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THE NETHERLANDS, BENELUX, AND THE ORIGINS OF THE
BEYEN-SPAAK INITIATIVE

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ANJO G. HARRYVAN

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SPAARK INITIATIVE

Introduction

This paper deals with a period in the postwar history of European integration which is normally referred to as La 'R elance Europ  enne', the European Relaunch.

During the nine months between the shipwrecking of the European Defense Project Treaty by the French Parliament in August 1954 and the new intergovernmental negotiations which were the result of the Messina Conference in June 1955, various plans for the future of European integration were presented. The most important of these schemes may have been the joint proposal of the governments of Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. The so-called Beyen-Spaak initiative resulted in a common Benelux-memorandum which laid the foundation of the Resolution of Messina, which, in turn, started the formation of the European Economic Community.

The aim of this paper is to present a detailed history of this Beyen-Spaak initiative, as much as possible on the basis of primary source material. This material has recently become accessible in the Netherlands. In Belgium however this is not yet the case; unfortunately the Belgian contribution will not get the attention it deserves.

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This paper will not deal with the actual decision making process during the Messina Conference itself: the minutes of the meetings and the official reports remained inaccessible.

Text

The refusal of the French National Assembly, on August 31, 1954, to ratify the treaty for the European Defence Community, forced the Dutch Government to reconsider its policy towards Western European integration. The collapse of the E.D.C. project effectively put an end to all plans for a European Political Community, and, with these, disappeared the Dutch Government's main lever for promoting a wider economic integration of the six participating countries of the European Coal and Steel Community. In brief, the 'No political integration without economic integration' approach of the Dutch Government had been robbed of its meaning.

During the weeks following the decision of the French Parliament, Foreign Minister Beyen and his colleagues in the Dutch Government came to the conclusion that, for the time being, no real progress in the field of Western European integration could be made; this pessimistic view of the future of the aims of his own policy was largely

coloured by Beyen's perception of French foreign policy as formulated by the Mendès-France Government. Long before the debacle over the E.D.C. Treaty, the Dutch Foreign Minister had had serious misgivings about the direction and underlying intentions of the policy of the French Government towards Western European Integration. (1). These fears were increased during the Brussels Conference (19-22 August 1954) when Mendès France had tried to make the other delegations accept a series of modifications to the E.D.C. Treaty which, in effect, would have striped the latter of its supranational character (2). The rejection of the E.D.C. Treaty by the French Parliament confirmed all the Dutch suspicions of French intentions, or lack of intentions in Western Europe. Beyen perceived this decision as an important and unpromising victory of nationalism over supranationalism in the foreign policies of Western European states, rather than as a protest against the rearmament of Western Germany. (3). The decision served as a vote of confidence for Mendès France and his return to what was considered a pre-E.C.S.C., nationalistic policy. Beyen concluded:

"The history of the E.D.C. has shown that for the present we should not place a lot of hope on further supranational organisation of Western Europe (whatever the scale and in whatever framework), considering that Mendès France will probably continue playing the most important political part in France for a long time." (4)

The failure of the E.D.C. project raised immediate, concrete problems. Western European Governments had still to resolve the fundamental question of the rearmament of Western Germany, and, therefore, the West German contribution to the whole Western defence effort.

This problem was dealt with, during a series of conferences held in London and Paris during September and October 1954, on the basis of a set of proposals presented by Sir Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary. The Paris Agreements were the outcome of these talks. In line with Eden's proposals an agreement was reached which on the one hand allowed Germany and Italy to become members of N.A.T.O., but on the other hand imposed certain restrictions on German rearmament within the framework of the Brussels Treaty.(5)

But the Eden Solution, was a solution founded on an intergovernmental basis. The Brussels Treaty Organisation, now transformed into the Western European Union (W.E.U.) lacked the supranational features of the proposed E.D.C., which, in fact, was precisely why it was acceptable to the U.K.-Government. The U.K.'s commitment to maintaining its military presence on the Continent on the other hand was, together with the restrictions on German rearmament, of the utmost importance in piloting the Eden solution through the French Parliament.(6)

For the Dutch Government, the Eden Plan was acceptable as a solution for the Western European defence problem. It saw this as a technical solution with a certain practical value, even though it was regarded by the Dutch as having nothing to do with Western European integration. The fact of British participation in the W.E.U. was, of course, regarded as an advantage. However, British participation excluded the possibility of considering the W.E.U. as a nucleus of future Western European Integration on a supranational basis.(7) Beyen wrote:

"The W.E.U. is an alliance which has come into being not owing to logic as such but because of a lamentable but undeniable reality, to settle the question of Germany's rearmament. There is no fundamental difference from other forms of intergovernmental cooperation like N.A.T.O., O.E.E.C., etc. It is not exaggerated to state that the furthering of European supranational cooperation taking the W.E.U. as a starting-point is bound to remain a castle in the air only leading to disappointing experiences because of (a) the United Kingdom being a member and (b) the attitude of the French Government."(8)

On this point Beyen was at odds with many of the ardent pro-European parliamentarians in the Netherlands, who generally stressed the need to prevent the stagnation of the movement towards Western European integration and maintain the new-found momentum provided by the solution of the European defence problem by initiating further moves in the political and economic fields. Also (according to Beyen: therefore) they were inclined to regard the W.E.U. as 'a kind of' E.D.C., now including the U.K. as well as the continental Six, and therefore, as a suitable starting

point for 'further' or 'real' European integration within the framework of the W.E.U.. This attitude was looked upon by Beyen with scorn. In his opinion it was futile, if not dangerous, to blur the borderline between cooperation and integration, that is between intergovernmental and supranational organisation. Apart from the practical limitations set by the French and British policies, cooperation and integration should be kept apart, not so much for the sake of tidiness in political theory as because of the danger involved in 'fake integration'.

Fake integration - traditional constructions based on intergovernmental cooperation with a small measure of supranationality - Beyen argued would not serve any European interest and should be avoided. For example, within the W.E.U., real parliamentary control over the W.E.U. executive organ would only make sense if this organ could be set up as a supranational authority which would have powers of its own and therefore a political responsibility of its own, independent from the national governments of the member countries; otherwise, apparently 'European' proposals to that effect would create nothing but fake-integration.(9)

In Beyen's opinion the champion of fake integration was France; and this had been the case even before Mendès France had come to power. Because of this alleged French

tradition, Beyen regarded Parliament's pro-integration pressure as very undesirable:

"The well intended efforts to prevent 'Little Europe' from stagnating bear the risk that France - by a dialectic of its own, already skilfully applied by Mendès France - will see its chance to render void the notion of 'supranationality' and transform it into a political slogan serving the various needs of French foreign policy." (10)

The French proposals for a common W.E.U. Armaments Production Pool may be cited as an example of this. These proposals presented as 'first steps on the way towards a supranational solution' were looked upon in the Dutch Cabinet as a scheme which was primarily designed to serve the French national interest in general and the French armaments industry in particular. (11)

On November 19, 1954 Beyen presented his views on the matter to the Dutch Cabinet, in a discussion-paper entitled "The policy of the Dutch Government concerning European cooperation". Not surprisingly this paper too was a long litany of woes against French foreign policy. It made the point that as far as European integration was concerned nothing constructive could be done while French policy remained unchanged. Moreover, because of the nationalist tendencies in France, such a change was not likely to occur in the near future. In the meantime, the Dutch government should pursue a defensive policy: defensive, not only to avoid fake integration within or without the W.E.U., but

also in order to defend the only existing supranational institution, i.e. the European Coals and Steel Community, against future French attacks. The E.C.S.C., Beyen expected, would be subjected to attempts to suppress its supranational identity, e.g. by extending the powers of the Council of Ministers at the cost of those of the High Authority. Beyen wrote:

"The defence of the E.C.S.C. against impending undermining by the French is of the utmost importance both to our country and to the Benelux, firstly because we have to defend the principles of cooperation which have been accepted for this important economic sector and secondly because the Community offers facilities to protect our direct economic interests against protectionist tendencies."(12)

The interests of the Coal and Steel Community would be best served, Beyen continued, by aiming at the realisation of objectives embodied in the original E.C.S.C.-Treaty. The point was that attempts to extend the powers of the Community to related economic sectors like transport could, in the present political situation, easily be counter-productive. Given the French attitude, any renewal of the political discussions on the Treaty might actually lead to a curtailment of these powers. In the circumstances government initiatives aiming at such an extension (called for by the Strasbourg Assembly, with the support of Monnet and the High Authority) would be most undesirable and should be guarded against.

Also Beyen's paper dealt with plans recently presented by the French and German governments concerning closer economic cooperation between these two countries. On October 26, 1954 Paris and Bonn had published a common declaration which announced a strengthening of their bilateral economic ties in the near future. In particular, this note foreshadowed a long-term Franco-German trade agreement advantageous both to German industry and to French agriculture. Clearly these plans constituted a potential threat to the Dutch and Belgian positions in intra-European trade. Therefore, vague as they still were, the plans were then discussed at the Benelux level. There it had been considered a comforting idea that the German administration had distanced itself from the perspective of any real bilateral bloc formation within W.E.U. or E.C.S.C. and had urged the necessity of drawing the other West-European countries into the talks.(13)

Beyen himself went still further by denying the existence of any real enthusiasm for the concept from the German side. For the present, he argued, there was no real reason for concern about the intended cooperation. Still, he pointed out, there was cause for alarm in that the initiative demonstrated once more the French tendency to deal with problems of a multilateral nature in a bilateral way: a tendency shown before during the W.E.U. negotiations and afterwards when they presented their proposals for a

European armaments pool. This approach, Beyen continued, constituted a threat to the smaller countries and to their interests. Under the circumstances close Benelux cooperation, especially in the field of foreign policy was more than ever necessary. During the discussions in Cabinet Beyen put a lot of emphasis on this last point. Realizing the extremely limited room for manoeuvre, as far as supranationality and integration went, he stressed the importance of defending multilateral cooperation as such, suggesting talks with Spaak on the question whether it would be feasible to undertake joint Benelux action to tackle this problem of resurging bilateralism. As a possible course of action Beyen mentioned the idea recently launched by Baron Snoy et d'Oppuers, the Secretary General of the Belgian Ministry of Economic Affairs, that the Benelux countries might take the initiative to start discussions in the O.E.E.C. on the formation of a Free Trade Area.(14)

This last remark in particular, demonstrates that, during the last months of 1954 the Dutch Foreign Minister entertained no hopes whatsoever of a speedy economic integration of Western Europe along the lines of his 'Beyen Plan'.

When it was discussed in Cabinet, Beyen's proposed policy met with little criticism. Pessimistic and defensive as it was - and acknowledged as such - it was accepted. This was

to remain the official Dutch outlook on European affairs for the following four months.(15)

Shortly after the Dutch Government's decision, Beyen went to Brussels for a political 'tour d'horizon' with his Benelux colleagues, Spaak and Bech.

Intra-Benelux foreign policy cooperation had gradually lost importance during the period 1950 to 1953. By the end of 1954 mutual consultation and policy coordination had reached something close to zero. During the final phases of the E.D.C. negotiations in August when Spaak had launched a proposal containing far-reaching concessions to the French demands without having consulted his Benelux partners previously, the lack of cooperation was blatantly obvious.(16) During the subsequent W.E.U. negotiations the Benelux delegations had worked together again, but the future of European cooperation and integration had not been discussed at the Benelux level afterwards. Consequently Spaak had embarked upon a course considerably different to that pursued by Beyen. Right from the beginning Spaak had had little sympathy for the free trade area idea generated by Snoy and his supporters in the Belgian Ministry of Economic Affairs. Contrary to the opinions of most political actors and observers at that time Spaak had initially been in favour of a new effort to create a politically integrated Europe. Also he had considered the newly founded W.E.U. a suitable organizational nucleus for

such an attempt, an opinion which caused Beyen some anxiety when he was informed about it. Apart from that, Spaak's ideas corresponded with those of his Dutch colleague to the extent that he too was more than sceptical on the question of whether it would be possible to bring about any new form of integration whatsoever as long as the Mendès France Government remained in power.(17)

It was his discussions with Jean Monnet, which started immediately after the W.E.U. negotiations in London and Paris, which made him look ahead. The president of the High Authority of the E.C.S.C. had been disappointed with the outcome of these negotiations. Monnet, the champion of supranationality, concluded that the Paris Agreements left little prospect for a further development towards European integration. He had blamed the European governments and their policies for what he perceived as a dangerous impasse:

"Je me préoccupai des moyens de faire que les forces politiques ne fussent plus nulle part les freins, mais partout les moteurs de l'Europe. La première condition de ce plan était que je fusse entièrement libre de mes actes."(18)

In order to obtain this 'freedom of action' he had decided not to seek re-election as president of the E.C.S.C. on the expiring of his term of office in February 1955. On November 9, 1954, Monnet stated to the High Authority:

"Ce qui est en voie de réussir pour le charbon et l'acier des six pays de notre Communauté, il faut le poursuivre jusqu'à son aboutissement: les Etats-Unis d'Europe." (19)

This same combination of sentiments, i.e. his enthusiasm for the prospect of a federal (western!) Europe and the conviction that government policies as they stood would not suffice to reach this goal, would lead him later on in 1955 to the foundation of his 'Front for the United States of Europe' a pressure group of parliamentarians, trade union officials and other personalities, organised to push those government policies in the right direction, that is towards a pro-European integration stance. (20)

Meanwhile, during the last months of 1954, Monnet had started talks with a number of prominent 'Europeans', with a view to drawing up a plan of action to put new life into the development towards a united and supranationally governed Western Europe. Paul-Henri Spaak was one of these interlocutors.

Although Monnet's role in what was later called the 'European Relaunch' has been grossly exaggerated in the literature, there seems to be little doubt that he exerted considerable influence on both the ideas and policies of at least this Belgian statesman. (21)

Monnet and Spaak shared the belief that 'something' had to be done, to get out of a possibly indefinite impasse. At

the same time, however, they were well aware of the fact that whatever initiative was taken the state of affairs of European politics called for the utmost caution: "Il fallait avant tout éviter un nouvel échec", wrote Spaak afterwards.(22)

This meant that whatever the form of the eventual proposals they would have to be acceptable to the governments concerned. In fact, like Beyen, Spaak did not believe in the possibility of a successful move forward as long as Mendès France and his adherents dominated French foreign policy. Consequently the Spaak-Monnet talks during the winter of 1954/1955 were in the nature of preliminary theoretical discussions about what might be done in the future. Monnet managed to convince Spaak of the desirability of proceeding by extending the powers of the Coal and Steel Community to related sectors, especially transport and energy. This opinion was bound to conflict with Beyen's ideas, as the Dutch Minister had, since 1952, argued against the sector approach and had favoured instead the so-called general approach: economic integration by means of the creation of a Western European Customs Union.(23)

The Dutch sources on the Beyen-Spaak-Bech meeting of the 25 November, 1954 are rather vague. Beyen afterwards reported to the Dutch Cabinet that on "the most important points" an

agreement had been reached. by this he meant that Spaak had explicitly distanced himself from his earlier ideas about using the W.E.U. as a starting point for new integration initiatives. In the course of the discussions Spaak presented his new ideas about an extension of the field of activity of the Coal Steel Community but it is interesting to note that he did not limit himself to that: he also raised the question whether a common market 'in a wider framework' would be worth considering. When his Dutch colleague timidly referred to the Dutch proposals with regard to this topic embodied in the Beyen Plan, he learned to his astonishment that Spaak was uninformed about them. An exposition by Beyen of his train of thought on this theme was followed by a more general discussion on the perspectives of economic integration. Beyen finally expressed his misgivings about French foreign policy and stressed the importance of a multilateralist stance. Spaak and Bech displayed an understanding of his fears.(24)

The available sources do not reveal any clear-cut decisions taken by the three. The fact, however, that Beyen reported agreement "on the most important issues" to his government seems to indicate that the Benelux ministers at least agreed that the time was not yet ripe for a new initiative. That at any rate was what Beyen told the Dutch Parliament in December: For the moment - he mentioned a period of five months - nothing should be done at all as far as Western European integration was concerned. Disappointed

parliamentarians who had wanted to see some kind of action on the European front were told informally that their government would refrain from initiatives as long as the Mendès France Government remained in power.(25)

During the first months of 1955 the centre of the diplomatic stage was dominated by the Saar-problem, the French proposals for a European Armaments Pool, Germany's return to sovereignty and the French-German plans for economic cooperation

On a more or less 'subterranean' level however the discussions about the future of European integration continued. It was clear that at some point the Western European Governments would have to decide on the future and form of integration, if any. The most suitable occasion for such a talk it seemed would be the forthcoming meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the E.C.S.C. when the member countries would have to decide on a successor for Jean Monnet as president of the High Authority.

This meeting, however, originally scheduled to take place in February, when Monnet's term of office would expire, was postponed time after time. At first the French Government did not want to jeopardize the ratification of the Paris

Agreements by the Conseil de la République by agreeing to a new summit on the European issue. Then, after this ratification on March 27, it was the Germans who asked for a delay, firstly because of their wish to negotiate Europe's future only after a complete restoration of (West) German sovereignty, and secondly because they hoped to find a way out of their domestic differences between Chancellor Konrad Adenauer and his Minister of Economic Affairs Ludwig Erhard over the stance to be taken by the F.R.G..(26)

The period up to June 1, 1955, when the meeting of the E.C.S.C. Foreign Ministers finally took place - the famous Messina Conference - has been baptized by Mayne 'The period of constructive opportunism'.(27) Indeed, throughout Western Europe, blueprints for future integration were drawn up and discussed. In the Low Countries alone, at least five distinct concepts for a European 'relaunch' could be identified.

Spaak continued and even intensified his deliberations with Jean Monnet. The latter, who would remain President of the High Authority until a successor was appointed, was by now busy writing a declaration in which he embodied his ideas concerning an extension of the supranational powers of the E.C.S.C. to the energy sector (oil, natural gas and electricity) and to the transport sector (land, water and air transport including the railways). Moreover, inspired by the views of his collaborator Louis Armand he now proposed the creation of an entirely new High Authority for

common research on, and the production of, atomic energy for civil purposes. Because of the recent scientific developments in this field Monnet expected atomic energy to lead to a 'new industrial revolution'. Therefore he regarded it as a promising nucleus for European integration in general: since the European countries concerned lacked the facilities to develop the potentialities of this atomic energy individually, there was a natural community of interests to arrive at close cooperation in this field.(28)

Within the Belgium administration however the sectoral and supranationalist aspects of the Monnet/Spaak approach met with resistance. First of all there was the plan by Baron Snoy of the Ministry of Economic Affairs for an O.E.E.C. Free Trade Area. Of more importance, however, seems to have been the initiative of the Belgian Minister of Foreign Trade, Larock. He presented a number of "propositions d'ordre économique pouvant servir à une action politique à entreprendre par des pays de Benelux" in order to arrive at a 'rélanche de l'intégration Européenne'. Larock's proposals originally dated from November 1954; in March 1955 he obtained some kind of official governmental support for his ideas which were now referred to as 'the Belgian proposals' at least by the Dutch administration. Larock suggested the création of a Free Trade Area limited to certain products, mainly manufactured good, namely those for which the total factor costs were more or less equal in the participating countries. For those products alone tariffs and

quantitative restrictions within the Area would be abolished (Trade policy with regard to third countries would, of course, be decided by the individual states).

Institutionally the Larock Plan was based on the principle of intergovernmental cooperation (supranationality might only be introduced later on, on the basis of a common agreement) and in connection with this the Belgian minister hoped for British participation. For France he suggested an empty chair policy: if necessary this country would be allowed to join in a later stage when it considered that its economy was strong enough. Apart from the Free Trade Area idea, the Larock proposals were concerned among other things with a common Western European public works policy and a common plan for road construction. A common Fund for Restructuring would help to defray setbacks and distortions caused by the increased competition.(29)

Besides these more or less governmental initiatives the Belgian ex-minister Van Houtte launched on March 17 a plan which resembled the Snoy concept: he argued for a Benelux initiative within the O.E.E.C. for the formation of a group of countries which would be willing to accept a gradual tariff reduction over a period of ten to fifteen years and the simultaneous abolition of quantitative trade restrictions up to 100%.(30)

Last not least, the Dutch Member of Parliament Blaisse drew up a 'pre-integration programme', published in february 1955. It took the line that, for the present, the political

situation was not ripe for real economic integration. Free movements of goods, capital, labour and services between the Western European countries would require a preliminary European development programme aimed at the removal of both the economic and psychological barriers to integration. Among other things his programme comprised suggestions for an intergovernmental plan for the development of Southern Italy, a common project on agricultural productivity, and one for the construction of atomic energy and natural gas plants, and technical and financial cooperation in the field of housing. The Council of Europe was, according to Blaisse, the most suitable institution to start action along these lines.(31)

This sudden accumulation of integration plans was certainly not limited to the Benelux countries. Also, in the Strasbourg Parliament and in the European League for Economic Cooperation, more or less original proposals were formulated. In Western Germany the discussion between Adenauer and Erhard and their adherents was getting into full swing: Adenauer supported a political orientation towards Western Europe and therefore, preferential economic relations with that part of the Continent; whereas Erhard as his disciples advocated a fundamentally liberal policy without discriminatory elements aimed at world-wide free trade.(32)

Certainly, all this planning for the future of Europe was reinforced by the fall of the Mendès France government on February 5, 1955. The subsequent formation of the Faure Cabinet, in which the 'anti-European' Gaullist element was considerably weaker and in which the pro-European M.R.P. now held important posts, contributed to a resurgence of pro-integration hopes and expectations. Faure's inaugural address to the Conseil de la République suggested that the new French Government would take a more positive stance than its predecessor. But the real objectives of government policy remained as yet unclear; new supranational institutions probably would not be possible. As a result, the 'new optimism' of February/March 1955 was cautious. It is noteworthy that all the schemes for general (or 'horizontal') integration discussed above took the line that some form of intensified intergovernmental cooperation was the best, or at least the most realistic, goal to be aimed at. Faure however also stated that the French interest would be primarily concentrated on 'cooperation' in the fields of electricity, transport and atomic energy; sectors which corresponded with those chosen by Jean Monnet for his sectoral-supranational approach. The clarification of French intentions was to be delayed until some moment after the ratification of the Paris Agreements by the French Parliament.(33)

Clearly, a new political situation had developed with new hopes and European integration plans 'springing up like mushrooms', as Beyen commented at the end of March 1955.(34) The Dutch minister himself, and the Dutch Government in general, however, were not so easily affected by the winds of change. In accordance with the policy line decided upon in December the Dutch had kept a low profile in European affairs.

In January Pella, the President of the E.C.S.C. Council, had made a tour of the European capitals in order to investigate the possibilities of further integration. On that occasion Beyen informed him that the Dutch government would not raise objections of principle against an extension of the E.C.S.C., but urged him not to take the initiative in such a move, because of the threat to the supranational character of the Community, posed by a re-negotiation of the E.C.S.C. treaty.(35)

Also the Dutch had enthusiastically participated in the torpedoing of the French ("fake integration") plans for an European Armaments Pool. Apart from France itself the Western European countries did not feel inclined to participate in the kind of organization the former had in mind. Consequently, although some kind of Armaments Secretariat was set within the W.E.U. framework, the final results fell far short of the initial French proposals.(36) Unlike the Belgians, however, the Dutch had refrained from theoretical discussions about the future of European

cooperation and/or integration. The change came in March, 1955, and it was the Spaak/Monnet talks which gave the first impulse to it.

During January and early February the Belgian Foreign Minister had tried to canvass support for the idea to appoint Maurice Schuman as Monnet's successor to the Presidency of the High Authority. The events in France in February as well as his contacts with Monnet made him change his mind. The fall of Mendès France, the emergence of the Faure cabinet and the development of a more optimistic climate in general did not fail to impress both Spaak and Monnet. During the last weeks of February the latter came to the conclusion that his declaration on the future of Western European integration - originally meant to be his valedictory address and the programme of his pressure group for the United States of Europe - might serve in the near future, as the basis for a joint communiqué to be issued by the six community governments.(37)

When the Benelux Foreign Ministers met on March, 10, 1955, in order to discuss the problem of Monnet's successor, Spaak proposed to his colleagues a meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the E.C.S.C. countries shortly after

the ratification of the Paris Agreements by the French Parliament. At such a meeting the French could be invited either to produce, or to agree to, a declaration of intent on the future of European integration. Such a joint statement, Spaak argued, would serve as a basis for further governmental action. Also, if the French thus explicitly committed themselves to a new more positive European policy, the effect might be that Monnet would reconsider his resignation as President of the High Authority.(38)

For Beyen, Spaak's proposal did not come as a surprise. A few days before the Benelux meeting the Dutch Ambassador in Brussels had sent him a message with a rather similar contents: Monnet was aiming at a common declaration by the E.C.S.C. ministers which would enable him to reconsider his resignation. Such a declaration would have to embody the intention to pursue the process of European integration and to do this 'on the basis of' the Coal and Steel Community. Beyen's reaction had been prepared. The Dutch minister approved of Spaak's plan to aim at an E.C.S.C. conference in order to provoke a clarification of the French intentions. But, as he pointed out emphatically, this did not mean that he would agree to Monnet's particular proposals for sectoral integration.(39)

The preparation of the response to the Spaak proposal is crucial to the subsequent orientation of Dutch foreign

the French policy and it thus deserves more detailed attention. Armed with the news of Monnet's new initiative the Director of the Western Cooperation sector of the Dutch Foreign Ministry had produced a preparatory note for the Benelux summit in which he implicitly suggested that the time had come to change tack and take a more active stance on the issue of the Western European integration. The note briefly summarized the traditional Dutch objections against further sectoral integration either within or without the E.C.S.C. framework. Implicit in the extension of the existing community, he argued, was the danger that the administration of the new sectors concerned, might be dominated by, and subordinated to, the interests of the coal and steel sectors.

The objection against sectoral integration in general was that the distinct fields of economic activity were so closely connected with each other that the sector approach as compared with the general approach could not really work: the sectoral divide could only be artificial and would create problems of its own. Taking into account these objections, a different course was suggested contrary to the one Monnet advocated:

"In our opinion it would be preferable to pursue further integration by reverting to the basic ideas of the Beyen plan (gradual realisation of a tariff community, the elimination of trade restrictions, the creation of a European Fund) and to prepare for its realisation by a gradual ripening of both the European political climate and European economic conditions." (40)

The wording of this note was still very cautious. Beyen, however, now obviously convinced of the necessity to embark upon a new and more active policy, did not limit himself to 'gradual ripening': within a fortnight he drew up a discussion paper for cabinet in which he proposed nothing less than a Benelux initiative for new intergovernmental negotiations, aimed at the creation of a (Western) European Economic Union. (41) The Beyen plan had thus been resurrected. Once again, the Dutch would launch an initiative for horizontal integration on a supranational basis in Western Europe. This bold proposal by Beyen was based on several motives, most of them mentioned by Beyen in his note or presented during the Cabinet discussions. He referred to the recent changes in France and the subsequent mushrooming of integration and cooperation plans. He discussed briefly the ideas of Larock, Monnet, van Houtte, Blaisse, the European Movement and the activities of the Strasbourg Parliament and concluded that there was the imminent danger of enormous confusion.

It would be most unfortunate, he argued, if the Dutch found themselves in a position in which they could only react to proposals put forward by others. Such a situation would weaken the Dutch position considerably. Consequently, in cooperation with the Benelux partners the Government should take a positive stand of its own. Stating the policy goals

which should be embodied in this stance, Beyen defined in a rather classical way the combination of European idealism and commercial self interest, which seems to have governed the Dutch European policy during the 1950's:

"We aim at a real intensification of cooperation between the European countries and at the development and stabilisation of the European market (for our exports)." (42)

Consequently, the course then proposed by many advocates of European integration was hardly attractive for the Dutch. The choice against further sectoral integration, embodied in the Luxembourg resolution, was still as valid as ever and thus the objection against the Monnet approach still held.

Moreover, he also rejected 'the general opinion that horizontal economic cooperation in Europe for the present would only be possible on an intergovernmental basis and cooperation on a supranational basis would only be possible for specific sectors, related to those administered by the E.C.S.C.'. As things stood, Beyen wrote, such general statements about Europe's potential in the field could neither be proved nor refused. Admittedly the gusto for horizontal integration on a supranational basis, especially in France, was not particularly impressive. He refused, however, to take for granted that the fate of the EDC had proved that Western Europe was not ripe for supranational cooperation in general. Moreover, the many supporters of integration who, boasting of their 'realism' and now

advocating intergovernmental schemes or sectoral integration, were under an illusion; neither of the two would, as such, lead to the general economic and political integration of Western Europe.

In brief: "The ruining of the EDC project has not affected the approach of the Dutch Government." Therefore, there was no reason whatsoever why the Dutch should not try to revive the E.P.C.-negotiations, and to aim at a new European Community, now with an exclusively economic task on the basis of the Beyen Plan.

The first Dutch goal should be a Benelux initiative along these lines. So far Spaak had not gone deeply into the problem; it was however quite feasible that he would sympathize with the proposed idea, Beyen argued. Also, such an initiative would not be incompatible with possible extension of the E.C.S.C. to transport and energy; as before, the Dutch would not fundamentally resist proposals to that end; and again, as before, they would not accept integration schemes for the W.E.U.. Finally, in order to improve its chances of realisation, the Benelux proposal should allow for a special transitional period for France in order to enable that country to modernize its economy, as well as a system of exceptive clauses for agriculture.

(43)

Beyen's proposal gave rise to an extensive debate within the Dutch Government. Prime Minister Drees spoke in plain terms of his scepticism. He and his civil servants were of

the opinion that there was not much chance of making a success of the proposal. The other European countries would not forego the possibility of protecting their national economies, and so there was a serious risk that a new supranational institution without real administrative powers would be the lamentable result, especially in view of the former E.P.C. negotiations. He would not disapprove of those supranational institutions if a real customs union were to be realised, but did not think that feasible, also because his Ministry seriously foresaw the return to power of Mendès France.

Drees' civil servants were inclined to regard Beyen's proposal as a rather unhappy result of parliamentary pressure. The Prime Minister himself would prefer an approach along the lines of the Van Houtte Plan, i.e. aiming at a Western European market without the clutter of supranational organs and joint policies. He was in favour however of an attempt to investigate possibilities for possible action at the Benelux level.(44)

The extreme opposite stance was taken by Sicco Mansholt and his Ministry of Agriculture, at that time a stronghold of die-hard supporters of the 'institutional' and/or 'federalist' approach to European integration. Here the Foreign Minister's proposal for a Benelux initiative met with a kind reception. Beyen's ideas with regard to the contents of such an initiative however were considered 'an error'. Once more, it was argued, the accent was laid on

the traditional Dutch interest, the furthering of intra-European trade and the creation of a customs union. France, Italy and Germany would not accept this approach.. Moreover, the E.P.C. experience, they reasoned, had made clear, that general economic integration could not be created on the basis of intergovernmental negotiations: new talks on the formation of a customs union would again only lead to endless discussions about elementary preconditions like the harmonisation of fiscal, social and monetary policies. Complex problems of this magnitude could not be dealt with by intergovernmental negotiations and a general treaty, but had to be resolved gradually by supranational organs. Therefore the Dutch initiative should aim at the creation of a political community administered by a supranational institution with powers for the gradual development of a joint economic policy. Political integration should be the basis and starting point for a development towards economic integration (Exactly the reverse of Beyen's thinking). (45)

Jelle Zijlstra, the Minister of Economic Affairs, basically agreed with Drees in that he emphasised the importance of the aim of arriving at a customs union. With regard to supranationality, however, he was more positive than the latter: referring to the Benelux experience he underlined that for the final aim, i.e. a fully-fledged economic

union, supranational institutions would be inevitable for the formulation of common policies. For the first phase - a 'simple' customs union - however one could do without those common institutions. Here too Benelux could serve as an example. More generally Zijlstra showed interest in the Larock concept of horizontal integration limited to a selected number of sectors and products.

Mansholt was not present at the discussions in Cabinet. Consequently Beyen found himself in a rather isolated position when he tried to defend the values of a supranational stance as such. The Foreign Minister 'had a hard time' reported Mansholt's substitute. According to the latter Beyen had to give in, in that he finally accepted the primacy of the customs union aim over the supranationality goal and was now willing to regard the latter as the coping-stone.

Beyen also had to deal with severe criticism of his suggestion concerning a special set of clauses for France. This was considered a premature concession which might be misused by the French negotiators. Generally speaking the reactions in Cabinet can be characterized as rather sceptical. Nevertheless, it was agreed that Beyen would continue the preparations for a Benelux initiative 'to moot the subject of economic integration'(46)

On April 4, 1955, Beyen sent Spaak a note, basically an abridged version of his cabinet paper, suggesting a joint Benelux initiative:

"Il semble donc que le moment soit venu pour une prise de position commune nettement définie de la part du Bénelux.(...) Il semble opportun que nos trois gouvernements se concertent pour prendre une initiative bien ordonnée qui pourrait utilement être avancée à la réunion des Ministres des Affaires Etrangères de la CECA. Une telle initiative aurait pour objet de créer une communauté supranationale, ayant pour tâche de réaliser l'intégration économique de l'Europe au sens général en passant par la voie d'une Union Douanière à la réalisation d'Union Economique."(47)

Beyen realised, he wrote, that proposals of this kind "pourraient rencontrer une opposition assez sérieuse de nos amis français". That however was not sufficient a reason for withholding those proposals.

Also he underlined the compatibility of general integration with further sectoral integration and suggested that the new Community would be a most suitable institution for carrying out the development programmes and the other 'interesting suggestions' of Larock.(48)

Meanwhile, the French Parliament had ratified the Paris Agreements and Spaak, who was still in close contact with Monnet, had concluded that the time for action had come. On April 2, 1955, without prior consultations with the Benelux partners, he sent the foreign ministers of France, Germany

and Italy a proposal for a joint declaration on European integration for the forthcoming E.C.S.C. meeting (which at that time was scheduled to take place in late April). Spaak proposed that the six countries should express their common intention to pursue the process of integration by an extension of the powers of the E.C.S.C. into the sectors of transport and conventional energy; they should create a new organ for atomic energy, linking it to the E.C.S.C.. In order to draw up a treaty to this end a governmental conference should be organized, presided over by Monnet.

The proposal, which did not mention anything concerning horizontal integration, was not received favourably. The French had not yet made up their mind and did not want to pursue such a direct course of action. Also, Prime Minister Faure felt little sympathy for Monnet and would not agree to a European relaunch presided over by the latter. The Germans were still occupied with their domestic differences and did not like the idea of integration in the field of nuclear energy. The Italian reply was vague, the Rome Government did not want to commit itself.(49)

This disappointing experience might have contributed to Spaak's interest in the ideas of his Dutch colleague. His reaction to Beyen's note was positive but pessimistic. He would gladly support Beyen's cause, he wrote, but doubted seriously if the proposal would be acceptable to the

French. Nevertheless, he agreed with Beyen that they ought to give it a try. As he wrote in his letter of April 7, 1955:

"Les idées que vous (...) défendez me paraissent excellentes et fondamentalement, je suis d'accord avec vous.// Mais je me demande si la politique que vous préconisez à quelque chance de succès. Je me demande, notamment, si le Gouvernement français peut l'accepter. Peut-être et je serais prêt à me rallier à cette idée devons-nous faire l'expérience." (50)

Still in his opinion, it would be advisable to make sure that there would be a possibility of 'orderly withdrawal' ('position de repli'); a suggestion which can hardly have been encouraging for Beyen. Referring to the latter's statement on the compatibility of general/sectoral integration he proposed to combine tactics:

"On peut mener à la fois la lutte pour obtenir un grand marché européen et en même temps tâcher de régler certains problèmes par secteur." (51)

Both approaches could be embodied in a Benelux proposal, he concluded. He continued by an exposition on the Monnet approach, stressed the importance of a governmental conference to draw up a Treaty for further sectoral integration (!), and voiced his expectation that a development along these lines would make Monnet reconsider his resignation and stand for a second term of office.

Obviously Spaak did not have great faith in the possibility of a governmental conference on the formation of a customs union.

Beyen wrote back on April 14. He concluded that agreement had been reached and emphasized: "Je m'oppose nullement à l'idée d'une extension des compétences de la C.E.C.A.". Such an extension might be useful, Beyen agreed, although it would not enhance the political solidarity in Europe and would not as such lead to European unification. Moreover, Beyen wrote, on a more practical level he had some doubts if all subsectors of transport and energy could be administered by a sectoral authority in a viable way. For oil, for instance, such an administration might be rather difficult to realise. As far as electricity was concerned, he was not sure that this subsector would really need supranational organisation. Also, there was no denying that transport integration was urgently needed: but was the E.C.S.C. the best framework for such an operation, he wondered?(52)

Beyen's 'doubts' reflected the results of the discussions in the Dutch cabinet on the advantages and disadvantages of the sectoral approach:

Oil should be omitted, it was argued, in order not to jeopardize the relation with the oil companies. Moreover there was the fear that 'oil-integration' within the

E.C.S.C. would lead to extra levies on this product (meaning higher consumer prices) in order to finance a low coal price policy.

Equally, responsibilities for the E.C.S.C. concerning transport did not seem a good idea, because this would probably lead to low costs of railway carriage and the corresponding need for Government subsidies - both contrary to Dutch railway policy.

Finally, with regard to electricity, cooperation at O.E.E.C. level had, according to the Cabinet, produced satisfactory results.(53)

Beyen and Spaak agreed to contact Bech and to meet in Den Haag (The Hague) at April 23, to get down to business, i.e. the actual drafting of the common Benelux proposal.

Meanwhile, within the Dutch Government, the discussion on the customs union approach continued. In practice this meant that several attempts were made to change Beyen's mind and to convince him of alleged errors and risks attached to his initiative.

Firstly, the Foreign Minister had to deal with severe criticism from within his own department. Beyen had written his March 24 Cabinet paper more or less on his own, without using preliminary drafts of civil servants. Consequently, the Economic and Military Cooperation Section (DGEM) could, taken by surprise, only react after that cabinet

discussions. In the beginning of April the DGEM-Director Van der Beugel produced a note in which he denounced the New Beyen Plan as unrealistic. Referring to the experiences of the EPC negotiations and the lessons which could be drawn from Benelux, he stated that a customs union administered by a supranational organ would not be acceptable, neither for France, nor for the other E.C.S.C. countries: this initiative could only lead to lengthy discussions.

Moreover, in his opinion, there was a real danger that the Beyen scheme would be used as the grounds for the creation of a supranational organ without any real power. The institutionalist approach of Mansholt's Ministry of Agriculture was an illustration! On the contrary, an extension of the Coal and Steel Community was feasible and this could be the alternative the Dutch should aim at. Admittedly, the traditional objections against sector integration were still valid as far as the creation of new pools was concerned; he argued that they would be considerably less valid in case of an extension of the already existing E.C.S.C.. The sole use of stressing horizontal integration would be that it would provide an opportunity to expose the Dutch long-term goals.

The Western Cooperation Section of the Ministry remained loyal to the Beyen Plan. Apart from the economic arguments this section presented a number of typically political motives, most of which concerned Germany. Horizontal

integration and supranationality, for example, were considered to avoid both the political neutralization of Western Germany and the resurgence of nationalism in that country. (54)

Beyen himself replied that he failed to see why he should not moot the question of a customs union - "what are we afraid of?" - and emphasised that he would not resist an enlargement of the E.C.S.C..(55)

On the side of the Agricultural Ministry, two notes were drawn up to demonstrate the desirability of aiming at the creation of common institutions, with initially rather limited powers on the one hand, and lack of feasibility of the customs union idea on the other. In vain, as far as Beyen was concerned.(56)

Spierenburg, the Dutchman on the High Authority sent the Foreign Minister the most recent draft of Monnet's 'Declaration'. In the accompanying letter he wrote that in his opinion the E.C.S.C. countries would be able to agree with one another only on the point of sectoral extension of the Community. Minister Zijlstra of Economic Affairs sent Beyen an essay on the merits of the Larock Plan, which he had written himself.(57)

The sources suggest that Beyen within his own Ministry, as well as in cabinet, was in a rather isolated position in that he was one of the few, who was actually convinced of

both the desirability and the feasibility of his scheme.(58)

Moreover, the negotiations on intensified German-French economic cooperation seemed to predict a return to bilateralism rather than a move forward to supranationalism. Serious blows to Dutch trade could be the consequence.(59)

Notwithstanding a general lack of encouragement however, Beyen stuck to his point of view.

The Benelux Foreign Ministers met on April, 23, in Den Haag. Bech, who had been informed by Spaak about the latter's discussions and correspondence with Beyen, had not been able to come to the meeting (but would approve of the results afterwards). Beyen and Spaak had discussions on the basis of the final draft of Monnet's declaration.(60) Initially, the President of the High Authority had frown upon Beyen's customs union's proposal:

"(Il) ne croyait opportun de heurter de front par l'idée d'un Marché Commun les puissantes traditions protectionistes de la France."(61)

The final draft of his paper, however, allowed for a second phase of integration, i.e. after the enlargement of E.C.S.C., in which the member countries would start "fixer les conditions et le programme d'une intégration general".(62) In accordance with what they had decided upon, the Benelux ministers chose for a different course:

sectoral and horizontal integration could be combined to complement one another and were equally proposed. They agreed upon a joint proposal for the E.C.S.C. meeting of foreign ministers which would contain suggestions for integration regarding:

1. sectoral

- a) transport: the creation of a common fund for common development programs (road construction, railway electrification etc.).
- b) joint research (and possibly: production) in the field of atomic energy for civil purposes.
- c) improvement of the traditional cooperation in the sector of (conventional) energy.

Sectoral integration could take place within the framework of the E.C.S.C., but this would not necessarily be the case

2. general

- a) Along the lines of the Beyen plan, i.e. the creation of an economic community on the basis of a common market which would be administered by a supranational institution, and a common agreement on:
 - 1. a scheme for the gradual removal of restrictions to trade between the participating countries.
 - 2. the harmonisation of fiscal, economic and social policies.

3. A system of safeguards (for cases of severe BOP-problems etc.)

4. the creation of a common Fund for Restructuring.(63)

On the basis of this agreement a team of Dutch and Belgian civil servants drew up a joint "Memorandum des Pays Benelux Aux Six Pays De la C.E.C.A." (See Annex).

The memorandum was not favourably received by the Dutch Government. Especially its 'hybrid' character met criticism. Unfortunately for the critics, the dual approach which it embodied was an inevitable consequence of the way it had come into being, i.e. as a compromise between the Benelux partners. Consequently, only a few minor changes were introduced.(64)

On May 9, 1945, the Dutch Cabinet grudgingly consented to the official presentation of the Memorandum to the French, West German and Italian Governments.(65)

At June, 1, 1955 the Council of Ministers of the E.C.S.C. finally met for what since has been known as the Messina Conference.

ANNEXMEMORANDUM DES PAYS BENELUX AUX SIX PAYS DE LA
C.E.C.A.

1. Les Gouvernements de Belgique, du Luxembourg et des Pays-Bas croient le moment venu de franchir une nouvelle étape dans la voie de l'intégration européenne. Ils sont d'avis que celle-ci doit être réalisée tout d'abord dans le domaine économique.

Ils estiment qu'il faut poursuivre l'établissement d'une Europe unie par le développement d'institutions communes, la fusion progressive des économies nationales, la création d'un grand marché commun et l'harmonisation progressive de leur politique sociale.

Une telle politique leur paraît indispensable pour maintenir à l'Europe la place qu'elle occupe dans le monde, pour lui rendre son influence en son rayonnement en pour augmenter d'une manière continue le niveau de vie de sa population.

Le développement des activités de la C.E.C.A. a révélé la nécessité d'un élargissement du marché commun dans les domaines voisins du champ d'activité de cette organisation. Les pays de Benelux estiment toutefois qu'un pareil élargissement ne pourrait réussir si une intégration économique générale n'était pas entreprise.

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A. L'élargissement des bases communes de développement économique devrait s'étendre, entre autres, aux domaines des transports, de l'énergie et des applications pacifiques de l'énergie atomique.

1. L'extension des échanges de marchandises et la mouvement des hommes appellent le développement en commun de grandes voies de communication qui ont fait, jusqu'ici, l'object de plans nationaux séparé.

A cette fin, un organisme serait chargé de l'étude en commun de plans de développement axés sur l'établissement d'un réseau européen de canaux, d'autoroutes, de lignes ferrées électrifiées et sur une standardisation des équipements. Il aurait aussi pour mission de rechercher une meilleure coordination des transports aériens.

Pour la réalisation des objectifs énumérés ci-dessus un fonds d'équipement des transports devrait être mis sur pied.

2. La mise à la disposition des économies européennes d'énergie plus abondante à meilleur marché constitue un élément fondamental de progrès économique.

C'est pourquoi toutes dispositions devraient être prises pour développer les échanges de gaz, de courant électrique, propres à augmenter la rentabilité des investissements et à réduire le coût des fournitures.

On devrait étudier des méthodes de coordonner les perspectives communes de développement de la consommation d'énergie et de dresser les lignes générales d'une politique d'ensemble, éventuellement par la création d'un organisme qui recevrait communication des programmes nationaux et donnerait un avis sur leur opportunité. Il pourrait provoquer l'établissement en commun de plans de développement pour l'ensemble des pays membres, de telle sorte que l'implantation des installations s'opérerait au mieux des possibilités économiques.

3. Le développement de l'énergie atomique pour des fins pacifiques ouvrira à brève échéance la perspective d'une nouvelle révolution industrielle sans commune mesure avec celle des cent dernières années.

Les pays Benelux estiment qu'il faut créer une Autorité commune, à laquelle seraient attribués la responsabilité et les moyens d'assurer le développement pacifique de l'énergie atomique sous réserve des arrangements spéciaux souscrits par certains Gouvernements des pays tiers.

Ces moyens devraient comporter:

- a) l'établissement d'un fonds commun alimenté par des contributions de chacun des pays participant et permettant de financer les installations et les recherches en cours ou à entreprendre;
- b) le libre échange des connaissances et des techniciens, des matières premières, des sous-produits et des outillages spécialisés;
- c) la mise à disposition, sans discrimination, des résultats obtenus et l'octroi d'aides financières en vue de leur exploitation;
- d) la coopération avec les pays non-membres et l'assistance technique aux pays sous-développés.

B.1. En ce qui concerne l'intégration économique générale, les pays Benelux estiment qu'il faut tendre à la réalisation d'une communauté économique.

Cette communauté devrait être fondée sur un marché commun à réaliser par la suppression progressive des restrictions quantitatives et des droits de douane.

2. L'établissement d'une communauté économique européenne, dans l'esprit des Etats Benelux, présuppose nécessairement l'établissement d'une autorité commune dotée des pouvoirs propres nécessaires à la réalisation des objectifs fixés. D'autre part un accord devra établir:

- a) la procédure et le rythme de la suppression progressive des obstacles aux échanges dans les relations entre les pays participants;
- b) les mesures à prendre afin d'harmoniser la politique générale des pays participants dans les domaines financiers, économique et sociaux;
- c) un système de clauses de sauvegarde;
- d) la création et le fonctionnement d'un fonds de réadaptation.

C En ce qui concerne le domaine social, les pays Benelux considèrent comme indispensable l'harmonisation progressive des réglementations en vigueur dans les différents pays, notamment celles relatives à la durée du travail, la rémunération des prestations supplémentaires (travail de nuit, travail du dimanche et des jours fériés), la durée des congés et leur rémunération.

D. En rédigeant le présent Memorandum, les pays Benelux se sont efforcés d'apporter une contribution à la solution des problèmes discutés entre les six pays de la C.E.C.A. lors de l'élaboration de la résolution de Luxembourg du 10 septembre 1952. Ils sont pleinement conscients de leur importance et de leur complexité. De multiples solutions se conçoivent pourvu que les buts à atteindre soient acceptés.

Les trois Gouvernements suggèrent en conséquence l'organisation d'une Conférence chargée de:

- procéder à l'étude et préparer des textes de traités organisant la poursuite des objectifs développés ci-dessus en matière de transports, de l'énergie et de énergie nucléaire ainsi qu'en matière de réglementation sociale en tenant compte des résultats déjà acquis à l'intervention de la C.E.C.A.;

- procéder à l'étude et préparer des textes de traités fixant les conditions et le programme d'une intégration générale de l'économie européenne;
- procéder à l'étude et préparer des textes des traités dressant le cadre institutionnel commun dans lequel devraient être exécutés les tâches prévues ci-dessus.

Les pays Benelux estiment que cette Conférence devrait comprendre, outre les six pays membres de la CECA, les pays qui ont signé avec la CECA un traité d'association et la CECA elle-même.

Il y aurait lieu d'examiner l'opportunité d'y inviter les autres Etats membres de l'OECE, soit comme observateurs, soit comme membres participants, ainsi que l'OECE elle-même.

Les traités envisagés devraient être ouverts à tous les pays participant à la conférence.

ARCHIVALIA

The source material for the writing of this paper has been collected in the following Dutch governmental archives, all of them in Den Haag (The Hague):

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- The archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Dutch 'Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken', and consequently in the notes referred to as 'B.Z.'
- The archives of the Ministry of Agriculture, referred to as 'Landb.' (for: Landbouw).
- The files of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, referred to as 'E.Z.'.

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35. A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 17.1.55;
36. A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 10.1.55, 17.1.55, 24.1.55;
A.R.A., MR (510), Wapenpoolbesprekingen, oprichting van een bewapeningscomit   in de WEU', 27.4.55; and: 'Draft Decision of the Council of Western European

Union as Adopted by the Organisation Committee on Thursday, 21st April 1955';

37. In his memoirs Monnet deals with this change as a merely technical one:

"Ce furent les événements qui m'obligèrent à différer l'annonce et la mise en oeuvre du projet auquel j'allais consacrer vingt ans de ma vie. La chute du cabinet Mendès France, aux premiers jours de février, rendit impossible la réunion des ministres et la nomination de mon successeur."

However, the subsequent events seem to indicate that already at this time Monnet was contemplating a resumption of political responsibility for the process of integration, at the governmental level.

J. Monnet, Memoires, 47;
R. Mayne, Recovery of Europe;

38. A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 11.3.55
39. idem, and:
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, 'Bijeenkomst Benelux-Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken', 8.3.55;
- 40 B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, 'Bijeenkomst Benelux-Ministers van Buitenlandse Zaken', 8.3.55;
41. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, 'Nota inzake de Europese integratie', accompanying letter d.d. 24.3.55;
42. idem;
43. See also: A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 21.3.55, 28.3.55;
44. A.R.A., MR (509), letter Fock to Drees, 25.3.55
A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 28.3.55;
45. Landb., G.S. Archief 5, 631 Eur. integr. bespr. 1955/56: Note by Van der Lee for Mansholt, 25.3.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, Letter Mansholt to Beyen, 26.3.55;
46. Landb., G.S. Archief 5, 631 Eur. integr. bespr. 1955/56: 'Aantekening voor de heer minister; betreft Ministerraadvergadering van 28 Maart - Benelux initiatief voor hervatting Europese integratiebesprekingen', 28.3.55;
A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 28.3.55 .
- 47 B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, 'Note' (G.S. no. 46999-175t)

- 48 idem;
49. P.H. Spaak, Combats Inachevés, 62-63
J. Ch. Snoy et d'Oppuers, "Un témoin raconte: Du plan Schuman aux traités de Rome", in: 30 jours d'Europe, no. 285 (avril 1982), 23-24;
- 50 B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, Letter Spaak to Beyen, 7.4.55;
51. idem, and:
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, Codetelegram Ambassade Brussel to Beyen, 5.4.55;
52. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, letter Beyen to Spaak, 14.4.55;
53. A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 12.4.55;
54. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, memorandum Van der Beugel to Beyen, no. 775, d.d. 5.4.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 134, memorandum Van der Beugel aan Beyen, no. 815, d.d. 12.4.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 151, 'Europese economische integratie', 7.4.55;
55. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 148, 'Notitie inzake de nota's van DGEM en Dr Kymmel', 12.4.55;
56. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, 'Nota betreft Benelux-initiatief tot hervatting van de integratie-besprekingen', 14.4.55; with accompanying letter Mansholt to Beyen, 20.4.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, Letter Beyen to Mansholt, 22.4.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, Letter Mansholt to Beyen, 28.4.55;
57. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, letter Spierenburg to Beyen, 27.4.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 131, letter Zijlstra to Beyen, 27.4.55;
58. A civil servant of the Ministry of Agriculture informed his superior about Beyen's position:

"Drs. Van der Beugel informs me, that Minister Beyen clings with desperate tenacity to the Customs Union Idea as the starting point for new talks. Allegedly nothing can put the scheme out of his head, although both supporters and antagonist of integration at his Department don't agree with the Customs Union Approach."

Landb., G.S. Archief 5, 631 Europese integr. bespr.
1955/56: Note Van der Lee for Mansholt; 19.4.55;

59. B.Z., II, G.S., 913.10, Europese integratie deel IV,
'Toezegging door Faure aan de M.R.P. gedaan bij zijn
kabinetsformatie', 15.4.55; and: Codetelegram, Van
Boetzelaer - Den Haag, 19.4.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, Codetelegram Van
Boetzelaer - Den Haag, 13.4.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, 'Notitie over de
economische aspecten van de Frans-Duitse
samenwerking', maart 1955;
60. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, letter Beyen to
Spierenburg, 2.5.55;
B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 134, memorandum Chef DWS to
Beyen, 15.4.55;
61. J.C. Snoy et d'Oppuers, "Un témoin raconte: Du Plan
Schuman aux traités de Rome", in: 30 jours d'Europe,
no. 285 (avril 1982), 23-24;
62. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 19, 'Projet de Déclaration';
63. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 134, Codetelegram/Circulaire
Beyen/Luns, 23.4.55;
A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 25.4.55;
64. B.Z., II, 913.100, no. 139, 'Memorandum des Pays
Benelux aus six Pays de la C.E.C.A.';
A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 6.5.55, 9.5.55;
65. A.R.A., MR (401), Notulen 9.5.55;



