

# Forces behind the Scene

## The ‘Europese Beweging Nederland’ and the Dutch Policy on early European Integration

1948 – 1954



Address given by P.A. Kerstens at the Congress of Europe in The Hague, May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1948.

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Master thesis

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this thesis is to determine what the views of the NGO 'Europese Beweging Nederland' (EBN) were on European integration and the Dutch policy on this topic during the years 1948 – 1954. By studying three case studies (i.e. the establishment of the Council of Europe, the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community, and the process towards the European Defence Community), this thesis primarily wants to investigate what EBN did to widen its views and how this was perceived by themselves and by policy-makers. These focus-points will result in a valuable and fresh perspective on the process of European integration in the mentioned period because existing historiography has mainly focussed on the role of international developments, Dutch party-politics, and economic motives. It will also fit into the existing historiography on the role of NGO's in the history of international relations.

This thesis is mainly based on primary sources of the EBN-archive in the Dutch National Archive in The Hague and on meeting minutes of the Dutch minister council. The study of EBN-publications, meeting minutes of the board, communication between EBN and policy-makers and memoirs has resulted in the conclusion that EBN perceived its own role as guiding and crucial in the mentioned period because it continuously pressed policy-makers and provided them with fresh ideas and new perspectives on European integration. The fact that actual Dutch foreign policy did not deviate much from EBN's proposals strengthened its belief in the importance of its actions and served as legitimisation for its existence. Therefore, this thesis argues that even though the influence of international developments and national party politics on Dutch European integration policy are undeniable, the EBN and the effects of its activities should not be overlooked either, which is currently the case in historiography.

## Introduction

“It is time that the European voice should be raised upon the scene of chaos, and prostration, caused by the wrongs and hatreds of the past, and amid the dangers which lie about us in the present and cloud the future”.<sup>1</sup> With these words, Winston Churchill pleaded for European integration in his opening speech of the first Congress of Europe, which took place from 7 until 10 May 1948, in the *Ridderzaal* in The Hague. This congress was organised by the ‘International Committee of the Movements of European Unity’ (ICMEU) – an overarching organisation which represented multiple smaller (early) European movements, such as the Dutch *Beweging van Europese Federalisten* (BEF) – with the aim of stimulating the international process towards European integration and unity. The fact that this congress took place in the most prestigious location in the Netherlands and was attended by few of the most influential Europeans of that time, such as the Dutch Princess Juliana and Prince Bernard and the honorary presidents of the Congress: Winston Churchill, Paul-Henri Spaak, Léon Blum and Alcide de Gasperi, emphasises the importance and the perception of this ‘public’ initiative.<sup>2</sup> But what were the exact goals and results of this Congress and was it as important as it was perceived by its organisers and attendees? And how does this relate to the general perception of the importance and role of non-governmental organisations?

The focus on European cooperation and integration during the four-day congress led to the formulation of multiple resolutions which were to be presented to the national governments and parliaments of European states. The most important ones were: a united Europe with free movement of goods and people; a European structure of human rights; the creation of a European supreme court; the establishment of a European Assemblée in which all member states would be represented; and, lastly, the coordination of the separate European movements’ ideas into a single clear goal: a federalist European democracy.<sup>3</sup> This last aim led the ICMEU to change its name to the slightly catchier name ‘European Movement International’. The congress itself sparked a rise of European federalism in the Netherlands as well, which resulted in the establishment of the ‘Dutch Council of the European Movement’ (*Nederlandse Raad van de Europese Beweging - NREB*) in 1948.

The pro-European goals and ideology of these movements were very clear from the beginning, but did these affect the process of European integration and how does this relate to the Dutch movements’ perception of its relevance? Who were the main advocates of the Dutch European movements and what strategies did these ‘public’<sup>4</sup> advertisers use to pursue their goals? This thesis is going to answer these questions by focussing on the (perception of)

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Address given by Winston Churchill at the Congress of Europe in The Hague (7 May 1948)’, *CVCE*, publication date 02-12-2013. Date of use: 10-10-2017, [https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/address\\_given\\_by\\_winston\\_churchill\\_at\\_the\\_congress\\_of\\_europe\\_in\\_the\\_hague\\_7\\_may\\_1948-en-58118da1-af22-48c0-bc88-93cda974f42c.html](https://www.cvce.eu/en/obj/address_given_by_winston_churchill_at_the_congress_of_europe_in_the_hague_7_may_1948-en-58118da1-af22-48c0-bc88-93cda974f42c.html)

<sup>2</sup> Hendrik Brugmans, ‘De ‘Europese Beweging’. Een overzicht’, *De Gids. Honderd en twaalfde jaargang* (Amsterdam 1949), pp. 2 – 14, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> De Europese Beweging, *De Europese Beweging: Ontstaan, doel en werkwijze* (1954), p. 28. Nationaal Archief Den Haag, ‘De Europese Beweging en haar voorgangers, 1946 – 1986’, inv. nr. 1116.

<sup>4</sup> Public is in inverted commas, as most of the EBN-members were member of political parties and/or the national parliament.

ideology, strategy and activities of the Dutch European movements, NREB and BEF (which merged into the ‘Europese Beweging Nederland’ (EBN) in 1958)<sup>5</sup>.

This period displayed several crucial events in the history of European integration, such as the earlier discussed Congress of Europe, the establishment of the Council of Europe, the process towards- and the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1952, and the French proposal – and rejection – of the European Defence Community (EDC, 1950 – 1954). Another interesting development in these years was the sudden shift of the traditional Dutch attention on the Transatlantic partners, the U.S. and the U.K., towards continental-Europe.<sup>6</sup> This period was also chosen because it contained the peak-years of the EBN: during the 1960s and ‘70s, the process of European integration and the EBN lost its strong post-war momentum.<sup>7</sup>

The argument of this thesis is that even though the influence of international developments and national party politics on Dutch European integration policy is undeniable, the EBN and the effects of its activities should not be overlooked either, as they pressured policy-makers and often provided them with revolutionary ideas and insights on European integration as a whole. The relevance of this research lies in the fact that it can provide insight in the EBN-perception of the value of its own activities and views on the process of European integration, which can add to our general understanding of the legitimisation of NGO’s.

EBN’s self-perception could be an interesting comparison with the existing views on Dutch policy towards European integration, such as the work and insights of Mathieu Segers, Robin de Bruin, and Annemarie van Heerikhuizen. Each of these Dutch historians has done research on the changing Dutch position towards European integration in the first decades after the Second World War, which shifted from a Transatlantic and isolated approach to a continental and open policy in the 1950s and 1960s.<sup>8</sup> Van Heerikhuizen has focussed on the role of personal views of politicians in Dutch policy-making on European integration and she concludes that these did not have a significant influence on the changing Dutch policy.<sup>9</sup> Segers argues that the effects of international developments, such as decolonisation, the Marshall plan, the creation of the Bundesrepublik Deutschland, and the Cold War were decisive in shaping European integration policy.<sup>10</sup> De Bruin, however, disagrees, as he states that national party politics and their ideological differences were the most important factors in Dutch policy-

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<sup>5</sup> This thesis will use the name ‘Europese Beweging Nederland’ (EBN) for the sake of clarity. Before their official merger in 1958, the ‘Beweging van Europese Federalisten’ (BEF) and the ‘Nederlandse Raad van de Europese Beweging’ (NREB) already coordinated their policy and views on European integration. The BEF was responsible for practical matters, such as event-organisation and teaching, while the NREB focussed on lobbying activities and policy-making.

<sup>6</sup> Mathieu Segers, *Reis naar het continent. Nederland en de Europese integratie, 1950 tot heden* (Amsterdam 2013), p. 58.

<sup>7</sup> European Union, ‘Geschiedenis van de Europese Unie’, [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history\\_nl#1945-1959](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history_nl#1945-1959) and ‘A.g. Harryvan, J. Van der Harst en S. Van Voorst (red.), ‘Interview met M. Van der Goes van Naters’, in *Voor Nederland en Europa. Politici en ambtenaren over het Nederlandse Europabeleid en de Europese integratie, 1945 – 1975* (Amsterdam 2001), p. 66.

<sup>8</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent* p. 157 – 160.

<sup>9</sup> Annemarie van Heerikhuizen, *Pioniers van een verenigd Europa* (Amsterdam 1998), p. 4 & 205 – 208.

<sup>10</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent* p. 58 – 74.

making.<sup>11</sup> All authors mention the EBN and its influence in the 1950s in their work, but they do not go into detail on the role of this organisation in the process of European integration. By doing primary research in the EBN-archive, which has not been done by previous researchers, this thesis will provide a fresh perspective on the evolution of European policy and a focus on the self-perception of the EBN and the policy-makers' perception of the EBN. By zooming in on this particular nongovernmental organisation, the analysis will also fit into Akira Irye's broader work on the role of international NGO's in global post-war history, which explains the 'ignored' connection between NGOs and globalisation.<sup>12</sup> He counters the assumption that globalisation was a result of the Cold War, as he argues that "credit should be given to international organisations, especially nongovernmental organizations, for having led the way".<sup>13</sup> The argument of this thesis – the role of the EBN in the early process of European integration has been underestimated in the existing literature – could serve as a more detailed legitimisation of Irve's conclusion.

This thesis will focus on events in the late 1940s and early 1950s that laid out the foundation of the European Union as we know it today. Throughout the chapters, the perception of the role of EBN-views, strategy, and activities in the development of Dutch views and policy will be the main focus. Chapter 1 will discuss the establishment of the European Assemblée (predecessor of the European Parliament) and the Committee of Ministers in Strasbourg. This institution provided the possibility and incentives for European states to plan the future of the European continent. Chapter 2 will analyse the establishment of the ECSC and chapter 3 will discuss the failed process towards the EDC.

The analysis is based on meeting minutes of the minister council and the EBN-board, communication between EBN-leaders and Dutch politicians and policy-makers, speeches of prominent European federalists, government memoranda and publications of the EBN-magazine '*Nieuw Europa*'. The questions that will be asked are: what was the EBN-perspective on the specific topic? How did the EBN express its views and how did it try to influence policy-makers? And how were the EBN-activities and efforts perceived by policy-makers and by EBN itself? By answering these sub-questions for every 'case study', this thesis will try to answer the main question: *how did the EBN perceive its role in the development of Dutch policy on European integration during the years 1948 – 1954?*

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<sup>11</sup> Robin de Bruin, *Elastisch Europa. De integratie van Europa en de Nederlandse politiek, 1947 – 1968* (Amsterdam 2014), p. 20 – 21.

<sup>12</sup> Akira Iriye, *Global Community. The role of international organizations in the making of the contemporary world* (Los Angeles 2002).

<sup>13</sup> Iriye, *Global Community*, p. 209.

## 1. The EBN and the Council of Europe

The Second World War and the German occupation of the Netherlands made a profound and unforgettable impression on the Dutch population. It strengthened the perception of the value and importance of peace in the European continent and this notion stimulated the rise of European federalism. The earlier discussed Congress of Europe in The Hague served as the most important catalyst for the growing enthusiasm about the possibilities of international cooperation in the rebuilding process of the European continent.<sup>14</sup> The resolutions that were presented by the attendees of this congress were optimistic and maybe even idealistic, but they were nonetheless mostly absorbed by European policy-makers. Especially the adoption of the idea to establish a supranational Council of Europe, with a ‘European Assemblée’ and ‘Committee of Ministers’, in Strasbourg was revolutionary, as this meant the partial transfer of national sovereignty to an international institution.<sup>15</sup> In hindsight, this Council became a melting pot of European federalists, functionalists and intergovernmentalists, which functioned as the starting point for the development of ideas and plans on the European integration-process, for example, the creation of the European Community for Coal and Steel. But how did the Council of Europe develop and what were the views, the role and contributions of the EBN? This chapter will argue that the EBN considered its efforts to be important and influential, but it is, due to a lack of relevant sources, not possible to prove this claim.

The existing historiography has focussed on the role of personal views of influential politicians, such as Spaak and Churchill, in the establishment of the Council of Europe. De Bruin mentions the federalist views of Brugmans, Ruygers, Kohnstamm, etc., but he connects this to their social-democratic ideology. The fact that the strongest supporters of the Council were all members of the EBN, is hardly analysed.<sup>16</sup> The same goes for Segers, as he does not mention the role of EBN at all. According to him, it was the changing Dutch perception of the BRD that stimulated the Dutch participation in the Council.<sup>17</sup> This chapter is going to focus on the perception of EBN-views, strategies, and actions on the establishment of the Council.

The signing of the London Treaty for the creation of the Council of Europe by the twelve member-states<sup>18</sup> on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 1949, one year after the Congress of Europa, turned EBN’s post-congress enthusiasm into disappointment.<sup>19</sup> The planned division of capabilities between the European Assemblée and the Committee of Ministers led to frustration amongst EBN-

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<sup>14</sup> A.G. Harryvan, J. van der Harst en S. van Voorst (red.), *Voor Nederland en Europa. Politici en ambtenaren over het Nederlandse Europabeleid en de Europese integratie, 1945 – 1975*, ‘Interview met M.H.J.C. Rutten’ (Amsterdam 2001), p. 290 – 291.

<sup>15</sup> ‘European Movement. Creation of a European Political Authority’, p. 156a (October 16 1949), in ‘Europese Beweging in Nederland en haar voorgangers, 1946 – 1986’, inv. nr. 134, Nationaal Archief Den Haag.

<sup>16</sup> De Bruin, *Elastisch Europa. De integratie van Europa en de Nederlandse politiek, 1947 – 1968*, p. 124 – 127.

<sup>17</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, p. 61 – 66.

<sup>18</sup> The member-states of the Council of Europe were: Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, The Netherlands, Norway, Turkey, The United Kingdom, Iceland and Sweden.

<sup>19</sup> ‘De eerste zitting der Europese Assemblée te Straatsburg. 10 augustus 1949’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 15 (October 1949). In ‘Europese Beweging in Nederland en haar voorgangers, 1946 – 1986’ (from here on: EBN and predecessors), inv. nr. 310, Nationaal Archief Den Haag (from here on: NA).

members. Verkade, the editor of EBN's monthly newspaper *Nieuw Europa*, called it a *gekortwiekte assemblée*<sup>20</sup>, as he stated that every paragraph of the statute showed fear of some national governments that the first institution of the European Federal Democracy would become too powerful. The EBN and its international partners had pleaded for an Assemblée with 300 representatives, as they believed this would be the only way to achieve real representation of all religious, social and political factions. The number of representatives was, however, restricted to 100 with an additional 100 deputies.<sup>21</sup> For the Netherlands, the Assemblée-delegates were Van de Kieft (PvdA), Kerstens (KVP), Serrarens (KVP), Van der Goes van Naters (PvdA), Schmal (CHU) and Bruins Slot (ARP),<sup>22</sup> all members of the EBN.<sup>23</sup> On top of that, the Assemblée did not get the authority to determine its own agenda, because this privilege was given to the intergovernmental Committee, which did not accept discussions on political and military issues.

In response to the announced institutional limitations of the Assemblée, the European Movements launched a campaign to increase the responsibilities of the advisory branch of the Council of Europe, for example, authority on agenda-setting. According to EBN, its 'weapons' were: "formulating thoughts, offering policy-proposals, and asking governments and parliaments for their cooperation and support on all active terrains".<sup>24</sup> The EBN perceived these instruments effective, as it argued that "this strategy achieved a great deal".<sup>25</sup> Another EBN-tool was the organisation of mass-demonstrations, especially around the first Strasbourg meetings. On August 12<sup>th</sup>, a group of approximately 30.000 people attended a mass-rally at the Place Kléber in Strasbourg.<sup>26</sup> Prominent spokesmen, such as Paul Reynaud, Hendrik Brugmans, Stefano Jacini, Paul-Henri Spaak, and Winston Churchill, spoke in favour of European federalism and supported an increase of capabilities for the Assemblée. This strategy, in which influential and prominent politicians/statesmen publicly expressed their support for the federalist-cause, was a tool which would be used frequently by the EBN in the years to come. In this case, the efforts of the European Movement, which were described as a "staggering foal who kicked around with its hoofs" by the EBN<sup>27</sup>, resulted into an expansion of debatable topics in the Assemblée.<sup>28</sup> Military issues were, however, still not allowed on the agenda. The EBN considered it nonetheless a victory, because its efforts led to a slight increase of the Assemblée's

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<sup>20</sup> 'De eerste zitting der Europese Assemblée te Straatsburg. 10 augustus 1949', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 15 (October 1949), inv. nr. 310. Meaning: 'restricted assembly'.

<sup>21</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>22</sup> NREB, 'Europa onderweg. Een overzicht, een commentaar en enkele gegevens', p. 18 (June 1953). In 'EBN and predecessors', inv. nr. 1181, NA.

<sup>23</sup> 'Verenigd Europa en de praktische politiek. Verblijdende belangstelling', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 17 (April 1950). In 'EBN and predecessors', inv. nr. 310 NA.

<sup>24</sup> De Europese Beweging, *De Europese Beweging: Ontstaan, doel en werkwijze* (1954), p. 17. In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 1116, NA.

<sup>25</sup> De Europese Beweging, *De Europese Beweging: Ontstaan, doel en werkwijze* (1954), p. 17. In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 1116, NA.

<sup>26</sup> 'De eerste zitting der Europese Assemblée te Straatsburg. 10 augustus 1949', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 15 (October 1949), inv. nr. 310.

<sup>27</sup> 'De eerste zitting der Europese Assemblee te Straatsburg'.

<sup>28</sup> 'European Movement (EBN). Creation of a European Political Authority', confidential report of October 16 1949, p. 156. In 'EBN and predecessors', inv. nr. 134, NA.

capabilities and because of the fact that the ‘first European Parliament’ showed it would not accept a minor and restricted role, which emphasised the persistent character of the Movement.<sup>29</sup> The Dutch government, however, did not discuss the EBN-campaign in its weekly meetings<sup>30</sup>, nor did minister of foreign affairs Dirk Stikker in his policy-coordination memoranda to the secretary-generals of foreign affairs (Snouck Hurgronje and Boon).<sup>31</sup>

### 1.1 *Different perspectives in the Assemblée & Committee*

When the agenda of the Assemblée was finally drawn up, the representatives of ‘the twelve’ could start their first debates on the future of Europe and federalism. There was a clear and strong division within the Assemblée between federalists, such as Brugmans (EBN), functionalists, and intergovernmentalists. European federalism believed in the urgency of political- and economic integration because political cooperation and unity were considered the only way to protect Western-Europe from the communist threat of the Soviet-Union. Another motive was the idea that European countries would never be able to restore their pre-war economic wealth and power on their own.<sup>32</sup> An economic union would, however, make the prospected common market larger than the American and Soviet market. According to European federalists, it was crucial that political integration would occur at the same time and pace as economic and military integration.<sup>33</sup> They also argued that the integration-process should finish in 1952, as this was the last year of the Marshall Plan which would lead to an ‘economic collapse’<sup>34</sup> if Europe would not be united by then. Due to the uncertainty about which countries would participate to what extent, it was “not possible to attempt to decide what precise constitutional form will be most appropriate for this political institution”.<sup>35</sup> If countries would agree “to merge some portion of their sovereignty, the following two-chamber legislature and executive body will be possible:

- a. A Chamber of Representatives, elected by popular suffrage on a population basis;
- b. A Chamber of States or Senate, whose members would be nominated either by national parliaments or governments, each State having equal representation;
- c. An Executive Council, responsible to and dependent upon the confidence of the two Chambers”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>30</sup> ‘Notulen van de vergaderingen van de Raad van Ministers’ (1948 – 1949). In ‘Ministerraad’, inv. nrs. 390 – 393, NA.

<sup>31</sup> ‘Aantekeningen, notities en memoranda van D.U. Stikker’ (1948 – 1950). In ‘Buitenlandse Zaken / Code-Archief 45 – 54’, inv. nr. 27339, NA.

<sup>32</sup> ‘Het Europees Federalisme’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 15 (October 1949), inv. nr. 310.

<sup>33</sup> ‘Het Europees Federalisme’.

<sup>34</sup> Hendrik Brugmans, ‘Het politieke debat te Straatsburg’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 15 (October 1949), inv. nr. 310.

<sup>35</sup> Brugmans, ‘Het politieke debat te Straatsburg’.

<sup>36</sup> European Movement, ‘Creation of a European Political Authority’ (16 October 1949). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 134, NA.

The European functionalists, on the other hand, had a more ‘realistic’ view and approach to European integration.<sup>37</sup> They believed in the value and importance of integration as well, but they considered a ‘sectorial-approach’ to be more effective, which meant the gradual integration of one sector at a time.<sup>38</sup> Brugmans, who was considered the intellectual father of federalism, described functionalism as “federalists who like to postpone”.<sup>39</sup> The intergovernmentalists were in favour of European cooperation as well, but they were against the transfer of sovereignty from a national to a supranational level.

Although the differences within the Assemblée complicated the discussions about the future of Europe, it was the federalists who could present their ideas and views on the organisation of the Assemblée first, because they had the most developed proposal.<sup>40</sup> The federalist representatives, such as the EBN-members Brugmans and Serrarens, wanted “a limited amount of competences for the European authority on areas where countries are already losing their independence, such as defence and economy”.<sup>41</sup> These sectors were considered essential as well, because “if we want to make Europe, we must also be willing to defend it; and in the long run it is unacceptable that the vital question of the defence of Europe should be dealt with anonymously”.<sup>42</sup> Another motivation was EBN’s conviction that a defence community would strengthen Europe’s position within the North Atlantic Pact.<sup>43</sup> The Committee of Ministers would get decision-making power and the permanent Assemblée, which would be chosen directly through European elections and would serve as a counselling and regulatory parliament.<sup>44</sup> Federalists believed that this first institutional proposal could be the starting point for further integration towards a federal Europe.<sup>45</sup>

Even though the ideological differences amongst the Assemblée-members seemed hard to overcome, the discussions resulted in an Assemblée-resolution which proclaimed that “its aim and goal is the creation of a European Political Authority with limited functions but real powers”.<sup>46</sup> There was still uncertainty about the constitution of this political authority, but the EBN and the Assemblée considered this matter of less importance, as the current structure (with an Assemblée and a Committee) sufficed as “an admirable starting point as well as a firm

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<sup>37</sup> Guido Thiemeyer, ‘Supranationalität als Novum in der Geschichte der internationalen Politik der fünfziger Jahre’, *Journal of European Integration History* vol. 4, no. 2 (1998), pp. 5 – 23, p. 6 – 7.

<sup>38</sup> Dirk U. Stikker, *Memoires. Herinneringen uit de lange jaren waarin ik betrokken was bij de voortdurende wereldcrisis* (Den Haag 1966), p. 167.

<sup>39</sup> Brugmans, ‘Het politieke debat te Straatsburg’.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>41</sup> Brugmans, ‘Het politieke debat te Straatsburg’.

<sup>42</sup> H.R. Nord, ‘Report on a European Federal Pact’ p. 2, (13-10-1949). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 18, NA.

<sup>43</sup> Nord, ‘Report on a European Federal Pact’ p. 2

<sup>44</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>46</sup> ‘European Movement (EBN). Creation of a European Political Authority’, confidential report of October 16 1949, p. 156. In ‘EBN and predecessors’, inv. nr. 134, NA.

foundation upon which to build”.<sup>47</sup> The Assemblée did agree on the idea that, for the time being, it would remain an advisory institution for the Committee of Ministers.

The outcome resulted in enthusiastic responses from the EBN, as they thought that their ideas functioned as base/starting point of the resolutions of the Assemblée. Siewert Bruins Slot, EBN-member and ARP-politician, stated in December 1949: “the result of Strasbourg exceeded my expectations. This parliament, which had to perform under adverse circumstances and still produced such an outcome, has proven its value”.<sup>48</sup> Brugmans was pleased with the outcome as well and he considered the role of the Movement crucial. In the EBN-newspaper *Nieuw Europa*, he stated: “there would not have been Strasbourg without the European Movement”<sup>49</sup>, which is debatable, but it is true the EBN provided the first draft for the Assemblée-resolution and that most of it was used. Also, the president of the European Movement International, Paul-Henri Spaak, was delighted with the progress that Europe made since the Congress of Europe in May 1948. At one of the Movement’s gatherings, he said: “You know that I am a socialist, but the only concession that I am willing to make to liberalism, is acknowledging that the establishment of this Assemblée is, in fact, a triumph for the private initiative”.<sup>50</sup> The federalists expected the resolution to be the starting point for further and deeper integration. The propagandistic enthusiasm was, however, understandable and naïve at the same time, because the Assemblée’s resolution still had to be ratified by the Committee of Ministers. It was up to this intergovernmental institution, which would gather from 3 to 5 November 1949 in Paris, to decide.

## 1.2 EBN, Drees & Stikker

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1949, the ‘Nieuwe Rotterdamse Courant’ opened its front page with the headline “Straatsburg is vergeefs geweest”.<sup>51</sup> The earlier discussed EBN-enthusiasm turned out to be premature, as the introduction of a European passport was the only proposal that had been accepted by the Committee of Ministers. The ideas about the economic union and a European statute for human rights were both delegated and postponed and the Assemblée did not get its desired expansion of capabilities either.<sup>52</sup> The differences between the idealistic federalists and the ‘natural conservatism of the governments’ turned out to be too big.<sup>53</sup> Amongst the EBN,

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<sup>47</sup> ‘European Movement (EBN). Creation of a European Political Authority’, confidential report of October 16 1949, p. 157.

<sup>48</sup> ‘Verenigd Europa en de partijen’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 16 (March 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>49</sup> H. Brugmans, ‘De rol der Europese Beweging en de perspectieven’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 15 (October 1949). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 310, NA.

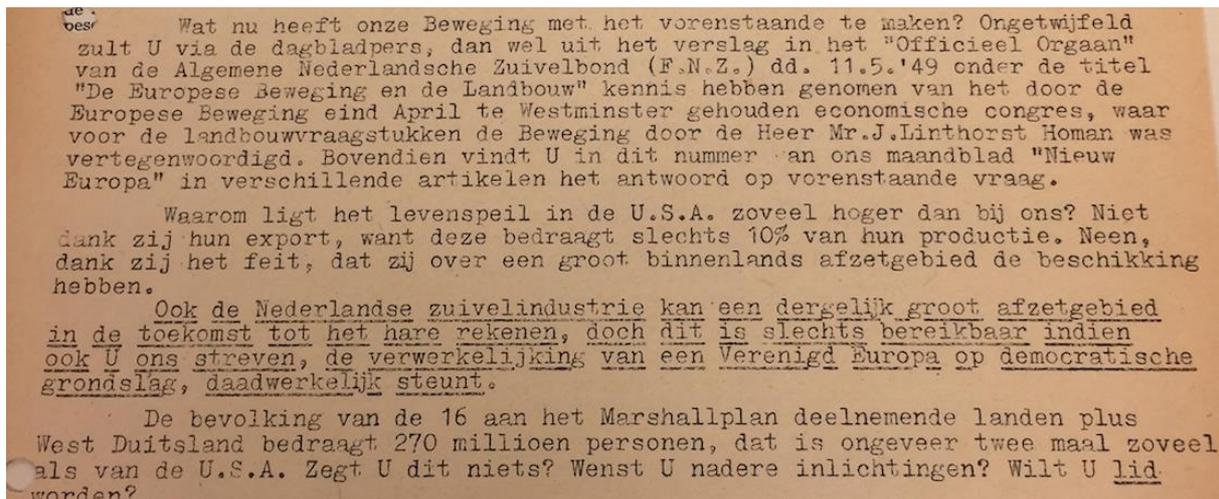
<sup>50</sup> ‘De rol der Europese Beweging en de perspectieven’.

<sup>51</sup> ‘Het krabbende anker. Straatsburg, Parijs en de Tweede Kamer’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 16 (March 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. 311, NA.

<sup>52</sup> ‘Gunstige kans voor Europees paspoort’, in *Algemeen Handelsblad*, (7 November 1949). Delpher, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl)

<sup>53</sup> Charles Rutten, *Aan de wieg van Europa en andere Buitenlandse Zaken. Herinneringen van een diplomaat* (Amsterdam 2005), p. 27.

“the Committee’s decision has led to disappointment”<sup>54</sup> because the Committee had crushed their federalist dream and also because the next Strasbourg-gathering was scheduled ten months from then. The Assemblée rejected the Committee’s decision and drafted a letter that accused the European ministers of foreign affairs (Committee) of obstructing the process of European integration.<sup>55</sup> Another reason for EBN’s disappointment was the fact that the Movement was not as influential as it expected. This was also indicated by the lack of progress in economic cooperation and integration, the continuing presence of nationalism within Europe and the unsatisfying results of mass-propaganda.<sup>56</sup> An example of this public pressure is an EBN-letter to the Dutch dairy-industry which emphasises the potential benefits of a common European market for this industry (part of this letter is displayed below).



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besr

Wat nu heeft onze Beweging met het vorenstaande te maken? Ongetwijfeld zult U via de dagbladders, dan wel uit het verslag in het "Officieel Orgaan" van de Algemene Nederlandsche Zuivelbond (F.N.Z.) dd. 11.5.'49 onder de titel "De Europese Beweging en de Landbouw" kennis hebben genomen van het door de Europese Beweging eind April te Westminster gehouden economische congres, waar voor de landbouwvraagstukken de Beweging door de Heer Mr. J. Linthorst Homan was vertegenwoordigd. Bovendien vindt U in dit nummer van ons maandblad "Nieuw Europa" in verschillende artikelen het antwoord op vorenstaande vraag.

Waarom ligt het levenspeil in de U.S.A. zoveel hoger dan bij ons? Niet dank zij hun export, want deze bedraagt slechts 10% van hun productie. Neen, dank zij het feit, dat zij over een groot binnenlands afzetgebied de beschikking hebben.

Ook de Nederlandse zuivelindustrie kan een dergelijk groot afzetgebied in de toekomst tot het hare rekenen, doch dit is slechts bereikbaar indien ook U ons streven, de verwerkelijking van een Verenigd Europa op democratische grondslag, daadwerkelijk steunt.

De bevolking van de 16 aan het Marshallplan deelnemende landen plus West Duitsland bedraagt 270 miljoen personen, dat is ongeveer twee maal zoveel als van de U.S.A. Zegt U dit niets? Wenst U nadere inlichtingen? Wilt U lid worden?

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Another type of propaganda was the organisation of ‘European nights’ about (the benefits of) European federalism throughout the Netherlands. These events were aimed at teaching people about Europe and getting support for the federalist cause, these were considered “grand propaganda nights”.<sup>58</sup> The EBN also spread flyers at high schools to create a European conscience amongst the youth.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> ‘Het krabbende anker. Straatsburg, Parijs en de Tweede Kamer’.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Raad van Europa innerlijk verdeeld. Vaste commissie contra comité van ministers’, in *De Tijd: godsdienstig-staatkundig dagblad*, (9 November 1949). Delpher, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl)

<sup>56</sup> ‘Politiek verslag over de periode april 1949 – april 1950. Beweging van Europese Federalisten’, p. 6 – 9 (June 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 19, NA.

<sup>57</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ‘Oproep aan de Nederlandse Zuivelindustrie. De Nederlandse zuivelindustrie en haar toekomst’, (June 1949). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 18, NA.

<sup>58</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ‘Notulen van de vergadering van het hoofdbestuur’, (11 May 1949). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 18, NA.

<sup>59</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ‘Notulen van de vergadering van het hoofdbestuur’, (28 May 1949). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 18, NA.

The outcome of the Committee's gathering produced criticism from the Dutch parliament of minister Stikker as well.<sup>60</sup> Bruins Slot and Serrarens, KVP-leader and EBN-chairman, expressed their disappointment with the Committee's narrow-mindedness on European integration and they considered Stikker's personal views as alike.<sup>61</sup> Stikker himself denied this by arguing that in some aspects he was "not completely satisfied either"<sup>62</sup>, but that he was only one of twelve ministers in the Committee and, therefore, the criticism should not be aimed at him. Stikker also responded to the criticism by publishing a notable message in *Nieuw Europa* which called for patience. He wrote that the Netherlands wanted nothing more than European integration, but he considered it irresponsible to take "imprudent steps based on an ideological impulse".<sup>63</sup> In the same edition of *Nieuw Europa*, PM Drees wrote about the importance of European integration as well, but he solely focussed on the significance of economic integration, while EBN pushed for defence – and eventually political – integration as well.<sup>64</sup> This concentration fits into the existing views on Drees' political orientation, which was mainly focussed on economic cooperation and adverse to (political) supra-nationalism.<sup>65</sup> It is surprising that Stikker expressed himself in this way, because it does not correspond with the existing notion of his thoughts on European integration, since historians such as Segers and Skandar Nasra have described his views as 'Transatlantic and British-oriented'.<sup>66</sup> This image became apparent in an interview of the Dutch newspaper '*De Gooi- en Eemlander*' with Stikker in which he happily said to be satisfied with the results of Paris.<sup>67</sup> Additionally, Stikker wrote in his memoirs that he was not a federalist nor continental-oriented because he considered European unity and integration unrealistic as long as it would not fit into the world politics of the USA and the UK.<sup>68</sup> This comment was in contrast with his statement in the Dutch parliament on 18 October 1950, when he said: "I want to prioritise that I'm a federalist".<sup>69</sup> His Transatlantic focus was also visible during the minister council of August 17<sup>th</sup>, 1949, where Stikker stated that even though it was unclear how Europe (and the world) would develop in the following

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<sup>60</sup> 'Handelingen 8<sup>ste</sup> vergadering Tweede Kamer, 1950 – 1951, 18 oktober 1950' p. 179 – 181. [www.statengeneraaldigitaal.nl](http://www.statengeneraaldigitaal.nl)

<sup>61</sup> 'Het krabbende anker. Straatsburg, Parijs en de Tweede Kamer'.

<sup>62</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>63</sup> Message from Dutch minister of Foreign Affairs Stikker to the European Movement Nederland, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 16 (March 1950).

<sup>64</sup> Message from Dutch Prime-Minister Drees to the European Movement Nederland, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 16 (March 1950).

<sup>65</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, p. 7. And Berthold Rittberger, 'No integration without representation! European integration, parliamentary democracy, and two forgotten communities', in *Journal of European Public Policy* 13.8 (Dec. 2006), pp. 1211 – 1229, p. 1218 – 1219. And Jan-Willem Brouwer en Peter van der Heiden (red.), *Drees. Minister-president 1948 – 1958* (Den Haag 2005), p. 78.

<sup>66</sup> Skander Nasra and Mathieu Segers, 'Between Charlemagne and the Atlantis: Belgium and The Netherlands during the first stages of European Integration (1950 – 1966)', in *Journal of European Integration History* (2012), 18.2, pp. 183 – 206, p. 196.

<sup>67</sup> 'Minister Stikker tevreden over de Parijse resultaten: "Wij begrijpen elkaar steeds beter"', in *De Gooi- en Eemlander: nieuws- en advertentieblad*, (8 November 1949). Delfer, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl)

<sup>68</sup> Stikker, *Memoires. Herinneringen uit de lange jaren waarin ik betrokken was bij de voortdurende wereldcrisis*, p. 159.

<sup>69</sup> 'Handelingen 8<sup>ste</sup> vergadering Tweede Kamer, 1950 – 1951, 18 oktober 1950' p. 181. Original quote: "Ik wil graag vooropstellen dat ik federalist ben."

years, he suggested sticking to the Transatlantic-bloc.<sup>70</sup> Drees was not considered a strong supporter of continental Europe either, which would be emphasised by the appointment of Johan Beyen as minister of foreign affairs in 1952. PvdA-leader Van der Goes van Naters even labelled him as a “xenophobic anti-European”.<sup>71</sup> Why then, did Drees and Stikker present their views on European integration different to the EBN?

Even though Stikker and Drees were not strong supporters of political integration, they did recognise the importance of European economic cooperation and integration, especially because of the WW-II devastations and the loss of Indonesia.<sup>72</sup> Decolonisation led to the necessity of a thorough restructuring of the Dutch economy, as it lost one of its main trading ‘partners’. The only viable option was, according to Stikker, to aim for liberalisation of European trade and enlargement of the European market, based on an increased production.<sup>73</sup> Stikker was, however, sceptical towards the supranational ambitions of his French, German, Italian, Belgian and Luxembourg colleagues, because he considered them too impulsive and he was not willing to participate in the integration process without American approval and British participation.<sup>74</sup> On top of that, he believed, being the only Protestant, it was “not his place”<sup>75</sup> to take part in the talks of his Catholic colleagues that were supposed to end their long-lasting conflicts.<sup>76</sup> Stikker hardly mentions the role of the EBN in the development of his views on integration in his correspondence with other politicians in the years 1948 – 1950<sup>77</sup>, but he does recognise it at some point in his memoirs, where he stated that “their wide and open views on European issues have later been used to improve the well-being of Europe”.<sup>78</sup> Considering these circumstances, it is very likely that Stikker, as a realist-politician, perceived the EBN and its views on Europe as a useful institution for stimulating economic integration. Even though he did not share the EBN-thoughts on a European Federal Democracy, he did not want to be on their bad-side either, which could explain his message in *Nieuw Europa* after the Committee-meeting in Paris.

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<sup>70</sup> ‘Verslag van de vergadering, gehouden op woensdag 17 augustus 1949’, in ‘Notulen van de ministerraad 01-06-1949 – 24-08-1949’, inv. nr. 393, NA.

<sup>71</sup> ‘Interview met jhr. Mr. M. Van der Goes van Naters’, in ‘Voor Nederland en Europa. Politici en ambtenaren over het Nederlandse Europabeleid en de Europese integratie, 1945 – 1975’, p. 76.

<sup>72</sup> Stikker, *Memoires. Herinneringen uit de lange jaren waarin ik betrokken was bij de voortdurende wereldcrisis*, p. 147.

<sup>73</sup> Stikker, *Memoires*, p. 147.

<sup>74</sup> Stikker, *Memoires*, p. 158. And Segers, *Reis naar het continent* p. 79 – 80.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 159.

<sup>76</sup> J.L. Heldring, ‘De Nederlandse Buitenlandse Politiek na 1945’, in *Nederlandse buitenlandse politiek: heden en verleden* (Baarn 1978), p. 33.

<sup>77</sup> ‘Brieven en memoranda van Minister Stikker’, in ‘Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1945 – 1954’, inv. nrs. 27340 – 27343, NA.

<sup>78</sup> Stikker, *Memoires*, p. 150.

### *1.3 Conclusion*

In conclusion, we can state that the EBN provided European policy-makers with fresh ideas and proposals for an institutional setup of a European authority. The different methods it used to widen its views, i.e. offering policy-memoranda; organising seminars for educating the wider public, and organising mass-demonstrations, were perceived by EBN as crucial for the shaping of the Council of Europe. It is hard to verify this assumption, as policy-makers do not give complete insight into their decision-making process. What we can say, however, is that the initial proposals of the Movement, for example about the institutional structure of the Council of Europe, did function as a starting point for the final resolution. Additionally, policy-makers, such as Stikker and Drees, did put effort into explaining and justifying the course of events in European policy to the EBN, which is an indication of its perceived status and weight.

## 2. The European Coal and Steel Community

The disappointing Committee-meeting of November 1949 and the damaged relationship between the Assemblée and Committee resulted in the establishment of a commission that solely focussed on improving the cooperation between the Assemblée and the Committee towards the second Assemblée-meeting in August 1950.<sup>79</sup> In hindsight, this development was a turning point in early European integration, because in the following years (until 1953), the fast pace of European integration convinced EBN-members that a federal Europe was within reach.<sup>80</sup> This belief was illustrated by the EBN's fear for a loss of members because of a declining urgency of its activities.<sup>81</sup> These years were perceived as a *European drunkenness*<sup>82</sup> by politicians and Europeans, because of the growing demand for supranational federalism. Besides the establishment of the commission for improving cooperation within the Council, there was another development that sparked the rise of federalism in Europe: The Schuman Declaration and the following establishment of the first supranational European institution: The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). This chapter will focus on the perception of policy-makers and the EBN of Schuman's proposal and on the role of EBN in the changing Dutch policy on European (supranational) integration.

Existing historiography has explained these processes by focussing on the role of international developments. Historian Van der Pijl has argued that the ECSC was initiated by the USA as part of its Cold War-strategy.<sup>83</sup> Segers supported this notion by arguing that the Dutch government was not able to choose a different course than its continental 'partners', mainly because of its weak international position and because of American political pressure.<sup>84</sup> In contrast, Alan S. Milward has explained the origins of the ECSC with domestically derived, predominantly economic interests of Western-European states.<sup>85</sup> This chapter will compare these state-centred views with EBN's perception of its role and will argue that existing historiography incorrectly ignores the role of EBN, as this NGO provided ideas and insights that were partly used in actual policy-making.

On May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1950, the French foreign minister, Robert Schuman, presented a declaration which proposed the creation of a European Coal and Steel Community, whose members would pool coal and steel production. This revolutionary idea came as a complete surprise for all potential ECSC-members (the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, and Italy), except for the BRD, because Schuman had only discussed his ideas with Chancellor Adenauer.<sup>86</sup> The thought behind

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<sup>79</sup> 'De besluiten van Straatsburg', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 17 (April 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>80</sup> De Bruin, *Elastisch Europa. De integratie van Europa en de Nederlandse politiek, 1947 – 1968*, p. 72.

<sup>81</sup> De Bruin, *Elastisch Europa*, p. 72.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 16.

<sup>83</sup> K. Van der Pijl, *Een Amerikaans plan voor Europa. Achtergronden van het ontstaan van de EEG* (Amsterdam 1978), p. 136 – 137.

<sup>84</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, p. 76 – 80.

<sup>85</sup> A.S. Milward, *The Reconstruction of Western Europe 1945 – 51* (London 1984).

<sup>86</sup> Nasra and Segers, 'Between Charlemagne and the Atlantis', p. 185.

the supranational controlling and governing of the production and selling of coal and steel was that these two resources were the most important factors of modern warfare. A supranational control of coal and steel would restrict the capacity and production of the industrial *Ruhrgebiet*, this would take away some of the French fears for the 5<sup>th</sup> war with Germany in 100 years. The ECSC was also supposed to prevent an *Alleingang* of the BRD within Europe, which would be catastrophic for the European economy in general.<sup>87</sup> Adenauer was enthusiastic about Schuman's proposal because he was mainly focussed on re-integrating the BRD within Europe. Additionally, was *Der Alte* convinced of the importance of a European cooperation based on Christian-democratic values, the opportunity the ECSC gave him was therefore considered a blessing.<sup>88</sup> Adenauer's realist notion that *Europapolitik* was the only way "überhaupt wieder in die Außenpolitik zu kommen"<sup>89</sup> (because it could lead to recognition of the BRD and equal treatment under international law), stimulated the European process towards the first supranational institution.

The supranational character of the ECSC created problems in the Netherlands, where this idea still activated fears of Drees and Stikker for a Catholic dominance in Europe. Other concerns of Stikker were the absence of Great-Brittain and whether the ECSC would have an effect on the general price-level and social situation in the Netherlands.<sup>90</sup> For Drees, on the other hand, a key-condition was an expansion of the Committee of Minister's capabilities to ECSC-level.<sup>91</sup> But what were the views of the EBN on Schuman's proposal? What did the EBN do to influence the course of events and how was this perceived?

## 2.1 *The EBN and the Schuman Plan*

The Schuman Declaration did not encompass all fields of integration that were desired by the EBN, but it nevertheless caused happiness amongst federalists.<sup>92</sup> The main reasons for this were:

1. It was perceived as a functionalist starting point which would undeniably lead to further (political) integration because the EBN considered economic unity ineffective and even impossible without political integration.<sup>93</sup>
2. The EBN realised that its federalist ideals were unlikely to be adopted and, therefore, it settled for this 'light-version'.<sup>94</sup>
3. Another reason for EBN's enthusiasm about the declaration was that "similar recommendations have been given by the EBN on several occasions in the past,

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<sup>87</sup> Guido Thiemeyer, 'Supranationalität als Novum in der Geschichte der internationalen Politik der fünfziger Jahre', p. 11.

<sup>88</sup> Thiemeyer, 'Supranationalität', p. 12.

<sup>89</sup> Thiemeyer, 'Supranationalität', p. 13.

<sup>90</sup> Stikker, *Memoires*, p. 163.

<sup>91</sup> Nasra and Segers, 'Between Charlemagne and the Atlantis', p. 188 – 189.

<sup>92</sup> Alfred Mozer, 'Träumerei van Schuman?', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 19 (June 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>93</sup> 'Resoluties A en C', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 20 (July 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>94</sup> H.R. Nord, 'Program van Actie voor 1951. Beweging van Europese Federalisten' (19 February 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 20.

especially at its congresses of The Hague, Brussels, and Westminster, for the sake of speeding up the process towards economic unity in Europe”.<sup>95</sup> This is partly true, as the Congress of 1948 did propose a united Europe with free movement of people and goods. Additionally, the European Economic Conference of Westminster (April 1949) suggested a pooling of resources and a common market as well<sup>96</sup>, but the appointment of a United Nations representative and the federalist motives behind the idea had not been laid out before.

4. EBN had one important amendment to Schuman’s proposal: “surveillance of the new controlling-unit has to be executed by the Assemblée, which will get the necessary capacities for this”.<sup>97</sup>

What does this perception tell us about the role of the EBN in the process towards the (ratification of the) ECSC in general? How did policy-makers perceive the EBN and how did EBN-members consider their own role in this matter?

The EBN was aware of the negative attitude of Stikker and Drees towards the Schuman Declaration and, therefore, their own activities were considered crucial for the ratification process of the ECSC. Brugmans proposed to focus all activities of the practical sub-organisation (BEF) of the EBN on implementing the Schuman Declaration.<sup>98</sup> The main reason for Brugmans’ proposal was the fact that the Declaration stated twice it would “immediately provide for the setting up of a common foundation for economic development as a first step in the federation of Europe”<sup>99</sup>, which corresponded with the adjusted EBN-views. Marga Klompé, prominent EBN-member and KVP-politician, dramatically emphasised the importance of the ECSC as well. She stated Europe had a few months, maximum half a year left for the ratification of the ECSC.<sup>100</sup> If Europe would succeed in taking the first step towards European unity, everything could ‘still end well’. If, however, Europe would “also fail to take this chance, there would not be any hope left for this part of the world”.<sup>101</sup> Convincing the people and media of the importance and benefits of the ECSC was seen by the EBN as an essential step in the ratification process.<sup>102</sup> Dramatizing the potential effects of a policy that did not comply with the EBN-views, like Klompé did in the article mentioned above, was a vital part of this strategy.

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<sup>95</sup> ‘Resolutie’, in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 20 (July 1950).

<sup>96</sup> European Movement, ‘European Economic Conference of Westminster, April 20th – 25th, 1949. General account and resolutions’. In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 134, NA.

<sup>97</sup> ‘Resolutie’, in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 20 (July 1950).

<sup>98</sup> ‘Verslag der Hoofdbestuurvergadering van de Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ’s-Gravenhage’ (7 June 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 19, NA.

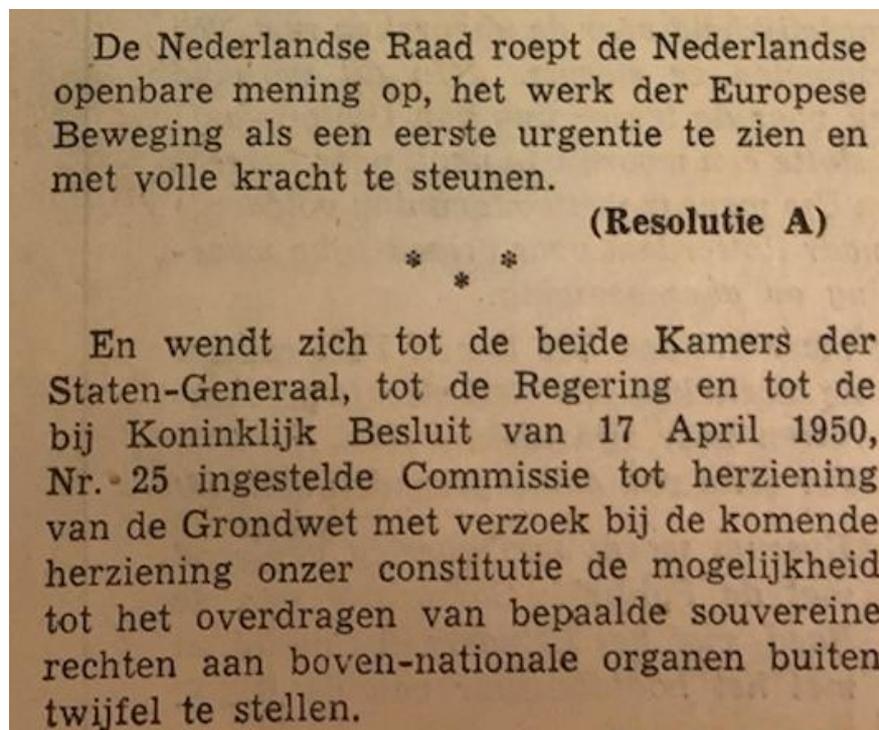
<sup>99</sup> Robert Schuman, ‘The Schuman Declaration – 9 May 1950’, European Union, [https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration\\_en](https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/symbols/europe-day/schuman-declaration_en)

<sup>100</sup> Hoofdschotel in Straatsburg ditmaal het Plan-Schuman. Een alleszins geschikte eerste steen voor de opbouw van het nieuwe Europa?, in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 20 (July 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>101</sup> ‘Hoofdschotel in Straatsburg ditmaal het Plan-Schuman. Een alleszins geschikte eerste steen voor de opbouw van het nieuwe Europa?’.

<sup>102</sup> C. van Rij, ‘Brief aan de leden van het Uitvoerend Comité van de Beweging’ (31 October 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 19, NA.

On the other hand, mass-propaganda was, however, no longer considered effective enough. Therefore, the EBN started focussing on directly influencing politicians<sup>103</sup> and other influential economic and political organisations.<sup>104</sup> This can be illustrated by an interview with Van den Beugel, who became secretary of foreign affairs in 1956. He stated that the influential EBN-members Mansholt, Klompé, and Samkalden were “for me in my work – and for the old gentleman Drees – very inconvenient people”<sup>105</sup> because any time that Drees or he did not agree with an EBN-proposal, ECSC-president Jean Monnet would use his close American contacts to influence the Dutch-position. This anecdote also supports Van der Pijl’s and Seger’s argument that the USA was a crucial factor in the integration-process, but it adds an EBN-layer. Another propaganda-strategy was the shaping of public opinion by educating people through seminars and other informing events or by publishing resolutions in support of federalist causes, an example of this is illustrated below.<sup>106</sup>



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<sup>103</sup> C. van Rij, ‘Schrijven aan de Hoofdbesturen der politieke partijen’ (July 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’. Inv. nr. 19, NA. In this letter, chairman Van Rij asks all political parties to adopt the importance of European Unity and federalism in their party-programmes.

<sup>104</sup> ‘Aan de afdelingsbesturen der Beweging van Europese Federalisten’ (June 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 19, NA.

<sup>105</sup> ‘Interview met dr. E.H. van der Beugel’, in A.G. Harryvan, J. Van der Harst and S. Van Voorst (red.), *Voor Nederland en Europa. Politici en ambtenaren over het Nederlandse Europabeleid en de Europese integratie, 1945 – 1975* (Amsterdam 2001), p. 51 – 52.

<sup>106</sup> H.R. Nord, ‘Program van Actie voor 1951. Beweging van Europese Federalisten’ (19 February 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 20, NA.

<sup>107</sup> ‘Resoluties A en C’, in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 19 (June 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 311, NA.

In the Dutch minister council, there was not much discussion about the ECSC, nor about the EBN, which indicates the lack of interest of the Dutch government in the Schuman plan until 1951.<sup>108</sup> What we can say about EBN's role is that it provided Europe (Schuman) with idealist institutional ideas, of which some returned to Schuman's proposal (i.e. economic union, pooling of resources and the exclusion of the UK). Another result of EBN-activities was, according to historian Jieskje Hollander, that the EBN dominated the field of publications and the public debate about Europe throughout the 1950s.<sup>109</sup> She states: "even critics were in favour of the movement towards a United Europe", as she argues that "although the practical elaborations led to discussion, there was no difference of opinion about the great end in view".<sup>110</sup> This argument is partly true, because even functionalists and intergovernmentalists aimed for a United Europe. There was, however, structural opposition from the Dutch Communist Party, which was illustrated by the voting for ratification of the Paris Treaty for establishing the ECSC in the Dutch parliament on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 1951: the communists were the only ones who rejected the proposal.<sup>111</sup>

The EBN itself considered its efforts as crucial in widening federalism, the general process towards European integration, and for Schuman's Declaration. In EBN's political report (April 1950 – April 1951), it concluded: "in general we can state that federalism has widened in our country amongst political parties, public- and cultural organisations, and parts of the media. The BEF has unquestionably contributed to this cause".<sup>112</sup> Another indication was an article in *Nieuw Europa* in which Geert Ruygers (vice-chairman of PvdA) argued that Schuman had acknowledged he got the idea for his plan because of an Assemblée debate in which federalists pleaded for economic supranational integration.<sup>113</sup> Ruygers repeated this statement two months later and concluded: "this is proof that public initiatives, developed in Strasbourg, do have an influence on the course of events".<sup>114</sup> Although it is true that these comments were exaggerated out of propagandistic motives (Ruygers was a federalist), the EBN-members were still convinced of the importance and effectiveness of their actions. This group of political elites considered themselves as the only ones who knew what was right for the future of the European continent, which explains the structural labeling of 'conservative' politicians as short-sighted and scared. In their minds, the course of events and the eventual policy were based on initial EBN-ideas that were widened through the efforts of EBN-members

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<sup>108</sup> 'Notulen van de vergaderingen van de Raad van Ministers' (1950 – 1951). In 'Notulen van de ministerraad', inv. nrs. 394 – 395, NA.

<sup>109</sup> Jieskje Hollander, 'The Dutch Intellectual Debate on European Integration (1948 – present). On Teachings and Life', *Journal of European Integration History* 17.2 (2011), pp. 197 – 218, p. 200.

<sup>110</sup> Hollander, 'The Dutch Intellectual Debate on European Integration (1948 – present)', p. 203.

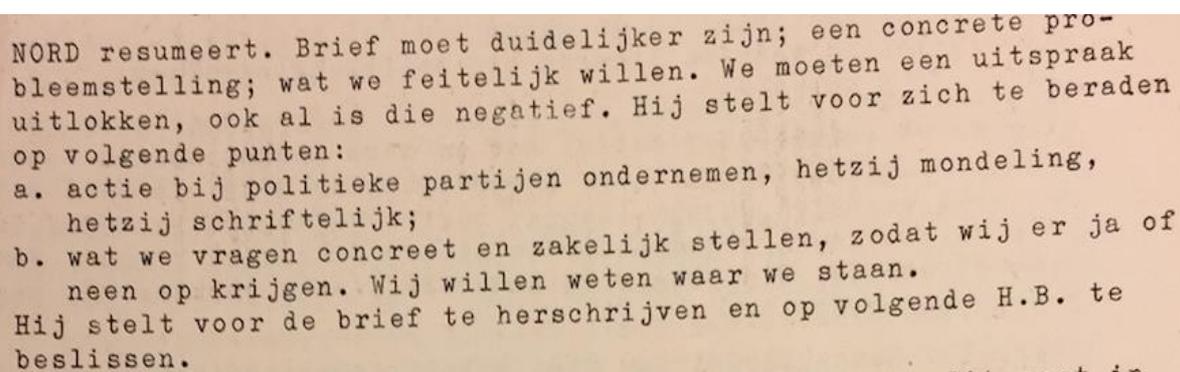
<sup>111</sup> 'Wetsontwerp 2228 bij de Kamer ingediend', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 4.11 (November 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 312, NA.

<sup>112</sup> 'Politiek verslag over de periode april 1950 – april 1951' (16 February 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 20, NA.

<sup>113</sup> Geert Ruygers, 'Excessieve critiek', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 22/23 (September/October 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>114</sup> Geert Ruygers, 'Defensiedebat in Straatsburg', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 25 (December 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

within their political parties.<sup>115</sup> The minutes of the EBN-board meeting below, in which writing politicians is discussed, illustrate the strategy and ideas of the EBN:



NORD resumeert. Brief moet duidelijker zijn; een concrete pro-  
bleemstelling; wat we feitelijk willen. We moeten een uitspraak  
uitlokken, ook al is die negatief. Hij stelt voor zich te beraden  
op volgende punten:  
a. actie bij politieke partijen ondernemen, hetzij mondeling,  
hetzij schriftelijk;  
b. wat we vragen concreet en zakelijk stellen, zodat wij er ja of  
neen op krijgen. Wij willen weten waar we staan.  
Hij stelt voor de brief te herschrijven en op volgende H.B. te  
beslissen.

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The signing of the Treaty of Paris on 18 April 1951 and the French plans for a European Defence Community (chapter 3) supported EBN's perception of its own importance.<sup>117</sup> Hollander considered this belief idealistic and unrealistic because she argued that the federalists were silent on possible obstacles, such as gaining wide public support, transfers of sovereignty or the question whether economic integration without political integration was possible at all.<sup>118</sup> This argument needs, however, refinement. It is true the EBN had idealistic views, but its members were mostly experienced politicians who understood how politics work and, therefore, they did recognise the potential complications along the process towards a federalist Europe. In the first years after the Congress of Europe, EBN repeatedly emphasised the importance of simultaneous political and economic integration.<sup>119</sup> This conviction changed, however, after another disappointing outcome of the Committee of Ministers (November 1950). Of all people, it was the 'father of federalism' (Brugmans) who realised that the federalist formula was not realistic for that moment and he argued the EBN should look for a compromise, even if that would mean a functionalist or sectorial approach.<sup>120</sup> The EBN was also constantly working to gain public support, for example by the earlier mentioned seminars, mass-demonstrations, and other forms of propaganda in order to inform "every housewife in Europe, how many more groceries she could buy and how much more stable and secure her- and her kids' lives could be".<sup>121</sup> These statements illustrate the flexibility and professionalism of the EBN, which does not correspond with the underestimating image Hollander created.

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<sup>115</sup> 'Notulen van Vergadering van het hoofdbestuur van de Beweging van Europese Federalisten' (11 July 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 20, NA.

<sup>116</sup> 'Notulen van Vergadering van het hoofdbestuur van de Beweging van Europese Federalisten' (11 July 1951).

<sup>117</sup> Hollander, 'The Dutch Intellectual Debate on European Integration (1948 – present)', p. 201 – 202.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 202.

<sup>119</sup> Alfred Mozer, 'Wat nu, kleine man?', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 14 (July 1949). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 310, NA. And 'Resoluties A en C', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 19 (June 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>120</sup> H. Brugmans, 'Gemengde gevoelens', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 24 (November 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>121</sup> 'Rapport der 3 Nederlandse afgevaardigden naar de voorbereidende economische conferentie – Westminster, London, 6 en 7 januari 1949'. In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 134, NA.

## 2.2 Dutch policy towards the ECSC

Stikker and Drees were initially unenthusiastic about the idea of a supranational institution for coal and steel. This attitude, however, changed within a year, as the Dutch signed the Treaty of Paris for establishing the ECSC on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 1951. Besides the earlier mentioned economic motives of both politicians, they also adopted other reasons for legitimising their decisions. According to the Dutch historians A.G. Harryvan, J. van der Harst and S. van Voorst (red.), diplomatic pressure and the personalities of the responsible Dutch politicians and government officials were of great importance as well. How does this relate to the historiography and the EBN-perception of its role in this development?

Harryvan et al. argue that Dutch foreign policy was initially (until the early 1950s) very reserved – even averse – towards initiatives aimed at political cooperation and integration in Europe.<sup>122</sup> Economic factors played, as mentioned above, an important role in developing Dutch policy. Mathieu Segers explained this by arguing that the Dutch government simply used *Realpolitik* because international circumstances did not leave the Dutch ‘a choice’ in setting their European-course.<sup>123</sup> Harryvan et al. argue, however, that the personal views of the new minister of foreign affairs, Johan-Willem Beyen (1952 – 1956), was the crucial factor in changing the Dutch views on political European integration and supra-nationalism.<sup>124</sup> They also mention the role of European federal idealism, but they consider its role relatively small.

The described strategies of the EBN, such as propaganda and presenting policy-proposals, were still visible after the signing of the Paris Treaty in April 1951. EBN considered this necessary because of the low pace of actual ratification<sup>125</sup> and this was a valid concern, because in the minister council five days after the Paris Treaty, Drees stated he did not have high expectations of the ECSC, because of division and complications within the French government.<sup>126</sup> Stikker, on the other hand, was more supportive of the ratification process. This was illustrated by his concerns he expressed to Drees and Van Lennep (ministry of finance) that the absence of a European payment-system was a serious threat for the ECSC and for the process of European integration as a whole.<sup>127</sup> He argued he wanted to gain American support for this institution in order to establish the ECSC. Another indication of Stikker’s view was his ‘memorie van antwoord’ to the *Eerste Kamer* about the Schuman Plan in January 1952. He explains the importance of the ECSC by stating that it could be the first step towards a united Europa which would guarantee peace, even if that would be without the UK.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Harryvan et al., *Voor Nederland en Europa*, p. 18.

<sup>123</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, p. 82- 83.

<sup>124</sup> Harryvan et al., *Voor Nederland en Europa*, p. 20.

<sup>125</sup> ‘Verslag van de vergadering van het Bureau Executief van de UEF (overkoepelende organisatie BEF) te Straatsburg’, (25 November 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 20, NA.

<sup>126</sup> ‘Notulen van de vergadering van de Raad van Ministers’ (23-04-1951). In ‘Notulen van de ministerraad’, inv. nr. 395, NA.

<sup>127</sup> ‘Memorandum van D.U. Stikker aan Minister-President en Jhr. v. Lennep (Fin.)’ (28 April 1952). In ‘Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1945 – 1954’, inv. nr. 27340, NA.

<sup>128</sup> ‘Memorie van Antwoord aan de Eerste Kamer inzake het Plan Schuman’ (16 January 1952). In ‘Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1945 – 1954’, inv. nr. 27343, NA.

In contrast to the period 1950 – 1951, there are not as many sources that explain the changing Dutch policy shortly before the signing of the Paris Treaty towards the establishment of the ECSC in 1952. There is one article of Brugmans of September 1951 in which he proposes to speed-up the ratification process by continuing without the UK and Stikker wrote this in his response to the *Eerste Kamer*.<sup>129</sup> It is, however, unclear whether he copied it or whether it was his own view. What we can say about the perception of EBN-influence, is that Stikker told Schuman that the “federalist thought was very much alive in the Dutch parliament, more than in the government itself. Your surprising initiative has sparked the debate about sovereignty in the Netherlands”.<sup>130</sup> Stikker did, however, not mention the EBN as an important factor in stimulating public debates in the Netherlands during his meeting with Schuman.

### 2.3 Conclusion

In conclusion, we can state the EBN perceived its views and activities as crucial for the Schuman Declaration, the signing of the Paris Treaty, and for influencing the public debate about European integration as a whole. This perception was based on the belief that it continuously provided policy-makers with idealist ideas and institutional proposals, which partly returned in the eventual setup of the ECSC (i.e. the establishment of an economic union as starting point for further (supranational) integration; free movement of goods; pooling of resources; and the exclusion of the UK). Moreover, EBN attached great value to its members’ efforts to widen their views amongst political parties. Dutch policy-makers do not officially talk about what factors influence them, so you cannot determine how they perceived the EBN-actions around the establishment of the ECSC. This does not mean, however, that you can rule out EBN from this development. This notion is explained by Iriye’s *Global Community* as well, as he states that it is easy to explain the rise of globalisation and internationalism with large developments, such as the Cold War and decolonisation, but that does not mean that less-known and less-documented processes, i.e. the growing importance of NGOs, should be left out of the analysis either.<sup>131</sup> This argument does not reject the general explanations of Harryvan et al., Milward, Van der Pijl, and Segers either, but it can add depth to their analyses.

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<sup>129</sup> H. Brugmans, ‘De federalisten hebben gelijk gehad’, in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 4.9 (September 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 312, NA.

<sup>130</sup> ‘Notities van bespreking met Schuman’ (31 October 1951). In ‘Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1945 – 1954’, inv. nr. 27340, NA.

<sup>131</sup> Iriye, *Global Community*, p. 40 – 43.

### 3. The EBN and the European Defence Community

The *European drunkenness* was also illustrated by the proposal the French Premier René Pleven submitted to the Committee of Ministers on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 1950. Even before the potential ECSC-members had ratified the Schuman Plan, the French government presented the Pleven Plan for the establishment of another supranational institution: The European Defence Community (EDC). Pleven's proposal was the worked-out version of the proposition that Winston Churchill had done in the Assemblée in August 1950, which called for the establishment of a European army with a European minister of defence.<sup>132</sup> The French government followed-up his notion by developing the Pleven Plan to forge a European army (including the UK) under the supranational authority and submitting it to the Committee before it was even discussed in the French National Assembly. This had everything to do with the fact that French communists, socialists, and Gaullists all strongly opposed the transfer of power of the French army. Another motive for Pleven's proposal was the communist North-Korean invasion of South-Korea on 23 June 1950, which convinced the United States to start the rearmament of West-Germany in order to strengthen the Western-European defence.<sup>133</sup> The Pleven Plan was also considered as another way of containing the potential re-emerging threat of the BRD, as it would fuse the German capabilities with western Europe's.

The EBN considered the Pleven Plan essential for the European security against the growing threat of the communist East and as an important and promising step towards a federal Europe. There was, however, such a short time between the proposal itself and the postponement by the Committee of Ministers, which gathered from 3 – 5 November 1950, that the EBN could start its offensive almost immediately after Pleven's proposal.<sup>134</sup> Besides the fact that the Committee hardly considered the proposal, were the potential member-states not enthused either. The French parliament was not eager to transfer its military sovereignty; Adenauer experienced strong opposition from the social-democrats (SPD) and he already had American support for national rearmament; the British were opposed to any form of supra-nationalism, especially military; and the Dutch government was only willing to consider it if the UK would take part as well.<sup>135</sup> In other words: the EBN was facing its most complicated task since its foundation.

Even though the EDC was *one bridge too far* for the European countries at this moment, it still caused a lot of turmoil and movement in the European integration process. The debate about the plan initially got postponed, later on, it was re-opened, but the plan got eventually rejected for good in 1954. The EDC-process even sparked ideas for the establishment of a European Political Union (EPU), which makes Pleven's proposal and its aftermath worth studying. This chapter will focus on the developing views of the EBN and Dutch policy-makers on the EDC and what the EBN did to influence the course of events. After that, it will analyse how these actions were perceived by the EBN itself and by policy-makers.

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<sup>132</sup> Edmund Jan Ozmanczyk, *Encyclopedia of the United Nations and International Agreements*, Third edition, Volume 3: N-S (New York 2003), p. 1805.

<sup>133</sup> Charles Rutten, *Aan de wieg van Europa en andere Buitenlandse Zaken*, p. 19 – 20.

<sup>134</sup> A. Mozer, 'Het Europese Leger', in *Nieuw Europa*, no. 24 (November 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>135</sup> A. Mozer, 'Het Europese Leger'.

The existing historiography about the EDC and the Dutch participation often has a state-centred approach. As discussed in the first two chapters, historians as Segers, Nasra, Brouwer, Weenink, etc., all focus on the role of international developments, American influence, national party politics and the personal views of key-players in policy-making.<sup>136</sup> This chapter will add a non-state perspective to their analysis by focussing on the perception of the EBN-role in the EDC-process.

### 3.1 *EBN and the European army*

The first step of EBN's propaganda process was, as we have seen in their efforts concerning the ECSC, to express and widen its views on Pleven's proposal. A familiar medium was *Nieuw Europa* and almost the entire November-edition was used for explaining the situation and EBN's perspective. EBN considered national armies and defence as conservative and old-fashioned concepts, because there was no 'national security' anymore within the global conflict between the USA and the Soviet Union, as 'Western-Europe' was perceived as one zone by the superpowers.<sup>137</sup> The EBN-view on the EDC can also be illustrated by Brugmans' statement in an EBN-meeting: "Through propaganda, we have to make clear that Plan-Pleven is of the same importance as Plan-Schuman, also for France and Germany. The notion that armament is solely an American matter is false. We have to widen the view that Europe has to contribute and that we have to oppose the weak stand of our government".<sup>138</sup> It was, therefore, for EBN, not a matter of whether there should be a European army in the first place, but how this army would be organised and managed. The federalists supported Pleven's proposition that "a Minister of Defence would be appointed by the participating governments and would be responsible, under conditions to be determined, to those appointing him and to a European Assembly"<sup>139</sup> (or future European Parliament). Besides the obvious advantage that a common European army would be stronger than any national army in Europe, which would increase Western-European security, it would also rule out an ever-threatening inner-European war.<sup>140</sup> Another positive effect of the establishment of a European army would be the reduced European dependence on the USA. EBN-member Nord described the problems with over-dependence as follows: "It is obvious that the European security cannot depend too much on the state of mind in the United States.

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<sup>136</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, and De Bruin, *Elastisch Europa*, and W.H. Weenink, *Bankier van de Wereld, Bouwer van Europa: Johan Willem Beyen 1897 – 1976* (Amsterdam 2005), and Jan Willem Brouwer en Peter van der Heijden (Red.), *Drees. Minister-president 1948 – 1958* (Den Haag 2005), and Nasra and Segers, 'Between Charlemagne and the Atlantis'.

<sup>137</sup> J.C. van Broekhuizen, 'Het Europese leger', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 24 (November 1950). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>138</sup> 'Notulen van Vergadering van het hoofdbestuur van de Beweging van Europese Federalisten' (11 July 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 20, NA. Original quote: "Wij moeten in propaganda naar brengen, dat Plan-Pleven van even groot belang is als plan Schuman, zowel voor Frankrijk als Duitsland. Het is een fout standpunt, dat bewapening alleen een Amerikaanse Zaak is. Het argument moet naar voren komen, dat een belangrijke Europese bijdrage geleverd moet worden en met kracht moet ingegaan worden tegen de lauwe houding van onze regering."

<sup>139</sup> 'Text of the Pleven Plan' (24 October 1950), [www.fransamaltongvongeusau.com](http://www.fransamaltongvongeusau.com)

<sup>140</sup> <sup>140</sup> J.C. van Broekhuizen, 'Het Europese leger'.

When in the USA those who pled for reduced military support to Europe, would get the upper hand and Europe have to descend to its own (if existing) national armies, it would mean nothing less than a catastrophe.”<sup>141</sup> These thoughts, together with the earlier-described notion that the EDC could be a steppingstone to further integration, truly convinced the EBN of the importance of a European army.

In a letter to the *Leden der Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal* the EBN asked the support of Dutch parliament for the European army-initiatives. This message described the fear amongst the Dutch people as a result of the Soviet-threats that ‘jeopardise the lives of the people of the free world’<sup>142</sup> in order to strengthen its point. This notion is disputable, as there are no indications of wide public support for the EDC, which can be illustrated by a cartoon of *De Volkskrant* about the EDC of 28 October 1950 (image below).



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Other terms EBN frequently used to manipulate policy-makers were ‘wisdom’, ‘responsibility of the representatives’, and ‘trust’, which fits into the earlier described ‘dramatization-strategy’ of the EBN. The Movement considered its efforts important in changing the Dutch-policy

<sup>141</sup> H. Nord, ‘Een Europees Leger?’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 4.3 (March 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 312, NA. Original quote: “Het is duidelijk, dat de veiligheid van Western-Europa niet teveel afhankelijk mag zijn van de stemming in de Verenigde Staten. Wanneer diegenen, die in Amerika pleiten voor minder militaire steun aan Europa, de overhand zouden krijgen en Europa zou dan moeten terugvallen op zijn (al of niet bestaande) nationale strijdkrachten, zou dat niets minder dan een catastrophe betekenen”.

<sup>142</sup> Hoofdbestuur van de Nederlandse Raad der Europese Beweging, ‘Verzoek aan de Volksvertegenwoordiging’, published in *Nieuw Europa* no. 24 (November 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 311, NA.

<sup>143</sup> A. Mozer, ‘Het Europees Leger’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 24 (November 1950). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 311, NA.

towards this concept, partly because it was the sole organisation that actively pleaded for the EDC, but also because Drees and Stikker were initially very reserved towards supranationalism, especially if it would be without its Transatlantic partner (UK). Stikker expressed his opposition in the national parliament by stating that defence integration would not be possible without Europe's Atlantic partners, nor without political- and economic integration.<sup>144</sup> Drees' main objections, such as the absence of the UK and Scandinavia and the rearmament of West-Germany, were expressed in the minister council.<sup>145</sup> He also considered it 'unacceptable' that a supranational authority (European minister of defence) would decide how many and where Dutch soldiers would be deployed.<sup>146</sup>

Because of the division within the Dutch government (Stikker and Drees vs. Mansholt and Van den Brink<sup>147</sup>), the debates about the Dutch participation in the EDC resulted in a compromise: the Dutch government would send an observer, instead of a participant, to the international talks about the EDC in the first half of 1951. Even though Drees and Stikker were initially not enthusiastic about the idea at all, they still wanted to prevent to be surprised by the eventual outcome of the negotiations. For the EBN, it was hard to understand how a small continental country as the Netherlands could think that it could get away with its "more or less aery attitude"<sup>148</sup>, especially because all the Dutch Assemblée-members voted in favour of Churchill's proposal and, with that, for Pleven's plan.<sup>149</sup>

Besides publicly criticizing the Dutch decision and pleading for Dutch participation in the European talks, the EBN also tried to influence developments by classic lobbying. Klompé expressed her concerns to a senior official of the ministry of foreign affairs (I. Stuyt) by stating: "Because of its observing role, the Netherlands is less capable of positively influencing the course of events."<sup>150</sup> Stuyt informed Stikker about the EBN-pressure, but still advised him to stick to the chosen policy. First of all, because the situation in Europe was not considered ripe yet for defence-integration, as there was no political or economic integration yet either. And secondly, because the Dutch expected Belgium to drop-out as well, as Stuyt believed that they only participated to please France.<sup>151</sup> Until half October 1951, this view remained dominant within the Dutch government.<sup>152</sup> The EBN was disappointed with the results of its actions, because "the Dutch government has decided to withhold itself from supporting the plans in

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<sup>144</sup> 'Beknopt verslag eerste zitting en dagverhaal tweede zitting Raadgevende Vergadering Raad van Europa' (18 October 1951). In 'Handelingen Tweede Kamer 1950 – 1951', p. 182. [www.statengeneraaldigitaal.nl](http://www.statengeneraaldigitaal.nl)

<sup>145</sup> 'Notulen van de vergadering van de Raad van Ministers' (1-10-1951). In 'Notulen van de ministerraad', inv. nr. 395, NA.

<sup>146</sup> 'Notulen van de vergadering van de Raad van Ministers' (1-10-1951).

<sup>147</sup> Nasra and Segers, 'Between Charlemagne and the Atlantis', p. 188 – 189.

<sup>148</sup> Nord, 'Een Europees Leger?', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 4.3 (March 1951). Original quote: "min of meer onwezenlijke houding".

<sup>149</sup> 'Plan Pleven', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 4.9 (September 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 312, NA.

<sup>150</sup> 'Memorandum van Ir. Stuyt aan minister Stikker van buitenlandse zaken' (3 April 1951). In 'Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1949 – 1954', inv. nr. 27343, NA. Original quote: "door het waarnemerschap is Nederland minder goed in staat om de gang van zaken in gunstige zin te beïnvloeden".

<sup>151</sup> 'Memorandum van Ir. Stuyt aan minister Stikker van buitenlandse zaken' (3 April 1951).

<sup>152</sup> 'Notulen van de vergadering van de Raad van Ministers' (1-10-1951).

question”.<sup>153</sup> In the same resolution, however, it still pressed for a review of the Dutch position towards the EDC.<sup>154</sup>

### 3.2 Change in Dutch policy

On October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1951, the Dutch government confirmed its earlier decision by determining to send again an observer to the European negotiations about a European army, which was widely discussed in the Dutch newspapers in the following week.<sup>155</sup> This made it even more surprising and noteworthy that a few days later, the Dutch government announced it would participate in the future negotiations after all. This policy-change was communicated by the government through a message addressed to the population, which stated that it would send a representative (Van Vredenburg) to the European army talks in Paris.<sup>156</sup> An explanation for the sudden change of course was, however, not given. Later that month, Schuman complimented the Netherlands for its changing view on the European army and used it as an example how European unity and federalism could overcome scepticism.<sup>157</sup> The decision led to mixed responses from the EBN. On the one hand, it resulted in happiness, as the EBN had been campaigning and lobbying for this cause since November 1950. On the other hand, however, was EBN very critical towards the alternating and unclear governmental policy, because the sudden shift illustrated “the lack of political vision” and insinuated “that this decision has been taken ‘der Not gehorchend, nicht dem eigenen Triebe’”.<sup>158</sup> But what caused this sudden change in policy? How did it develop? And how did the EBN perceive its own role in this process?

Because of the lack of explanatory governmental sources about the decision-making process, it is hard to decide what the most important motive was for the sudden policy-change of the Dutch government. There are, however, multiple developments that could help us understand this shift better. The first and most obvious aspect was the fact that ‘the five’ negotiating parties presented their first draft for the establishment of an EDC in June 1951.<sup>159</sup> Stikker and Drees had not expected that the negotiations would lead to anything, let alone a draft within half a year. If one considers the weak Dutch position in international affairs around this time, it is very likely that this development pressured the Dutch government and caused fear for missing out on this European integration process. A possible counter-argument to this

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<sup>153</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ‘Resolutie Europees leger’ (5 September 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 20, NA. Original quote: “De Nederlandse regering heeft gemeend haar daadwerkelijke steun aan de uitvoering van de desbetreffende plannen te moeten onthouden”.

<sup>154</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ‘Resolutie Europees leger’.

<sup>155</sup> For example in: ‘De vorming van het Europees leger’, in *Nieuwe Courant* (12 October 1951). In Delpher, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl). And in: ‘Het Europees leger’, in *De Tijd: godsdienstig-staatkundig dagblad* (2 October 1951). In Delpher, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl)

<sup>156</sup> ‘Te kort’, in *De Telegraaf* (13 October 1951). In Delpher, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl)

<sup>157</sup> ‘Nieuw Plan van Robert Schuman. Instemming van Engeland en Amerika’. In *De Telegraaf* (26 October 1951). In Delpher, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl)

<sup>158</sup> A. Mozer, ‘Hoe is de stand, Mieke? Schuman pleit voor Europese Federatie. Nederland stuurt ‘deelnemer’ naar Parijs. Benelux-minister tegen Europees leger – wat wil men?’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 4.11 (November 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 312, NA.

<sup>159</sup> A. Mozer, ‘Het Europees leger. Van Churchill tot Churchill’, in *Nieuw Europa* no. 5.1 (January 1952). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 313, NA.

analysis could be that the Dutch government had a Transatlantic focus and continental matters were not of great interest to Stikker and Drees. This would be a viable argument, but one of Holland's most appreciated allies, the USA, was actually strongly in favour of the EDC as well, which was illustrated by NATO-commander Eisenhower, who stated: "the establishment of a European army has to speed up, because the re-integration of West-Germany will solve the security issues in Middle-Europe. The Western-European defence would – without West-Germany – create uncertain situations along the Rhine. There will be no safety and security for Europe without the establishment of a European army, which makes a transfer of national sovereignty essential".<sup>160</sup> The USA had, mainly because of the Marshall Plan, significant influence in the Netherlands and, according to the earlier mentioned historians Nasra and Segers and Charles Rutten (one of the Dutch representatives in Paris)<sup>161</sup>, pressured the Dutch government to participate in the EDC.<sup>162</sup> The following Dutch support for the EDC was illustrated by Stikker's message in *Nieuw Europa* in which he expressed his hope that the Dutch parliament would support the EDC.<sup>163</sup> The negotiating 'six' eventually signed the treaty for the establishment of the EDC in May 1952 and as a result of the initial Dutch rejecting attitude towards the European army, Drees and Stikker were able to limit EDC's supranational capabilities, to widen the decision-making power of the Committee of Ministers as EDC-institution and to introduce unanimous decision-making.<sup>164</sup>

The EBN realised the chosen path of sectorial integration did not fit into the traditional federalist ideology, however, it was pleased with the outcome of the negotiations of the 'six' because the EBN had already accepted that a functionalist approach to integration was more likely to be used (chapter 2). The EBN also wanted to prevent to be labelled as 'unrealistic' or 'hopeless fools', which strengthened the EBN-support for the EDC.<sup>165</sup> The EBN encouraged the instalment of a European minister of defence, as this would strengthen the supranational character of the EDC and because a European minister would be the unquestionable starting-point for establishing a political union (which was discussed during the EDC-talks in Strasbourg in May 1952).<sup>166</sup> This proposition was, however, eventually rejected and Drees was the most important opponent of this idea. Another Movement-proposal was to use the ECSC governing structure for the EDC, but it got rejected as well.<sup>167</sup> The EBN responded to these rejections by stating it was "too bad [...], but at least it provided useful content for the debate".<sup>168</sup> Besides

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<sup>160</sup> Quote of President Eisenhower, published in *Nieuw Europa* no. 4.12 (December 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 312, NA.

<sup>161</sup> Rutten, *Aan de wieg van Europa en andere Buitenlandse Zaken*, p. 25.

<sup>162</sup> Nasra and Segers, 'Between Charlemagne and the Atlantis', p. 190.

<sup>163</sup> D.U. Stikker, 'Ingezonden mededeling', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 5.2 (February 1952). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 313, NA.

<sup>164</sup> Josef L. Kunz, 'Treaty Establishing the European Defence Community', *The American Journal of International Law*, no. 47.2 (April 1953), pp. 275 – 281, p. 278 – 279.

<sup>165</sup> Mozer, 'Hoe is de stand, Mieke? Schuman pleit voor Europese Federatie. Nederland stuurt 'deelnemer' naar Parijs'.

<sup>166</sup> Mozer, 'Hoe is de stand, Mieke? Schuman pleit voor Europese Federatie. Nederland stuurt 'deelnemer' naar Parijs'.

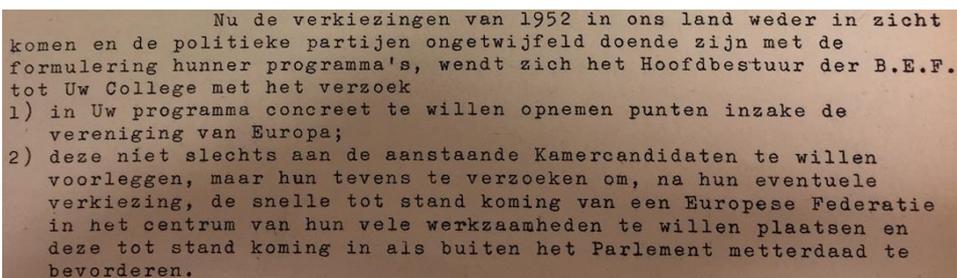
<sup>167</sup> P. Serrarens, 'Een goede Assemblée', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 5.6 (June 1952). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 313, NA.

<sup>168</sup> Serrarens, 'Een goede Assemblée', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 5.6 (June 1952).

the acceptance of the functionalist-approach, the EBN did not provide revolutionary ideas for the signing of the treaty of May 1952. In the following months, EBN did not publish anything in which it discussed its own relevance, which was very common in other situations. The rejection of EBN-proposals, plus the fact that the sudden shift in policy completely surprised the EBN-members as well, simply didn't provide content for propaganda up until May 1952. The decreased self-esteem was illustrated in the annual EBN-report of 1952 which stated: "the board can't possibly be satisfied, although not completely dissatisfied either, with the results and size of the actions of our Movement".<sup>169</sup>

### 3.3 Ratification of the EDC

The signing of the treaty for establishing the EDC did not result in EBN-euphoria just yet, as the past (chapter 1) had taught that nothing was certain until it was ratified by all member-states. Therefore, the EBN started, in cooperation with its European sister organisations, a campaign aimed at speeding-up the ratification process of the EDC-Treaty.<sup>170</sup> An important part of this campaign was gaining public support for the EDC, for example by organising seminars, collecting autographs of supporters<sup>171</sup>, and by organising a mock-election for the future of the European continent.<sup>172</sup> In the Netherlands, the EBN had already started its campaign shortly after the signing of the EDC-Treaty, mostly because of the approaching Dutch parliamentary elections of June 1952. A frequently used method of the EBN was directly contacting politicians and convincing them of the importance of European unity. An example of this is an EBN-letter to the boards of the political parties in July 1951 (see image below). In this letter, EBN argues that addressing the importance of federalism and European unity in party programmes would lead to more public support because European unity and security were important themes amongst the electorate.<sup>173</sup>



Nu de verkiezingen van 1952 in ons land weder in zicht komen en de politieke partijen ongetwijfeld doende zijn met de formulering hunner programma's, wendt zich het Hoofdbestuur der B.E.F. tot Uw College met het verzoek

- 1) in Uw programma concreet te willen opnemen punten inzake de vereniging van Europa;
- 2) deze niet slechts aan de aanstaande Kamercandidaten te willen voorleggen, maar hun tevens te verzoeken om, na hun eventuele verkiezing, de snelle tot stand koming van een Europese Federatie in het centrum van hun vele werkzaamheden te willen plaatsen en deze tot stand koming in als buiten het Parlement metterdaad te bevorderen.

The EBN wanted to act as 'pressure-group' for the EDC-cause by forcing politicians and policy-makers to

<sup>169</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, 'Jaarverslag 1952 van de secretaris' (March 1953). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 22, NA. Original quote: "Het hoofdbestuur kan, hoewel niet geheel ontevreden, zich onmogelijk voldaan gevoelen over het resultaat en de omvang der werkzaamheden van onze Beweging".

<sup>170</sup> H.R. Nord, 'Ten geleide', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 5.9 (September 1952). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. 313, NA.

<sup>171</sup> G. Vixseboxse, 'De Politieke Organisatie mag niet langer wachten', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 5.10 (October 1952). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 313, NA.

<sup>172</sup> 'Proefverkiezingen in ons land', in *Nieuwsblad van het Noorden* (8 September 1952). In Delpher, [www.delpher.nl](http://www.delpher.nl)

<sup>173</sup> 'Brief aan de Hoofdbesturen der politieke partijen' (16 July 1951). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 20, NA.

express their views on this issue, especially towards the elections.<sup>174</sup> This strategy was continued after the elections when the EBN first presented a manifest which explained its expectations from the new government (i.e. specific attention of the new government for European integration and the EDC, and the appointment of a state secretary for European integration within the ministry of foreign affairs).<sup>175</sup> In the next months, EBN sent letters to the new PM Drees, all party-leaders, and the government-investigator, in which it emphasised the importance of the EDC-ratification by highlighting the Western-European security-issues and potential benefits of a united Europe.<sup>176</sup>

In contrast to the period until the EDC-Treaty, the EBN did perceive its role in the ratification process as important, because it had convinced ‘many people and groups’ of the righteousness of its principles and the EDC.<sup>177</sup> Brugmans illustrated this perception by arguing: “Ratification of the EDC-Treaty is almost certain”.<sup>178</sup>, which was considered the result of the Movement’s campaign. According to Brugmans, the reform of the radical federalist ideology was the main reason for the nearing ratification of the EDC-Treaty, because “unfortunately, wars are not won by cavalry-charges! The result of this action is, however, real! People who voted against turned into abstainers and abstainers have turned into supporters”.<sup>179</sup> Another indication of EBN’s self-perception was its political report of 1953, which stated the EBN was now an organisation more aligned with political parties, and statesmen such as Eisenhower, Schuman, De Gasperi, Adenauer and Spaak took EBN-views more into account than those of small countries.<sup>180</sup> In addition, the report concludes by describing the importance and influence of the EBN as “by no means unimportant”.<sup>181</sup> These statements are unquestionably biased by propaganda-motives, but they still give some insight in the self-perception of the EBN, which corresponds with the earlier discussed thesis of Iriye that emphasises the leading-role of NGO’s in international affairs.<sup>182</sup> The remaining of this chapter will analyse several developments that could help us understand the self-perception of the EBN.

The sudden Dutch support for the EDC at the end of 1951 had been pleaded by the EBN since the initial postponement of November 1950. Considering the strong influence of the USA

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<sup>174</sup> ‘Vergadering hoofdbestuur BEF’ (11 July 1951). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 20, NA.

<sup>175</sup> ‘Manifest Beweging van Europese Federalisten’ (26 June 1952). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 21, NA.

<sup>176</sup> ‘Brief van hoofdbestuur BEF aan de nieuwe MP Drees en de fractievoorzitters van alle democratische partijen’ (5 July 1952). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 21, NA.

<sup>177</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ‘Europese Leger Resolutie’ (February 1953). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 22, NA.

<sup>178</sup> H. Brugmans, ‘Stellingen over de huidige toestand van het Europese Federalisme in Internationaal Verband’ (1 April 1953). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 22, NA. Original quote: “Thans kan aanneming (EDC) als nagenoeg verzekerd worden beschouwd.”

<sup>179</sup> Brugmans, ‘Stellingen over de huidige toestand van het Europese Federalisme in Internationaal Verband’. Original quote: “oorlogen worden helaas niet gewonnen met cavallerie-charges! Maar het resultaat van deze actie is reëel. Tegenstemmers zijn erdoor tot abstinenteren geworden, abstinenteren tot (in godsnaam dan maar) voorstemmers”.

<sup>180</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, ‘Politiek Jaarverslag over het jaar 1953’ (March 1954). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 23, NA.

<sup>181</sup> BEF, ‘Politiek jaarverslag over jaar 1953’. Original quote: “geenszins onbelangrijk”. 1

<sup>182</sup> Iriye, *Global Community*, p. 209.

within the Dutch government, the timing of the American – and following Dutch – support for the EDC, and the fact that the shift completely surprised the EBN as well, it is safe to argue the EBN did not play a significant role in the process that led to the signing of the EDC-Treaty in May 1952. This development, however, strengthened the EBN in its belief and support for the EDC, which functioned as starting-point of the campaign to speed-up the ratification-process. During this campaign, a noteworthy EBN-request was the appointment of a state secretary for European integration at the ministry of foreign affairs. The new Drees-government partly agreed to this, as it installed two ministers of foreign affairs (Johan Willem Beyen and Joseph Luns (KVP)), of which Beyen got authority on European integration. Drees had chosen the party-less banker for European integration because he was a Protestant<sup>183</sup> and he was not known as a ‘European’.<sup>184</sup> Beyen’s work on European integration with the ‘six’, however, turned him into a strong supporter of European integration<sup>185</sup>, which resulted into his international policy-proposal (Plan Beyen 1952) that served as the blueprint for the establishment of the European Economic Community (1957). Another ironic development was the fact that Beyen even converted to Catholicism after his period as minister. His policy made Beyen a very popular minister amongst the EBN, but Drees was less satisfied with his choice.

The points of view of the new government were closer to the EBN-views than those of previous administrations. An important asset for the EBN was minister Beyen, as he was open to idealism and new ideas on European integration. The Movement regularly sent its ideas to the new minister and he actually used these to shape his own views and policy.<sup>186</sup> An example of this was EBN’s personal advise to avoid alternating standpoints in the European ratification-talks in order to speed-up the process in 1954 (see image next page).<sup>187</sup> This was considered necessary because changing international circumstances had weakened the ratification-momentum. In the minister council of August 16<sup>th</sup>, 1954, Beyen proposed the same strategy by emphasising the importance of speeding up the negotiations, partly by preventing amendments.<sup>188</sup> Another situation that explains EBN’s self-perception was the direct result of EBN’s letter to minister Cals of education, arts, and sciences, in which it proposed to add lectures about Europe to the standard high school curriculum.<sup>189</sup> Minister Cals accepted this request within a few months, which led to the following EBN-statement: “The Netherlands plays a more positive role for our foreign policy in European integration since the appointment of the ministers Beyen and Luns (for which our Board pressed during the government formation

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<sup>183</sup> Jan Willem Brouwer en Peter van der Heijden (Red.), *Drees. Minister-president 1948 – 1958*, p. 81 – 82.

<sup>184</sup> J.W. Beyen, *Het spel en de knikkers. Een kroniek van vijftig jaar* (Rotterdam 1968), p. 199 – 200.

<sup>185</sup> Beyen, *Het spel en de knikkers*, p. 218.

<sup>186</sup> ‘Correspondentie EBN’ (1952 – 1954). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nrs. 21 – 24, NA. And ‘Notulen van de vergadering van de Raad van Ministers’ (1952 – 1954). In ‘Notulen van de Ministerraad’, inv. nrs. 397 – 400, NA.

<sup>187</sup> ‘Telegram gezonden door de Beweging van Europese Federalisten aan Zijn Excellentie Mr. J.W. Beyen’ (8 August 1954). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 23, NA.

<sup>188</sup> ‘Notulen van de Vergadering van de Raad van Ministers’ (16 August 1954). In ‘Notulen van de Ministerraad’, inv. nr. 400, NA.

<sup>189</sup> ‘Brief aan Zijne Excellentie de Minister van Onderwijs, Kunsten en Wetenschappen mr. J.M.L.Th. Cals’ (7 May 1953). In ‘EBN and its predecessors’, inv. nr. 22, NA.

process).<sup>190</sup> A final explanation for EBN's positive self-perception was the fact that the Dutch parliament was the second country that ratified the EDC-Treaty on July 23, 1953.<sup>191</sup>

Het lange uitstel terzake van de inwerking treding van het Verdrag vormt een groot beletsel voor een goede functionering van de Westelijke samenwerking. Wij verhoogen ons erover dat de Nederlandse regering het belang van spoedige ratificatie door alle betrokken parlementen steeds met kracht heeft bepleit en zich heeft verzet tegen nadere overeenkomsten, welke hernieuwde onderhandelingen en hernieuwde parlementaire bekrachtiging zouden medebrengen.

In dit ernstige oogenblik wil de Beweging van Europese Federalisten met klem erop aandringen, dit standpunt te handhaven en geen medewerking te verlenen aan maatregelen, die tot gevolg zouden hebben, dat de Europese Defensie Gemeenschap niet langer zou strekken tot daadwerkelijke bevordering der Europese eenwording binnen Atlantisch verband.

(w.g. Mr. H.R. Nord),  
algemeen voorzitter.

Rd.222.

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Even though there were strong indications that supported the self-perception of the EBN and its influence, it was not sufficient for the final ratification of the EDC. The impact of Stalin's death (March 1953) and the Gaullist-victory in the French elections (December 1953) was too substantial to overcome. The EBN was devastated after the final rejection by the French National Assembly in September 1954, but it also resulted into new insights, such as Europe was not ripe for military or political integration; and EBN should now focus on economic integration (which succeeded in 1957).<sup>193</sup> In the historiography, the changing Dutch policy on integration and the final French rejection of the EDC have mainly been explained by the role of Beyen and large international developments.<sup>194</sup> The EBN, on the other hand, considered its own role essential in the first matter.

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<sup>190</sup> Beweging van Europese Federalisten, 'Politiek Jaarverslag over het jaar 1953' (March 1954). Original quote: "Nederland speelt een meer positieve rol voor ons buitenlands beleid in de Europese integratie sedert het optreden van de ministers Beyen en Luns (hierop is trouwens tijdens de kabinetsformatie sterk aangedrongen door ons Hoofdbestuur)".

<sup>191</sup> W. Verkade, 'Tweede Kamer ratificeert als no. 2 de EDG', in *Nieuw Europa* no. 6.8 (August 1953). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 314, NA.

<sup>192</sup> 'Telegram gezonden door de Beweging van Europese Federalisten aan Zijn Excellentie Mr. J.W. Beyen'.

<sup>193</sup> 'Resolutie van de NREB' (27 October 1954). In 'EBN and its predecessors', inv. nr. 23, NA.

<sup>194</sup> Segers, *Reis naar het continent*, and De Bruin, *Elastisch Europa*, and W.H. Weenink, *Bankier van de Wereld, Bouwer van Europa: Johan Willem Beyen 1897 – 1976* (Amsterdam 2005), and Brouwer and Van der Heijden (Red.), *Drees. Minister-president 1948 – 1958*.

### 3.4 *Conclusion*

The EBN was not able to play an important role in the first phase of the EDC (October 1950 – May 1952), which lowered its self-esteem. This recovered during- and after the EBN-campaign aimed at the ratification of the EDC-Treaty. Several events and developments in this period (i.e. the appointment of Beyen as minister of foreign affairs and EBN's positive relation with him; minister Cal's approval of EBN's proposal for education on European integration; the fact the Netherlands was the second country that ratified the EDC-Treaty) served as confirmations for EBN's self-perception and are worth mentioning in any analysis of the development of Dutch policy towards the EDC. Even though it is not possible to test the EBN-notion, this chapter has tried to add some focus to the existing historiography about the mentioned theme, which is mainly based on external factors and personal views of politicians.

## Conclusion

Since the establishment of the *Europese Beweging Nederland* in 1948, this federalist NGO has tried to stimulate (supranational) European integration by using its vast and deep network to shape public opinion and influence policy-makers. By means of its monthly newspaper (*Nieuw Europa*), events, mass-demonstrations and manifests it spread federalist ideas and policy-proposals amongst society and the national parliament in order to steer the government towards European unity. This thesis focussed on three crucial processes (establishment of the Council of Europe; creation of the ECCS; and the EDC-initiative) that, in hindsight, have functioned as the basis for the integration towards the European Union as we know it today. In every case, EBN's actions and the perception of its role and influence by policy-makers and the EBN itself were the main focus points. By zooming in on these matters, the thesis attempted to answer the main question: *'how did the EBN perceive its role in the development of Dutch policy on European integration during the years 1948 – 1954?'*

This research resulted in the conclusion that the EBN perceived its role in the process of European integration as essential and guiding because it constantly provided policy-makers with fresh views and new perspectives on European integration and international relations as a whole. It has tried to imprint the view that Western-European countries should be perceived as one zone in global affairs. Part of this perspective is the assumption that one zone cannot be governed by the old-system, but instead needs a supranational political, economic and military governance. Some of the most important other proposals/ideas of the EBN in these years were: the establishment of a Council of Europe with a European Parliament (*Assemblée*) that would stimulate discussions about European cooperation and integration; the creation of a common market with free movement of people and goods and a pooling of resources; a shifting Dutch focus from Transatlantic to continental Europe; and Dutch participation in the EDC. The fact that actual Dutch foreign policy did not deviate much from EBN's proposals strengthened its belief in the importance of its actions and served as legitimisation for its existence.

The EBN is hardly mentioned in the discussed historiography about the early integration years of the Netherlands. According to Iriye, ignoring the role of NGO's in the history of international relations is very common, because the influence of vast international developments is considered more important and more interesting as well. The same goes for existing literature about (Dutch-policy on) early European integration because all discussed historians have focussed on the role of international developments (i.e. Cold War; establishment- and rearmament of the BRD; decolonisation; etc.), personal views, and traditional party-politics. Although it is undeniable these matters have influenced the course of events in the early integration, the role of the EBN is, according to this thesis, unrightfully overlooked. This argument is supported by Iriye's conclusion that NGO's have often "led the way" as they have turned the world's attention to cross-national issues.

By studying EBN-sources and publications, this thesis attempted to gain a better understanding of the self-perception of the EBN-role during the first years of European integration. The research tried to look at the course of events through an EBN-lens and this resulted in a better understanding of its perception. The analyses of EBN-activities, in combination with Iriye's fresh NGO-focussed insights on globalisation and international relations, have resulted in the conclusion that existing state-centred historiography has wrongly

ignored the role of the EBN in Dutch policy-making on European integration during the years 1948 – 1954. Because even though EBN's self-perception is hard to test and concepts about influence and roles are often vague and hard to determine, this does not mean that the guiding/inspirational role of EBN can be ignored in any analysis of Dutch-policy on European integration.

Additional research on the European Movements from other countries is required to further conceptualise the self-perception of the role of European Movements in European integration history. A more detailed concept could deepen our understanding of the start of the process that led to the European Union as we know it today and, with that, it could add depth to the existing historiography on European integration. Finally, it could also provide a better insight into the ways NGO's legitimise their actions and existence as a whole.

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