ Ibidem; Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 170.

²⁹⁸ Rijkens, *Handel en wandel*, 170-171.

²⁹⁹ Klein, *Een ondernemer in de politiek*, 23.

³⁰⁰ Memorandum for Z [Luns] 24-03-1961, WIE inv. nr. 50.

³⁰¹ Letter Duynstee to Luns 20-02-1961, DUYN inv. nr 12 (folder February '61).

to seek contact with Sukarno because of his fear to be accused of not wanting any solution.³⁰² This could have been interpreted by Scholtens, Van Konijnenburg and, subsequently, Duynstee as an informal permission. More concrete attempts to involve the Dutch government in the group's actions can also be identified in Prof. Van Hamel's deliberations with Luns. Van Hamel in 1961 attempted to get the government to agree to send a delegate to the Indonesians, tasked with setting up informal talks. Luns, although pessimistic, discussed possible options for this function with Van Hamel and both agreed that high ranking ministerial employee Hans Hirschfeld would be best suited. Luns was sceptical that Hirschfeld would be willing, but when Hirschfeld (who was strongly affiliated with the Rijkens group) was approached by Van Hamel he turned out much more willing than Luns had expected.³⁰³ Whether such discussions led by Hirschfeld did in fact take place remains unknown, but the fact that Luns, albeit grudgingly, was willing to discuss these matters with Van Hamel and also grant Van Hamel permission to discuss the matter with Hirschfeld, reveals how the true nature of Luns' relation with the Rijkens group was not nearly as hostile as it is often described.

Whether granted permission for their actions or not, the group did often notify Luns or De Quay of their undertakings. Duynstee for instance did so when he reported to both on his meetings with Nasution, Zain and other Indonesians.³⁰⁴ What's more, De Quay even requested such reports as when he for instance wrote a letter to Rijkens requesting an account of the latter's meeting with Nasution. A request he wrote after having publicly distanced himself from the group both in the ministerial council and through the press release by the ministry of foreign affairs.³⁰⁵ Probably because of this, De Quay also wrote that Rijkens could be assured of De Quay's complete secrecy, 'even when I transfer your report to colleague Luns'.³⁰⁶

Finally, and again ending on a more speculative note, certain statements made by Rijkens group affiliate Werner Verrips suggest that, if true, De Quay used Verrips and the group to bypass Luns and contact the U.S. directly. Verrips twice, while trying to contact high-ranking State Department employees, mentioned that he was commissioned to convey a message both by De Quay and leading figures from the Dutch corporate world.³⁰⁷ While recognizing that Verrips was a highly dubious source, the State Department did ask its embassy in The Hague to provide comments on the "likelihood of De Quay's involvement".³⁰⁸ The possibility that De Quay would undertake such actions and bypass Luns

³⁰² Extract minutes ministerial council 23-06-1961, WIE inv. nr. 50.

³⁰³ Memorandum of discussion Van Hamel with Scholtens, Luns and Hirschfeld 03-?-1961, HAM inv. nr. 177.

³⁰⁴ Letter Duynstee to de Quay 17-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61); Memorandum of conversation between Bot and Duynstee 21-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61); Letter Duynstee to De Quay 23-06-1961, DUYN inv. nr. 12 (folder June '61).

³⁰⁵ Letter Rijkens to De Quay 09-08-1961, WIE inv nr. 50.

³⁰⁶ Ibidem.

³⁰⁷ Telegram Department of State to US Embassy The Hague 24-02-1962, WIE inv. nr. 52 (folder 2); Letter Verrips to George McGhee 06-03-1962, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 2).

³⁰⁸ Telegram Department of State to US Embassy The Hague 24-02-1962, WIE inv. nr. 52 (folder 2).

remains rather small, since (as for example with Rijkens' report on his meeting with Nasution) De Quay seemed to have earnestly discussed the private initiatives that he knew of with Luns. Finally, the historian P.W. Klein in a letter to his colleague Cees Wiebes discussed his suspicion that De Quay was aware of Verrips' actions in the U.S. without briefing Luns on it, and might have even received Verrips in his office once.³⁰⁹ Klein stated that he had never gotten around researching this but that De Quay's diaries might reveal more on this. Verrips, however, is not mentioned once in De Quay's diaries and such speculations remain therefore unsubstantiated.

In the before mentioned minutes from a meeting of the ministerial council on the 23rd of June 1961, the discussion on the Rijkens group ends with the question of whether or not any minister should receive members of the group in the future. It was decided that such decisions should be made by each minister individually and that there would be no formal ban on meetings with the group.³¹⁰ This decision seems exemplary for the larger topic of actual cooperation between the government and the Rijkens group. The group was not avoided or banned, it was even welcomed as a source of information, whether provided by the group on its own initiative or after requests from government members. At the same time there is no actual evidence for any request, either from De Quay or someone else, to have the group organize any meeting or have them undertake any action. This is not surprising given the conclusions presented in chapter 3. It also does not affect the conclusions with regards to actual influence exerted by the group since, as has by now been repeatedly stated, the group was able to exert influence first and foremost through bypassing the Dutch government altogether. Yet since many historians left the question of government cooperation unanswered, this disquisition hopefully functions so as to present a clearer image of the nature of the group.

³⁰⁹ Letter Klein to Wiebes 05-09-1997, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 1).

³¹⁰ Minutes cabinet meeting 23-06-1961, WIE inv. nr. 50.

Conclusion

In June 1952, before the formation of the Rijkens group, Joseph Luns discussed Paul Rijkens in a letter to his political mentor Carl Romme. In this extraordinary document, Luns describes Rijkens as a remarkably warm, kind and intelligent man. However, regarding international politics, Luns thought Rijkens to be on the naïve side of things and also operating perhaps too strongly from a business perspective.³¹¹ Although many historians have stressed the supposed hostility between Luns and Rijkens, Luns would practically repeat this character description in an interview in 1984.³¹²

The WNG dispute saw relations between the young Indonesian state and the Netherlands rapidly decline and by 1962 the situation had deteriorated to the point that the two countries were on the brink of war. This situation clearly originated from a refusal by either government to compromise on their goals and viewpoints for the area, even though Luns had already in 1958 explained to Rijkens that for him 'the first death over WNG would be reason enough to immediately handover the whole of WNG to Sukarno.'³¹³ The fact that, between January and June 1962, a total of 157 Indonesians died, and that in total over a hundred Dutch soldiers would lose their life in WNG, clearly indicates the true value of Luns' stance on the matter.³¹⁴ The question of which position with regards to the dispute was the truly naïve one should therefore not be taken lightly.

Returning to the question posed in the introduction, to what extent can the Rijkens group be said to have played a role in the developments of the WNG dispute? As it turns out: to quite a large extent. Despite historians such as Meijer, Gase, Drooglever, Lijphart, Hofland, De Geus, Hellema or Van Esterik, who all specifically claimed that the group was unable to make any significant impact, we can here conclude that the group played a crucial role at important moments in the dispute. It is only possible to draw such conclusions because the group was here for the first time researched from an NDH perspective. Important attention was paid both to governmental archives and to private archives of group members. This all showed how important layers of non-governmental exchanges were ignored by more orthodox diplomatic historians and how a broader understanding of what diplomatic relations entails also presents a broader and more all-encompassing understanding of the forces that influence diplomatic relations. Specifically, this study has presented important new answers to questions such as how the Bunker talks came to be, why Indonesian politicians dared to take such an uncompromising stance and how the U.S. government turned out confident that pressuring Dutch policymakers would not lead to detriment and disaster.

³¹¹ Letter Luns to Romme 16-06-1952, ROM inv. nr. 80.

³¹² Gase, *Misleiding of zelfbedrog*, 205.

³¹³ Memorandum Rijkens group, RYK inv. nr. 178.

³¹⁴ Overzicht van de voornaamste Indonesische daden van agressie, LUNS inv. nr. 234; Elands and Staarman, *Afscheid van Nieuw-Guinea*, 205.

Both the U.S. and Indonesia recognised the group's role in the dispute. In 1974 Frits Philips would receive the highest Indonesian award then given to any foreigner, for his efforts to improve Dutch-Indonesian relations.³¹⁵ Bernhard for his role would, in an informal letter to the Queen, be specifically thanked by Kennedy, who wrote that Bernhard's "thoughtful comments on this difficult issue were helpful to me at an important moment."³¹⁶ An honour that, should we believe the historian Klein, also befell Rijkens in a separate letter from the State Department.³¹⁷ Furthermore, rather awkwardly, Rijkens was already publicly thanked by Sukarno before the end of the dispute in a public speech in 1961.³¹⁸

Such gratitude expressed by both Indonesia and the U.S. shows the extent to which to those governments the group's actions had been of value. Obviously explicit gratitude was never expressed by any member of the Dutch government. In chapter 3 we saw that, although being fairly unsuccessful in actively changing Dutch governmental policy directly through advise and discussion, the group did succeed in indirectly influencing the government's attitudes. Luns explicitly stated that his plan for 'internationalization' of WNG was necessary due to a 'collapse of the home front'. This could only refer to the changing attitudes in the national press, which were in turn strongly influenced by the Rijkens group. Luns' own popularity remained high throughout the dispute and polls showed a large majority of the Dutch population favouring Luns' policy. Yet due to the press' critical attitudes these effects were neutralized. Furthermore the group made sure to convey Indonesian wishes to discuss WNG with the Dutch government. As was, the case for instance, with Duynstee who directed De Quay's delegate, father Van Hees, to Bonn. Through this the group facilitated the talks that would lead to the meetings headed by Ellsworth Bunker.

The influence the group exerted on coverage of the dispute in the Dutch press, along with personal assurances that indeed the Dutch people favoured a transfer of WNG to Indonesia, albeit false, seem to have strengthened the Indonesian government in its own militant approach to the dispute. This was set forth in chapter 4 where it also became apparent that the group made it seem as if support for the official policy was weak within the Dutch government itself. Spreading the image of a divided Dutch government, chapter 4 showed the ways in which the Rijkens group was able to raise the confidence of the Indonesians and enable them to hold on to a more aggressive policy. This policy in turn heightened the sense of a looming disaster internationally, with especially the Kennedy administration fearing a Cold War conflict.

This fear of a growing conflict which would strengthen communist sentiments led the new U.S.

³¹⁵ Philips, *45 jaar met Philips*, 297.

³¹⁶ Letter John F. Kennedy to Queen Juliana 16-08-1962, LUNS inv. nr. 233.

³¹⁷ Klein, *Een ondernemer in de politiek*, 16.

³¹⁸ Meijer, *Van Sabang tot Merauke!*, 121.

government to more actively seek a peaceful solution to the dispute. The way in which it did so, however, by increasing diplomatic pressure on the Dutch and having them drop their primary conditions of Papuan independence, was not from the start self-evident. Although being informed of the opposite by its own embassy, the White House and State Department became increasingly convinced that Dutch public opinion favoured the transfer of WNG to Indonesia and that the Dutch government itself was highly divided on the issue. As chapter 5 showed, the actions of the group were highly important in encouraging such a shift. In all likelihood the Kennedy administration, through its Cold War politics, would have eventually sided with the Indonesians in any case. Yet the Rijkens group did provide it with the arguments to effectively do so relatively quickly. The interest for the group's actions is also obvious from the many contacts between its members and the American embassy, as well as through Rijkens' own contacts with the State Department and the UN delegation.

Chapter 6 showed how the group was no extension of the Dutch government, but that it was a reconciliatory voice amidst growing anti-Indonesian sentiments. The group informed the Dutch government on most of its meetings with Indonesians, but seemingly concealed its activities in the U.S.. All of this makes the group a highly interesting topic for research based on an NDH approach. The value of such an approach has by now been hopefully displayed, as this thesis, in conclusion, calls for a serious reorientation of historiographical consensus. Any future historical overview of the WNG dispute should note the activities of a group that was in many ways essential for the actual way in which the dispute was resolved. Hopefully any further research on either the dispute itself or its international politics places the Rijkens group firmly at its centre.

Many questions regarding the undertakings, nature and membership base of the group remain unanswered. Firstly, the obvious point of archival material should here be mentioned. Any historian who obtains access to Rijkens' archives will find a vast amount of new documents to work with to further the understanding on the group's nature and influence. Yet, even without the Rijkens archives, any scholar who incorporates Indonesian state and private archival material will greatly add to both this thesis and understanding of the group in general. It is no coincidence that the chapters on the group in relation to the Netherlands and the U.S. are a great deal longer than the chapter on Indonesia. Fortunately, this research was able to make use of both Dutch and U.S. government archives, yet given the group's activities, there should be more to find within Indonesian archives.³¹⁹ Historians Bart Luttikhuis and Christiaan Harinck have attempted to provide a rudimentary inventory of the Indonesian

³¹⁹ Fortunately, for the U.S. government archives, Cees Wiebes' extensive collection of copied U.S. government documents on the WNG dispute, stored in the International Institute for Social History in Amsterdam, proved easily accessible. Furthermore some collections have been digitized and are openly accessible online, as was the case with certain documents from the Kennedy administration. For this see: <https://www.jfklibrary.org/Research/Search-Our-Collections/Browse-Digital-Collections.aspx>.

national archives, albeit with a focus on material between '45 and '49.³²⁰ Correspondence with Luttikhuis, however, confirms that for the fifties and sixties the archives of then existing government agencies can be found and accessed without much trouble. Lastly the Dutch National Archives in The Hague hold the archives of Marcus van Blankenstein, of which only a section has been inventoried. Several telephone exchanges with his granddaughter and biographer, Elisabeth van Blankenstein, confirmed that these archives contain much more material on the Rijkens group. If these archives ever become fully accessible they will form a valuable addition to existing source material.

Aside from the sources, other more concrete questions might also inspire future research. A further inquiry into Rijkens' contacts in the U.S. would strongly add to existing understanding. What was Rijkens' precise relation to U.N. ambassador Adlai Stevenson, or to the lawyer Henry G. Walter Jr.? Furthermore, spatial limits prevented this thesis from extending on several corporate initiatives, but these might also prove useful for further research. What was the relation between the group and other business leaders (both Dutch and American) that visited the State Department, requesting a more active stance by the U.S. in the WNG dispute, without any obvious ties to the group, such as John Loudon (Shell), William Bramstedt (Caltex), G.L. McCoy (Stanvac) and John D. Rockefeller III?³²¹

Regarding the membership, furthermore, a broader understanding of the ties and connections between the group and (former) members of the Dutch government would add greatly to existing research. First off, Rijkens' connection to De Quay remains elusive. Klein in an interview with students from Leiden university claimed to have seen correspondence between Rijkens and Bernhard in which Rijkens states that De Quay authorised his actions.³²² Further research might shed new light on this issue. Furthermore the relation between the group and the parliamentary opposition could not, due to spatial limits, here be mentioned. However there is strong evidence that the group collaborated with at least the PvdA and perhaps also other parties.³²³ Also interesting might be the role of Dutch foreign minister and later NATO Secretary-General Dirk Stikker with regards to the group. The U.S. embassy linked his views to the Rijkens group, yet a formal affiliation has yet to be proven.³²⁴ Lastly,

³²⁰ Bart Luttikhuis and C.H.C. Harinck, 'Voorbij het koloniale perspectief. Indonesische bronnen en het onderzoek naar de oorlog in Indonesië. 1945-1949', *BMGN – Low Countries Historical Review* 2 (2017) 51-76; Another starting point might be the work of historian Matthew Minarczek who has also attempted an inventory of the archives at the ANRI, although focusing primarily on the colonial period. See: <http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/12299>.

³²¹ Memorandum of conversation between John Loudon, Walter Robertson and Howard Jones 11-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68; Memorandum of conversation between Mr. Bramstedt, Walter Robertson, et. al. 25-06-1958, WIE inv. nr. 46 (folder 1); Memorandum of conversation between G.L. McCoy and James O'Sullivan 17-08-1959, WIE inv. nr. 47; Memorandum of conversation between John D. Rockefeller III and J. Graham Parsons 30-04-1958, WIE inv. nr. 46 (folder 1).

³²² Interview Ido Verhagen and Jochum Jarigsmas with P.W. Klein 02-06-1995, WIE inv. nr. 212 (folder 1).

³²³ PvdA vertrouwelijk verslag van de vergadering van de Sectie Ontwikkeling Overzeese landen 16-05-1956, DRE inv. nr. 914; Memorandum of conversation between Robert W. Barnett, Dr. de Vries and Mr. W. Peekema 14-01-1958, WIE inv. nr. 68; Meijer, *Den Haag-Djakarta*, 570.

³²⁴ Telegram U.S. embassy The Hague 10-04-1961, POF inv. nr. 122a (folder 2).

ambassador Van Roijen also met with many members of the group.³²⁵ However, the contents of these discussions, as well as Luns' awareness of them, remain unclear.

Truly interesting would be a further investigation with regards to the claims that the group made contributions to the election funds of several U.S. senators and delegates. Such claims would be hard to prove and their origins remain questionable. Yet, if true, such findings would shed a completely different light on the group. Possible starting points for this might be those senators and delegates that sat on foreign affairs committees and were concerned with the WNG dispute. Furthermore, the figure of Werner Verrips could also be researched to a further extent, perhaps shedding a clearer light on the question of why an obviously intelligent collection of individuals concerned with international relations would even affiliate themselves with such a figure.

Lastly, several countries that played a lesser role in the dispute have here been ignored completely. Especially the role of Australia, as a direct neighbour of WNG, could be of interest in relations to the Rijkens group. Recent publications suggest that Australia's policy on the matter was in fact influenced by the group.³²⁶ Furthermore, England also seems to have played a minor role in the dispute as a facilitator of diplomatic exchanges, and on the whole was involved more directly through the involvement of partly Dutch-owned companies which were under threat of being nationalised in Indonesia. Bart Stol's recent research on the relation between different European colonial powers and the Dutch WNG policy, as mentioned in chapter 2, also highlights the importance of these countries for the developments of the dispute. The group therefore might have also contacted these governments or in some other way undertaken activities in these countries.

The sum of the total influence the group and all of its individual members have exerted on the development of the WNG dispute will perhaps never be understood, recognized or uncovered. Furthermore, as expressed above, much more additional research needs to be done to present a more complete picture of its nature and actions. This thesis has hopefully nonetheless added to a better understanding of the group. It aimed to research and uncover the important position of the group at the core of the dispute's developments, inspiring any future author on the WNG dispute to bring the group more to the forefront of research. A group that up till now in existing historiography has either been ignored or deemed unsuccessful, yet, as has been presented, a group that also strongly influenced the course of the dispute and played an active role in its developments.

The Rijkens group, as a collective of businessmen, journalists, academics, politicians, union leaders, burgomasters, heads of employers' associations and heads of works councils, was able to influence the developments of the WNG dispute in a way that brought a conclusion much quicker than

³²⁵ Van der Maar and Meijer, *Herman van Roijen 1905-1991*, 612.

³²⁶ Umetsu, 'The Impacts of Indonesia's Civil War and the US-Soviet tug of War over Indonesia on Australia's Diplomacy Towards West New Guinea', 182-183.

otherwise might have been the case. It functioned as a diplomatic channel, lobby group, public diplomat, ideological think-tank and influential political actor all at once. It had its own objectives and interests and it turned out to also have the political means to pursue these. Such a description of the group has not been offered before since previous historians have been either unable or unwilling to grant the group much serious interest, most probably because it did not fit orthodox understandings of diplomacy. The NDH methodology does offer a foundation that incorporates these 'outsider initiatives' into a larger diplomatic framework. Joseph Luns, along with previous historians, might have depicted Rijkens as an unsuccessful and naïve amateur in international politics; research presented here, however, paints quite a different picture.

Abbreviations in the Annotation

BLA - Archives Marcus van Blankenstein

DRE - Archives Willem Drees

DUYN - Archives Frans Duynstee

GOED - Archives Frans Goedhart

HAM - Archives Joost van Hamel

KMP - Archives Ministerial Cabinet (Kabinet Minister-President)

LUNS - Archives Joseph Luns

NSF - National Security Files

POF - President's Office Files

QUAY - Archives Jan de Quay

ROM - Archives Carl Romme

RYK - Archives Paul Rijkens

WEY - Archives George Weijer

WIE - Archives Cees Wiebes

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-Collection Jan de Quay

Centrum voor Parlementaire Geschiedenis (Nijmegen)

-Collection F.J.F.M. Duynstee

Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis (Amsterdam)

-Collection Cees Wiebes

J.F.K. Library (Boston MA, U.S.A.)

-National Security Files

-President's Office Files

Nationaal Archief (The Hague)

-Collection Marcus van Blankenstein

-Collection Willem Drees

-Collection Frans Goedhart

-Collection Joost van Hamel

-Collection Kabinet Minister-President

-Collection Joseph Luns

-Collection Carl Romme

-Collection George Wijer

Unilever Archives & Records Management (Rotterdam)

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