Bachelor Thesis

Star Wars and Hollanditis
The political reaction in the Netherlands to Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (1983-1986)

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Voor mijn moeder, die betoogde dat we verhalen nodig hebben,
en daartoe inspireerde,
zelfs, of juist, wanneer dat soms moeilijk is

Special thanks to my supervisor Kim van der Wijngaart for her advice and time

"I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete" [1] –

President of the United States of America Ronald Reagan, March 23, 1983

"The remarks by President Reagan concerning a shield against missiles were, at the time, made with an eye on the far future. It is a futuristic concept, with the intention of providing safety through defensive systems, but it is still in the phase of initial research. Apart from questions about the technical and financial feasibility of this plan, there are several questions that need to be addressed critically. (…) It could mean a new dimension in the arms race. In this context, the consequences for arms control negotiations and already accomplished results in this field must be considered" [2] -

Dutch Minister of Defense Job de Ruiter, December 12, 1983 (original in Dutch)

[1] Ronald Reagan, "Address to the Nation on Defense and National Security" *Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum* online. Accessed June 25, 2018. https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/research/speeches/32383d
[2] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 18100 nr. 56 "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1984. Hoofdstukken V en X." Nota naar aanleiding van het verslag (December 12, 1983): 4

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Glossary

General abbreviations and terms

ABM	Anti-ballistic missile
ASAT	Anti-satellite (weapon)
ATBM	Anti-tactical ballistic missile
Big three of - (Western) Europe	The FRG, France, and Britain. Occasionally expanded to 'big four' to include Italy
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense(s)
CD	Conference on Disarmament, also known as CoD. Based in Geneva
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency (United States)
EDI	European Defense Initiative. Also known as TDI (Tactical Defense Initiative)
ESA	European Space Agency
ET	Emerging Technologies
EUREKA	European Research Coordination Agency. Sometimes referred to as EURECA, not to be confused with the unrelated European Retrievable Carrier program also named EURECA
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany. The official name of West Germany; *Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, with its capital in Bonn. Used to distinguish from communist East Germany
ICBM	Intercontinental ballistic missile
INF	Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces
MAD	Mutually Assured Destruction. The principle that adversaries in the Cold War had the potential to essentially destroy one another, thereby preventing either side from initiating open aggression. The logic behind the doctrine of deterrence.
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament. Generally used in this thesis to refer to a member of the Dutch Second Chamber (*Tweede Kamer)*
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Dutch: NAVO – *Noord-Atlantische Verdragsorganisatie*)
NPG	Nuclear Planning Group (of NATO)
R&D	Research and Development
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative. Also referred to as Star Wars
SDIO	Strategic Defense Initiative Organization. The American research organization for SDI technology
WEU	Western European Union. International organization and military alliance. Member states at the relevant time were Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, West Germany, and the United Kingdom
WEU Assembly	Western European Union assembly of national parliamentary representatives
WEU Council of Ministers	Western European Union meeting of ministers, generally of Defense and/or Foreign Affairs

Dutch terms

CDA	*Christen-Democratisch Appèl* - Christian Democratic Appeal. Main Christian Democratic party, conservative center-right. Senior coalition partner.	
VVD	*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* - People's Party for Freedom and Democracy. Rightwing liberals, junior coalition partner.	
D'66	*Democraten '66* - Democrats '66. Center-progressive liberals. Opposition party.	
PvdA	*Partij van de Arbeid* – Labor Party. Major leftwing opposition party.	
Tweede Kamer	Second Chamber	Lower house/House of Representatives
Eerste Kamer	First Chamber	Upper House/Senate
Binnenhof	Heart of Dutch national politics in The Hague. Used as a metaphor for the houses of parliament (States General) and the government.	
Kabinet	Cabinet: Ministers and State Secretaries	
Kabinet Lubbers I	1982-1986 CDA-VVD	
Kabinet Lubbers II	1986-1989 CDA-VVD	

Ministerraad (MR)	Council of Ministers. The official weekly meeting of the ministers
REZ	*Raad voor Europese Zaken.* Minister's Council on European Affairs.
Vaste commissie-van defensie	Tweede Kamer committee on Defense. Made up of government and parliament representatives
Vaste commissie-parliament van buitenlandse zaken	Tweede Kamer committee on Foreign Affairs. Made up of government and representatives

Persons

Netherlands

Aardenne, Gijs van	Minister of Economic Affairs (*Minister van Economische Zaken*) 1982-1986. VVD politician.
Broek, Hans van den	Minister of Foreign Affairs (*Minister van Buitenlandse Zaken*) 1982-1993. CDA politician.
Deetman, Wim	Minister of Education and Science (*Minister van Onderwijs en Wetenschappen*) 1982-1989. CDA politician.
Eekelen, Wim van	State Secretary of European Affairs (*Staatsecretaris van Europese Zaken*) 1982–1986. Minister of Defense 1986–1988. VVD politician.
Ruiter, Job de	Minister of Defense (*Minister van Defensie*) 1982–1986. CDA politician.
Lubbers, Ruud	Prime Minister (*Minister-President*) 1982-1994. political leader of the CDA.

Other Countries

Kohl, Helmut	Chancellor of (West) Germany, 1982 –1998. CDU politician (Christian Democrat).
Mitterrand, François	President of the French Republic, 1981-1995. Socialist.
Reagan, Ronald	President of the United States of America, 1981-1989. Republican.
Thatcher, Margaret	Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, 1979-1990. Conservative.
Weinberger, Caspar	Secretary of Defense, 1981-1987. Republican.
Wörner, Manfred	FRG Federal Minister of Defense, 1982 –1988. CDU politician.

Introduction

In June of 2018, US President Donald J. Trump announced he would work towards the establishment of a new branch of the American armed forces: a space force.[3] While few foreign politicians have officially responded, it seems that concerns about the militarization of space and the serious risks and financial burdens of an arms race in space - concerns that used to be prevalent in the past - are resurfacing not only among American policy makers, but among their foreign colleagues as well. Meanwhile, in the spring of the same year, President Trump also started a trade war with a number of countries, including the Western European states – traditional allies of the United States.[4] One of the longest and, arguably, most loyal allies is the Netherlands. Dutch Prime Minister Rutte stated that he "was angry", but he tried to moderate the criticism and antagonism between the Europeans and Americans, arguing that "the transatlantic relationship is of great importance."[5] Indeed, since the inauguration of President Trump and his administration, news items about tensions between Western Europe and the United States have come to dominate the picture of transatlantic relations. A major source of these tensions is the fact that the Trump administration makes unilateral policy announcements that surprise the European allies, and not rarely adversely affect European interests. At a moment when there is talk of both the revival of space militarization, and of the most strained transatlantic relations since decades, looking back at a moment in recent history when both of those factors played a role too can function as an interesting context and reflection for current-day events. This period took place during the administration of US President Ronald Reagan.

In March 1983, during a period marked by some of the most tense relations between East and West in the entire Cold War – President Reagan had just called the Soviet Union the "evil empire" - President Ronald Reagan made an announcement that left the world surprised and confused. On national television, Reagan announced his plan to render "nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete": the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI). His proposal, quickly dubbed "Star Wars" by the public, essentially came down to protecting the United States from nuclear ballistic missiles by means of satellites in space that could destroy an enemy missile during its flight. The plan came as a complete surprise to the European allies. Apart from being skeptical about the technical and financial feasibility of a such a futuristic plan, many European allies became – and remained - deeply concerned about such a plan throughout the 1980s; had Reagan thought about the costs and dangers of building an arsenal in space? And about the consequences for the defense of Western Europe? And about the essential role that nuclear missiles played in NATO's security strategy through the doctrine of deterrent? Such questions were raised all over Western Europe, including in the Netherlands. While quite some attention has been devoted to the American side of Reagan's "Star Wars", it is just as valuable to investigate its impact on an ally of the US, such as the Netherlands, to understand the consequences of American unilateral measures upon international - allied - relations.

The historical image of Dutch politics in the 1980s is dominated by images of protests against the placement of American cruise missiles on Dutch soil to enhance NATOs nuclear deterrent. During this "missile crisis", a discussion led by intellectuals arose about the nature of Dutch foreign politics: some pleaded that the Netherlands, by refusing to place the missiles as NATO had decided, had fallen back into old habits of neutralism and/or international idealism: refusing to place the missiles was

[3] Katie Rogers, "Trump Orders Establishment of Space Force as Sixth Military Branch" *New York Times* online, last modified June 18, 2018. Accessed June 25, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/18/us/politics/trump-space-force-sixth-military-branch.html

[4] --, "US tariffs a dangerous game, says EU" *BBC*, last modified 1 June, 2018. Accessed June 25, 2018. https://www.bbc.com/news/business-44324565

[5] --, "Rutte en EU-commissaris zien nog geen handelsoorlog met VS" *NU.nl*, last modified 1 June, 2018. Accessed June 25, 2018. https://www.nu.nl/economie/5294144/rutte-en-eu-commissaris-zien-nog-geen-handelsoorlog-met-vs.html

argued to be the result of foolish idealism against nuclear weapons, or the equally foolish notion of Dutch neutrality in the newly rising Cold War arms race. This theory quickly became known as "Hollanditis".[6] Naturally, this sparked another group of academics and politicians to argue that the Netherlands were still relatively loyal allies to the United States and that there was no such return to old traditions in foreign policy. This discussion, focusing on the 1980s, is still relevant in historical publications and thinking today. While it is true that the controversy surrounding the missiles was the most important feature of Dutch foreign politics in this decade, an issue like Star Wars can serve as a new case study to see if any of the claims in the mentioned debate also applied to a different topic than the placement of cruise missiles. Naturally, there was, to some degree, a link between the cruise missiles and SDI, as both issues were part of Dutch foreign and defense policies during the 1980s; both issues turned into sources of disagreement between the Netherlands, the European allies, and the Americans. This link is analyzed in this thesis, but still deserves attention in further research. However, since much has been written on the cruise missiles, and little about the role of SDI in Dutch politics, this thesis is an effort to provide a new perspective on Dutch foreign policy in the 1980s – focusing on SDI and related subtopics.

Conclusions on the extent to which the Dutch were a 'loyal ally' are more valuable if they are drawn based on comparisons to the policies of similar states; 'were the Netherlands a loyal ally', is much more interesting to consider when adding the question: compared to whom? In the case of SDI and American allies, the comparison is most logical with other Western European states, especially the "big three", namely France, Britain, and West Germany. This is most logical because of a number of reasons: the role of these countries was the most influential, they featured the clearest political opinions, and almost all of the literature available on SDI and Europe is about the big three. The latter fact, too, is a reason why researching SDI in relation to the Netherlands specifically is valuable.

These considerations lead to a number of related research questions that this thesis seeks to answer. Firstly, regarding the general narrative of SDI and the Netherlands: what were the Dutch political reactions and policies regarding SDI, and why? Then, about the comparative elements: how do the reactions and policies of the Netherlands regarding SDI compare to the most relevant policies and reactions of other European states, especially France, Britain, and West Germany? Lastly, and most importantly, regarding the Dutch foreign policy position: do the answers to the questions above show that the Netherlands were a loyal ally of the US regarding SDI, or that the Dutch suffered from a return to Dutch neutralism and idealism, also called "Hollanditis"?

The topic of SDI, especially in relation to a specific state and its politics, is quite complex; SDI, as a political issue, featured a wide range of aspects, including issues of military and civil technology, economics and industry, strategy, and international politics. Or to use the words of Dutch Foreign Affairs Minister van den Broek in 1985: SDI "concerns very complex material, in which all kinds of aspects are intertwined to such an extent that it is hard to make clear distinctions between, for instance, civil and military aspects, and between foreign and defense policies."[7] Because of this complexity, the chapters of this thesis feature different subtopics that are all relevant to the Dutch political reaction to SDI. In order to answer the research questions in a structured and clear manner, this thesis is divided into three main substantive chapters: the literature review and framework, a chapter on the initial years of 1983-1984, and a chapter on the most important years of 1985-1986. The first chapter, containing

[6] This term, and the theory behind it, were most notably introduced in Walter Laqueur, "Hollanditis: A new stage in european neutralism." *Commentary,* 72(2), 19 (1981). For a complete description of this debate, see the literature review, section 'Dutch policy: Cold War, foreign relations and defense'

[7] Tweede Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18979 nr. 2 "Verslag van een mondeling overleg Strategisch Defensie Initiatief" (May 29, 1985): 4

the literature review, outlines the relevant bodies of literature, which help to piece together the context in which the Dutch responded to SDI, including literature on Dutch foreign policy, and SDI and Europe. Since little has been written about the subject of this thesis specifically, a chronological presentation of the relevant events is an important component of the latter two chapters. Yet, those chapters also include analytical elements, as well as comparative sections that relate the Dutch positions to those of the most important other European states. The second chapter on the initial years deals mostly with initial political reactions and debates, and strategic concerns. The later years of chapter 3 were dominated by discussions about research, technology and industry. In the third chapter, two subtopics are analyzed too: the technological research programs of EUREKA and the European Defense Initiative (EDI). The timespan chosen, namely 1983-1986, covers the time from the direct context of the announcement of SDI, to the end of the most pressing debates in the Netherlands surrounding SDI. In October 1985, the Dutch government decided against official participation in the American SDI research program, and in 1986 the government published a booklet outlining and explaining the governmental positions on the issues surrounding SDI. While SDI as a subject of controversy did return a number of times in slightly different contexts than analyzed in this thesis during and after 1986, it never returned to the same prominence.

Regarding the use of sources, this thesis makes use of a number of different types of source material. Primary sources include Dutch parliamentary debates, Dutch newspaper articles, declassified documents from Dutch and American governmental agencies – found in physical and online archives. The secondary sourcing relies on academic literature, i.e. books and journal articles. Naturally, the types of sources listed are used with the aim of (re)constructing the story of the Dutch political reaction to SDI, that is, answering the research question(s). However, this thesis is not an attempt to provide a complete study of any of the types of sources – for instance, it is not a study of all news articles in leading Dutch papers regarding SDI. The Dutch archival sources have been retrieved from the National Archives (*Nationale Archieven*) in The Hague; they are declassified minutes of meetings of the Council of Ministers (*Ministerraad*) and other ministerial councils between 1983-1986.

Lastly, a number of points of clarification are in order. The subtitle of this thesis reads 'the political reaction'. The focus in this thesis is on the interaction between the government, mostly represented by the ministers and state secretaries in the cabinet, and the political parties, most importantly in the parliament. Uncovering this interaction helps to construct a coherent narrative of the development of SDI and the Netherlands. Other actors, such as industrial representatives, are included where relevant. As such, this thesis is not an effort to meticulously describe and analyze the standpoints – and the developments of standpoints – of individual parties or politicians. To limit the length of this thesis, inquiries into political parties are generally limited to the three main parties, namely the coalition partners CDA (*Christen-Democratisch Appèl* - Christian Democratic Appeal, the conservative center-right senior coalition partner), and VVD (*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* - People's Party for Freedom and Democracy, the rightwing liberal junior coalition partner), and the main opposition party PvdA (*Partij van de Arbeid* – Labor). Occasionally, the second opposition party D'66 (*Democraten '66*, progressive-liberals) is included. As a result, strongly politically oriented sources, most importantly newspapers such as *De Waarheid* (The Truth, a communist newspaper) are not included in this research, except where directly relevant to the main narrative. The author did attempt to introduce a degree of diversity in choosing the politicians and newspapers to be analyzed – all within the limits of moderate political orientation. Moreover, in order to limit the length and complexity of this research, the role of civil society organizations – action groups, lobby organizations and the like – is generally not included either. Some research has been conducted into the role and standpoints these groups,[8] yet, further inquiries would surely help to further uncover the complicated

[8] For a short analysis of the role of Dutch civil society groups in the SDI debate specifically, see: Robert J.

effects of SDI upon the Dutch political and societal climates. Lastly, of course, most of the primary – and some of the secondary – sources are in the Dutch language. Quotes, position names, and similar Dutch terms are translated by the author, having kept in mind both accuracy and legibility.

Literature review

A historiographical overview for SDI and Dutch politics can be divided into an outline of two separate bodies of literature that both cover a part of the topic. This division originates from the fact that little academic attention has been paid to the specific combination of SDI and Dutch politics (especially Dutch foreign policy). However, those two elements separately have sparked a reasonably sizable body of literature; in this literature review, the topic of Dutch politics, with a focus on defense and foreign policy – most notably in the context of Cold War and alliance relations - is covered first, and the topic of SDI – SDI & Europe especially – is engaged with thereafter. As is explained at the end in detail, this thesis seeks to combine these two separate bodies into a framework in which the political reaction to SDI can be interpreted and fully explained in its context: both the Dutch political context and Dutch foreign policy, and SDI and Europe, form important backgrounds to the topic of the Netherlands and SDI.

Dutch policy: Cold War, foreign relations, and defense

Dutch foreign policy and defense policy in the late 1970s and 1980s were inherently linked, and strongly shaped by the Cold War. During this period, these policy domains and the political controversies surrounding them were especially dominated by the issue of the placement of American nuclear cruise missiles in the Netherlands, and to a large extent, the same is true for the leading literature in the historical genre.[9] Therefore, the controversy surrounding the cruise missiles is directly relevant to the topic of SDI and the Netherlands, to the extent that it dominated the Dutch political and public debates on foreign affairs and defense throughout the better part of the 1980s, and thereby shaped the climate in which the political reactions to SDI came to be. Moreover, both issues were of strategic, financial, and military consequence to the Dutch state and involved the same players, namely the NATO allies, and indirectly the Soviet Union.

The issue of the cruise missiles has its direct origins between 1977 and 1979, when it was decided that NATO's nuclear deterrent needed an upgrade in Western Europe to come on par with the new nuclear placements of the Soviet Union. This would be done through stationing new nuclear missiles (type Tomahawk and Pershing-II) on the territory of several European NATO states, most importantly on British and West German soil. This type of weapons became known as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF). The Netherlands, it was decided within NATO, would also have to play a part in this new deterrent, by hosting 48 American cruise missiles on its soil. However, throughout 1979 and the 1980s, the Dutch coalitions struggled with strong popular and parliamentary protests against the placement nuclear armaments in the Netherlands. The two Van Agt governments, Van Agt I (1977-1981, center-right CDA and VVD) and Van Agt II (1982-1983, center-left CDA, PvdA, and D'66) feared strong public and electoral backlash in the event of a *plaatsingbesluit*, i.e. the

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Berloznik, "Perceptions and Reactions to SDI in the Benelux Countries" in Hans Günter Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence. Implications for Europe: Perceptions and Assessments* (United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan, 1987), 248-249. For Dutch civil society in the 1980s, especially in the context of the cruise missiles debate, see: Remco van Diepen, *Hollanditis. Nederland en het kernwapendebat 1977-1987* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, 2004)

[9] See for instance: Hans Righolt "Dutch-American Relations During the Second Cold War" in Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen and Giles Scott-Smith (eds.) *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij Boom, 2009): 707, 710-715, and Duco Hellema, *Dutch Foreign Policy. The Role of the Netherlands in World Politics* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters Publishing, 2009): 273-281

actual decision to allow the placement of American INF weapons on Dutch soil. The coalitions postponed the decision on missile placement and emphasized time and again the importance of arms limitation talks, especially regarding INF. This was done in an attempt to counter anti-governmental public opinion sentiments, and to perhaps solve the issue through the abandonment of INF systems in Europe altogether. Partially as a result of Dutch concerns, NATO introduced the so-called Double-Track Decision (*dubbelbesluit*, i.e. double decision in Dutch) in 1979, which entailed an offer to the Soviet Union for INF reduction negotiations, and in failure of such deliberations, deployment of INF systems in Western Europe. The INF negotiations started in 1981, but were rather unfruitful and ended in late 1983 when the Soviets ended negotiations in reaction to INF placements in West Germany and Britain. Dutch political and civil protests against the placements were predominantly inspired by moral objections to nuclear weapons in general, and concerns about further escalation of Cold War animosity and the resulting arms race. Sizeable parts of the Dutch political and civil landscapes, including the left-wing and significant parts of the confessional-wings, argued that the folly of the nuclear Cold War arms race had to stop somewhere, and the Netherlands could be a start. Especially in the United States this stance was met with criticism.[10]

As mentioned, the cruise missiles episode was and is the subject of the leading historiographical debates regarding Dutch foreign policy in the 1980s. While those debates focus on INF and the Netherlands, they are exponents of the a broader discussion with as its theme long-term Dutch transatlantic and Dutch European policies; the INF controversy is an important case study therein. Two main streams are to be found within the historiographical debates on Dutch transatlanticism and Europeanism. These streams resonate the arguments of the main camps that took part in the political debate in the 80s around INF. The first narrative is centered around the thesis that the Dutch, especially the Dutch governments, in these years "remained as loyal as could reasonably be expected"[11] to the Americans and NATO. In the other narrative, it is argued that the Netherlands were a stubborn and pacifist dissident member of NATO. This position sparked the nickname "Hollanditis", which is generally argued to have been reckless and naïve refusal of the Dutch to contribute to NATO policies of deterrence. The most important case in point was, of course, the refusal to place INF missiles in the Netherlands to enhance deterrence vis-à-vis the Warsaw Pact from Western Europe, thereby increasing chances of East-West instability. This theory was named after an article published in 1981 by American-Israeli historian Walter Laqueur, in which he argued that the Dutch protests against the placement of the cruise missiles were rooted in the resurfacing of the old Dutch foreign policy of neutralism, which was spreading throughout Europe like a virus.[12] Neither Laqueur's theory nor his terminology were new or original – the likes of *The Economist* and Dutch politicians, including Frits Bolkestijn had pleaded virtually the same in the years before[13] - but Laqueur's article was quite impactful at the time, and remains so today.

Yet, the narratives of "Hollanditis" and the "loyal ally" too are part of a larger historiographical debate. These two narratives can be seen as renewals of a much older academic discussion in the Netherlands regarding Dutch foreign policy, surrounding the *constantenthese*, literally thesis on constants.[14] This thesis had surfaced decades earlier in a variety of forms, most notably by prof. dr. J.C. Boogman of the Rijksuniversiteit Utrecht in the 1960s. Boogman traced the history of modern Dutch foreign policy to the Dutch 17th century, the Dutch golden age. In this time,

[10] Righolt "Dutch-American Relations" and Frank Zuijdam "Dutch left-wing political parties and NATO" in *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations*: 659-662,707, 710-715. Further, see: Hellema, *Dutch Foreign Policy*, 273-281

[11] Righolt "Dutch-American Relations" in *Four Centuries*: 715

[12] Laqueur, "Hollanditis"

[13] Van Diepen, *Hollanditis*, 220-221

[14] Van Diepen gives an excellent analysis of this debate, both in the general sense, and applied to the 1980s and the INF controversy therein. See: Van Diepen, 222-235

emphases were on three pillars: neutralism, to attempt to keep out of wars with bigger powers, (naval) commercialism, signifying the emphasis of the Dutch elites on trade, and lastly a combination of moralism and religion. Especially the Calvinists, according to Boogman, played an important role in the notion that the Netherlands, in their foreign policy, should attempt to play a role in improving the international order and its principles.[15] This thesis was picked up by other scholars over the next decades, most notably by J.L. Heldring, who argued that Calvinism, moralism, and neutralism still directly influenced contemporary Dutch foreign policy,[16] and liberal political scientist – later VVD politician and minister - J.J.C. Voorhoeve, who identified, in his dissertation in 1979 and throughout subsequent years, three main "traditions"in Dutch foreign policy. Those were "maritime-commercialism" – focus on trade and international rules/law, "neutralist-abstentionism" – inspired by the pragmatic reasoning that the Netherlands were too small to fight European conflicts, and "international-idealism" –moralistic and idealist antipathy to power politics, and the drive to create a more peaceful world.[17] However, these portrayals of Dutch foreign policy traditions were criticized by other Dutch scholars, such as historian C.B. Wels, who argued that, while Dutch foreign policy did feature some patterns, the sweeping argument as made by the authors above, namely that the entirety of modern Dutch foreign policy was inspired by the same traditions, was a generalization and could not be backed up with enough evidence.[18]

This debate became highly politicized at the time of the controversy surrounding the cruise missiles; naturally, pacifist-leaning organizations such as the IKV (*Interkerkelijk Vredesberaad,* a leading ecumenical peace organization) preferred not to be associated with the advocates of Dutch neutralism in the 1930s.[19] Whether or not the Netherlands were a loyal ally of the Americans was measured, in this controversy, by the extent to which the Dutch agreed with American and NATO policies to enhance deterrence and act as a counterweight against the Soviet Union and its allies, thereby breaking with the tradition of neutralism and pacifist Calvinist-moralism that had caused Hollanditis. Due to this politicization of a historical debate, it is important to note that the term "loyal ally" is politically charged; an alternative name could be "critical ally", for instance. The crux herein is the difference in opinion on when a NATO state is too critical to be loyal. For the purposes of this thesis, "loyal ally" is used in the way Laqueur defined it, similar to the work of Heldring and Voorhoeve, to indicate a clear contrast between the loyal Dutch and Hollanditis.

In 2009, Duco Hellema, a leading Dutch historian in the field of Netherlands' foreign relations, somewhat nuanced the debates above. He argued that both the narratives of the loyal ally and Hollanditis contained partial truths: '[i]t is an accepted observation that during the Cold War the Netherlands acted as a loyal ally of the United States. In certain aspects, this is correct. However, there were also many conflicts, differences of opinion, and hesitations. (…) The loyal ally thesis is clearly too simple and further research is certainly necessary to clarify the U.S.-Dutch relationship[.]'[20] Given

[15] Most notably, see: J.C. Boogman, "Achtergronden, tendenties en tradities van het buitenlands beleid van Nederland (eind zestiende eeuw-1940)" in E.H. van der Breugel et al. *Nederlands buitenlandse politiek. Heden en verleden* (Baarn: In den Toren, 1978): 9-28. For further analysis, see: Van Diepen, 222-224

[16] Recurs in a number of Heldring's publications. Most importantly, see: J.L. Heldring "Preoccupatie met het beginsel" in A.L. Constandse, J.L. Heldring and P. van 't Veer *Gelijk hebben en krijgen* (Amsterdam: Bezige Bij, 1962). See for further analysis: Van Diepen, 224

[17] Recurs in a number of Voorhoeve's publications. Most importantly, see: J.J.C. Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles. A Study of Dutch Foreign Policy* (Martinus Nijhoff, 1979). For further analysis: Van Diepen, 225-227

[18] Van Diepen, 227-230

[19] Ibid., 231

[20] Duco Hellema, "The politics of asymmetry: the Netherlands and the United States since 1945" in Krabbendam et al. (eds.) *Four Centuries*: 594. For further reading, see: W. Klinkert and G. Teitler, "Nederland van neutraliteit naar bondgenootschap. Het veiligheids- en defensiebeleid in de twintigste eeuw" in Bob de Graaff, Duco

that little research has been conducted into the role of SDI within this debate, the issue of SDI and the Netherlands has all the potential to serve as a new case study to test the mentioned theses by and to further the existing body of research and literature

SDI, Europe, and the Netherlands

Since the announcement of SDI, the topic has been described and analyzed in a body of literature that documented SDI from a variety of different angles. Indeed, given the complexity of the SDI program, the body of literature on SDI is diffuse in a number of ways: publications differ significantly in academic disciplines, geographical focus, periodical focus, and publication date. Regarding the academic disciplines, studies range from technological and scientific debates, to strategic and military disputes, to diplomatic and international relations considerations, to political and governmental inquiries, and to economic and financial analyses. Generally, the publication date is key in categorizing and interpreting the relevance of publications. Peaks of publications are noticeable in 1984-1987, and quite a while later, starting in the 1990s-early 2000s until rather recently. Importantly, the publications in the former wave are generally contemporary contributions to the ongoing debates regarding the feasibility and desirability of SDI at the time, while the latter wave of publications features more historical surveys and analyses of SDI in the larger historical contexts of the Cold War and international relations. The distinction of literature as outlined above helps to place the majority of scholarly literature in the contemporary category, which is generally literature in disciplines such as political science, international relations, physics and technology, political economics, and so on, rather than historical. This is not to say that the contemporary literature is of little importance; in the case of the analyses of strategic implications and government responses, findings in both categories of literature have been relatively similar – as will be shown below. Furthermore, the relevance of literature in the contemporary category is often that these publications help to reconstruct the events and debates at the time.

The most important historiographical debate in which SDI plays a crucial role regards the question of what caused the end of the Cold War. Within this controversy, a group of predominantly American authors, generally referred to as "the triumphalists," have argued since the early 1990s that President Reagan's harsh policies towards the Soviet Union caused its internal economic and political system to implode, thereby "winning" the Cold War. Elements in this policy were Reagan's tough rhetoric and his unwillingness to sign arms limitation agreements, but especially instrumental was Reagan's decision to open a new dimension to the arms race by introducing SDI: the arms race in space. Through this policy, the triumphalists argue, the Reagan administration outspent the political economic capacity of the Soviet Union, and Gorbachev slowly had to admit defeat.[21] Given the exclusive focus on the role of the Soviet Union and the United States in this debate, it has limited relevance to the topic at hand. Yet, exactly that limitation is instrumental in the sense that it illustrates how the role of Western Europe, including the Netherlands, has generally been overlooked in the dominant literature on SDI.

This dominant literature consists of a number of publications, in which *Way Out There in the Blue* (2001) by journalist Frances FitzGerald is of central importance. This study provides an in-depth and well-researched insight into the roles of the US governmental complex and the Reagan administration, from the inception of the idea of SDI to the many debates and changes in the SDI research program (named SDIO – Strategic Defense Initiative Organization) throughout the 1980s and

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Hellema and Bert van der Zwan (eds.), *De Nederlandse buitenlandse politiek in de twintigste eeuw* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2003): 26-33

[21] For an overview of this debate, see: Beth A. Fisher, "US foreign policy under Reagan and Bush" in: Melvyn Leffler and Odd A. Westad (eds.), *The Cambridge History of the Cold War: Volume III. Endings*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 267-288

early 1990s. The book engages with the mentioned triumphalist controversy, as well a number of other America-centered issues. But not with Western Europe.[22] The most comprehensive historical-academic work is certainly *The Strategic Defense Initiative* (1992) by Edward Reiss. This extensive study features in-depth studies of all major aspects of SDI, including one chapter dedicated to Europe. This chapter provides the best historical overview and analysis of the troubled relationship between the West Europeans and SDI, albeit with a rather significant focus on the subtopic of EDI – which is covered in the third chapter of this thesis.[23] Its publication is of importance, given that it was published after the actual SDI program had been losing political importance and exposure; most of the literature that is available on SDI and Europe is of contemporary nature. It shows that the issue of Europe and SDI was still worth studying, even after it had lost its news status, because of the friction SDI had caused between the European allies and the US, and among the European allies themselves.

Interestingly, the conclusions on SDI and Western Europe with regards to the timeline of events, and about the general strategic and political implications, have not changed significantly since the mid-1980s in academic literature. Additionally, the literature almost exclusively focuses on the "big 3" of Western Europe, i.e. Britain, France and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, West Germany), with the occasional addition of Italy.[24] Before the rather limited body of literature on the Netherlands and SDI can be understood in its context, i.e. why it is so limited for instance, it is important to examine the general narrative of SDI and Europe – that is, mostly the big three and Europe - that rises from the literature.

The narrative generally starts at the shockwave that went through the European capitals after Reagan's unannounced and somewhat futuristic speech. The European allies generally issued little response to the announcement, though it was clear that most officials were unhappy about the unannounced plans, as well as with the possible effects of the SDI doctrine in the future. However, there were other more pressing events in the Cold War – such as the downing of the Korean airliner KAL007 in September 1983, the reelection of Reagan in 1984, and the ongoing debates about INF. Moreover, the American government, especially the Reagan administration, was also still looking for a practical implementation of the general notion of SDI.[25]

However, throughout 1983 and 1984, it became clear that the European allies had serious, fundamental reservations to SDI. Apart from the fact that most Europeans were very skeptical of the financial and technological feasibility of a complete space shield, deploying military defense systems in space was likely to violate treaties such as the ABM (anti-ballistic missiles) Treaty (1972) and the Outer Space Treaty (1967). Furthermore, one of the deepest concerns was with the fact that a space-based missile defense system was not feasible for Europe: Europe was under threat from short- and mid-range missiles, while SDI would be based on the long-range ballistic missiles. In other words, if the US would succeed in deploying an SDI system, the European half of NATO would be the only part of NATO vulnerable to nuclear attacks.[26] Furthermore, many Europeans feared that SDI would

[22] Frances FitzGerald, *Way out there in the blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the end of the Cold War* (New York: Touchstone, 2001)
[23] Edward Reiss, *The Strategic Defense Initiative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992)
[24] Most importantly, see: Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*, and Ivo H. Daalder *The SDI Challenge to Europe* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Ballinger Publishing Company, 1987). See also: Michael Lucas, "SDI and Europe" *World Policy Journal*, 3(2), 219–249 (1986). For literature on specific states, see for France: John Fenske, "France and the Strategic Defence Initiative: speeding up or putting on the brakes?" *International Affairs*, 62(2), 231–246 (1986), and for West Germany: Christoph Bluth, "SDI: The Challenge to West Germany" *International Affairs*, 62(2) 247-264 (1986). For further reading, see also: Charles J. Ball, *European/American relations over the S.D.I.* (Ph.D. dissertation, London School of Economics, 1991).
[25] FitzGerald *Way out there in the blue*, especially 239-241
[26] Ko Colijn and Paul Rusman "Westeuropese antwoorden op SDI" in Philip P. Everts (ed.) *De droom der onkwetsbaarheid* (Kampen: Kok Agora, 1986): 129-130, and Lucas, "SDI and Europe", 221

trigger similar projects by other countries, resulting a costly and dangerous new arms race in space. [27] This was problematic in itself, but was also especially threatening to Europe, as it would be left behind the US and potentially the Soviets in this race.[28] Additionally, this renewed race for anti-ballistic missiles systems, if successful, potentially threatened the smaller nuclear arsenals of Britain and France; these arsenals guaranteed the strategic independence of both states, but due to the limited size of both arsenals, they could never overwhelm a potentially working Soviet SDI.[29] In addition to the loss of the nuclear potential, and even if there were to be a feasible protective system for Europe too, another issue would be that in the case of functional SDI systems, a significant part of the nuclear arsenals would be rendered ineffective and the MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) doctrine would be broken. This meant that as a replacement, conventional forces would become much more important in the Cold War military standoff. This was problematic because the Warsaw Pact states outnumbered NATO greatly in terms of conventional forces. The new situation would require great raises in defense spending, and Europe would most likely be the battlefield if any conventional clash would ever take place.[30]

However, all of the reservations about SDI were relative speculations, given that the US government had not communicated its intentions clearly yet. In December 1984, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher flew to Camp David for a meeting with President Reagan. Here, the two agreed to a joint statement - which will be elaborated on later - on SDI that featured four points, taking away the main British – and to a large extent, European – concerns, including treaty obligations, the upkeep of deterrence, and the shared Western commitment not to seek nuclear dominance or increased offensive capabilities.[31] By March 1985, American Secretary of State Weinberger announced the concrete plans for SDI at a NATO summit in Luxembourg; the European allies would be asked to openly support SDI in general, and European tech companies could bid on subcontracts to the US state funded SDI program. SDI would not interfere with the ABM treaty, and would not be implemented without previous consultation with the allies. In exchange for these commitments, the US government sought political and technological support of NATO allies for SDI. As such, the Reagan administration was now 'selling' SDI mainly as a research program.[32] The European allies proved to be quite susceptible to the argument that SDI would usher in a new era in military and civil technology; the allies would miss the boat if they would not join.

The big three all played a different role in the SDI and Europe story. Almost from the outset, there was, compared to the other European allies, little critique from the British on SDI, which was in line with the strong Anglo-American ties and the personal relationship that Thatcher and Reagan shared. After the introduction of the four point plan, the most compelling British concerns – mainly of strategic nature - had been taken care of and the British government supported SDI in broad lines, especially the research part. Additionally, the British most likely had the largest interest in acquiring the mentioned (military) technological contracts of all European allies, and this dominated much of the British debate on SDI.[33] Contrastingly, the French were generally very critical of SDI, which was mainly the result of the fact that the French position was relatively politicized compared to other European states. Nuclear deterrence was the cornerstone of French defense policy, and SDI was interpreted as a direct threat to this doctrine. Furthermore, the French considered the program an

[27] Gary L. Guertner, "Offensive Nuclear Forces, Strategic Defense and Arms Control" in Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*, 42 and Bluth, "SDI: The Challenge to West Germany", 248
[28] Daalder *The SDI Challenge to Europe* 24
[29] Daalder, 24,47-50, and Colijn and Rusman in Everts, 129
[30] Daalder, 19,40-41, and Lucas, "SDI and Europe", 220-222
[31] Daalder, 13
[32] Lucas "SDI and Europe", 221-222
[33] Daalder, 12-16, Reiss, *The Strategic Defence Initiative*, 125-126, and Trevor Taylor, "SDI – The British Response" in Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*, 129-149

attempt by the Americans to expand their dominance over both the Soviets and the Europeans; the European partners would be junior partners to an American-owned technological program. France's emphasis on French and European autonomy led to its most important unique contribution in the SDI story, which was the effort to found an alternative European R&D (i.e. Research and Development) program: EUREKA.[34] However, in March 1986, rightwing politician Jacques Chirac was elected prime minister, and France shifted towards support of SDI – officially in May 1986.[35] In the FRG, the subject of SDI was more important in debates on security, strategy, and international relations than in most other European states. Within the German political landscape, there was sympathy for both the American and the French positions, which led to West German support for both the SDI and EUREKA research programs. The unique role of the FRG was mainly its – temporary- advocacy for the European Defense Initiative, which would be a European-run program aimed at developing a system to protect the European NATO states from nuclear missiles, against shorter range missiles than those threatening the US.[36] However, the EDI plan never became very concrete and it encountered resistance from many sides. Eventually, it slipped off the agenda between 1986-1988.[37]

As noted previously, the literature, both contemporary and historiographical, has focused on the big 3.This is neither surprising nor necessarily problematic, but the result is that there are hardly any studies of the political reactions of several other, relatively smaller, European states to SDI, including the Netherlands. The most notable study on the Netherlands specifically is presented in a subchapter by Robert J. Berloznik named *the Reaction to SDI in the Netherlands* in *Star Wars and European Defense*, a broad study published in 1987. In five pages, Berloznik provides a brief overview of the Dutch governmental, parliamentary and civil society stances towards SDI between 1983 and mid-1985.[38] This is not to say that there are no publications on SDI in the Dutch language; most notable are three studies, published in 1985 and 1986, while the debates surrounding SDI were at their heights. These studies are the Flemish *Star Wars* by Berloznik and Patrick De Boosere, *De Droom der Onkwetsbaarheid* edited by Philip Everts, and *Duel om de ruimte* by G.C. Berkhof. The former provides an insightful overview, albeit in occasional popular-science language, of the strategic, economic, technological and political implications of SDI, as well as an insight in the extensive industrial and political lobby complex and a brief overview of the Belgian policy towards the program. However, it does not engage with role and the reactions of the Netherlands specifically.[39] *De Droom der Onkwetsbaarheid* (the dream of invincibility) provides a broad, high quality study of the European dimension to SDI by a number of prominent Dutch scholars in fields ranging from physics to ethics, political science and economics. While especially its chapters on the strategic, political, and technological implications are relevant to understanding the climate in which the Dutch political reactions to SDI came about, the Dutch position – governmental, parliamentary, or any other form - is rarely mentioned.[40] *Duel om de ruimte* (the duel for space) by G.C. Berkhof was published in 1985 and has a broader focus, namely the use of space for all military and intelligence operations by the US and the USSR in the Cold War.[41] This work is certainly the best study in the Dutch language with regards

[34] Daalder, 22-25, and Alain Carton, "SDI – The French debate on Deterrence" in Brauch, 150-165
[35] --, "SDI is voor einde deze eeuw niet operationeel" *De Volkskrant*, October 14, 1986: 4
[36] Hans Günter Brauch "The Political Debate in the Federal Republic of Germany (SDI – The West German Debate)" in Brauch(ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*, 166-217, Daalder, 17-22, Bluth, "SDI: The Challenge to West Germany", and Reiss, *The Strategic Defence Initiative*, 126-127. The subtopic of EDI is dealt with in detail in chapter 3.
[37] Reiss, 127-132
[38] Berloznik, "SDI in the Benelux Countries" in Brauch, 234-235,243-250
[39] Robert Berloznik and Patrick De Boosere, *Star Wars* (Berchem: Uitgeverij EPO, 1986)
[40] Everts (ed.) *De droom der onkwetsbaarheid*
[41] G.C. Berkhof, *Duel om de ruimte. Aspecten van Westeuropese veiligheid* ('s-Gravenhage: Instituut Clingendael, Staatsuitgeverij, 1985)

to the context of SDI within the larger issue of the employment of space-based military systems by different actors, as well as on the technological and military-industrial complex matters. General Berkhof would become one of the most vocal proponents of SDI in the Netherlands during the 1980s. The mentioned publication, as well as further publications – which are analyzed in a later chapter – sparked intense academic debate about the feasibility and desirability of SDI and EDI. This debate was generally on the strategic results of these programs.[42]

What can be distilled from the literature available on the Netherlands and SDI specifically follows the broader lines of SDI and Western Europe. The Dutch government had no knowledge of the plan before its announcement in 1983. There was little to no response to the plan until March 1985, when the NATO summit in Luxembourg necessitated the Dutch government to respond, and the government had much more concrete information from the American authorities to base a decision on.[43] In terms of Dutch policy, in 1985, contributing authors in *De Droom der Onkwetsbaarheid* made a list of the most important factors to evaluate the SDI program on, as used by the Dutch government. They listed these, based on their analysis of Dutch governmental policy. They included the SDI program's threat to the ABM treaty, the prevention of disengagement of American military presence in Europe, impacts on nuclear deterrence, INF negotiations, and the prevention of a new arms race.[44] The Netherlands were one of the leading European states to call for a unified European response to SDI, and the American demand for research participation in particular, mostly within the framework of the recently revived Western European Union[45] (WEU) framework.[46] Additionally, by mid-1985, the Dutch government had announced its participation in EUREKA, and that it attached "great value" to the development of defenses against the kinds of missiles threatening Western Europe.[47] By 1986, the Dutch government had decided not to sign an official agreement with the Americans on research cooperation and science and technology exchange under the SDI umbrella, thereby not following a number of other European states like Britain and FRG. However, the Dutch government announced it would not prohibit Dutch companies and institutions from taking part on their own behalf.[48]

The literature available on Dutch relations to SDI is generally descriptive and mildly analytical; it does not provide any sweeping theses or larger explanations. This literature generally bases itself on parliamentary debates, newspaper articles and speeches, but never to the extent that a comprehensive overview, let alone analysis, of SDI and the Netherlands is formed. From the information generally found in the – limited - literature, the stance of the Dutch government can generally be considered to be quietly critical, yet not obstructive or openly 'rebellious' in NATO relations. Given the lack of argumentative literature, especially historical, on the topic at hand, the construction of such an argumentation comprises one of the main purposes of this thesis. Furthermore, this thesis also serves to test the general narrative on SDI and Europe with a new detailed case-study of the Netherlands, to see whether or not Dutch policies formed any exceptions from the analyses of the big 3 in the literature.

[42] Berloznik "SDI and the Benelux Countries" in Brauch, 249
[43] Ibid. 234-235, 243-250
[44] Ko Colijn and Paul Rusman "Westeuropese antwoorden op SDI" in Everts (ed.) *De droom der onkwetsbaarheid*:131
[45] The WEU was a military alliance, revived in 1983-1984. Member states at the time were Belgium, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, West Germany, and the United Kingdom
[46] Robert C. Hughes *SDI: A View from Europe* (Washington D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1990): 70,93
[47] Berloznik in Brauch, 244-245
[48] Daalder, *The SDI Challenge to Europe*, 82

The first phase: 1983-1984

The first part of the Dutch political reaction to SDI ranges from Reagan's announcement of the plan in March 1983, leading up to mid- to late-1984. This period is marked by hardly any response from the government's side, and few – yet increasing – reactions from the parliament's side. Furthermore, characteristics of this period are general confusion about the plan's general impact and details due to a lack of information, and the association within Dutch politics of SDI with another type of military use of space, namely anti-satellite technology. Moreover, during these years, the political-strategic concerns – shared to a large extent by Dutch politicians and the government – became clear. Yet, the government remained hesitant to voice those concerns. Of course, the cruise missile controversy, at its peak during 1983-1984, played a role in the background. In this chapter, this first phase is put into a chronological story, both outlining and analyzing the reactions and policies. Then follows additional comparative analysis of the Dutch first phase to the reaction of the other West European states in this period that rises from the literature outlined in the literature review.

Announcements, ASATs, and arguments

Before Reagan's announcement of March 23, 1983, the Netherlands had already taken on a leading role in the international discussion on what was becoming the concern of the use of space for military purposes. Most important in this discussion was the development of an arms race in space. Concerns mostly involved the development of anti-satellite technology (ASAT), which was a category of weapons of several natures – airplanes, missiles, and satellites – which were in development at the time both in the Soviet Union and the United States to combat the other side's (military) satellite potential. Within the Dutch political climate, there had, for years already, been support for Dutch diplomatic efforts to bring about multilateral arms limitation and arms reduction agreements regarding the military use of space. Given the Netherlands' modest size, especially regarding military might, multilateral fora for such agreements were the best avenue to achieve concrete results.

From Dutch contributions to these fora, it can be seen that the Dutch were truly committed to curbing the rise of the militarization of space. These Dutch diplomatic efforts were mainly conducted within the Conference on Disarmament, hereafter CD (also known as CoD). This was (and is) a multilateral forum located in Geneva, playing a key role in multilateral disarmament negotiations. In the Ministry of Defense's budget proposal for 1983, Minister of Defense Job de Ruiter wrote that "[t]he Netherlands have also put efforts into making 'prevention of an arms race in space' an agenda point on the CD's agenda. In the spring meeting, a cautious first step has been made in the assessment of the problems in this area."[49] Minister of Foreign Affairs van den Broek stated in an answer to questions asked by members of the *Tweede Kamer* - the Second Chamber, i.e. the Dutch lower house/House of Representatives - that "the Government assigns high priority to the question of the prevention of an arms race in space, and in this light the Government will remain actively involved in the deliberations within the Transatlantic alliance and the Geneva CD on this topic. The Government regards this issue as important as the limitation of nuclear and conventional weapons and the prohibition of chemical weapons."[50] As such, in the eyes of the Dutch government, the increased military use of space was an issue of serious concern - an issue that was part of the larger complex of Cold War weaponry build-up which had to be combatted constantly. For instance, Minister van den Broek stated in a Second Chamber debate on March 9, 1983, just two weeks before Reagan's "Star Wars speech" that "it is of importance to the Government that [not only quantitative, such as nuclear

[49] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 17 600 "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1983. Hoofdstuk V. Departement van Buitenlandse Zaken."memorie van toelichting (1982): 10

[50] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 17 600 nr. 37 "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1983 Hoofdstuk V Departement van Buitenlandse Zaken" Lijst van antwoorden (January 6, 1983): 11

and conventional, but also] the qualitative aspects of armament are considered in the general arms control policies. For instance, one can think of the arms race in space. The risks of disturbance of [international strategic] stability are surely not just fictional with these developments."[51]

On March 23, President Reagan made his famous speech on American television. The Dutch, like the other allies, had not been informed, let alone consulted, of the speech's content beforehand.[52] At the Council of Ministers, Prime Minister Lubbers informed his colleagues that he had "received from President Reagan the text of his speech on American television on future defense politics."[53] It seems that there was little sense of urgency among the ministers with regards to the strategic and/or political effects of the speech. The initial reaction in Dutch media was critical, but linkages to Dutch security or Dutch foreign policy were hardly made; the focus was on the implications for the negotiations on nuclear arms limitations, arms control and East-West relations in general – not in relation to the Netherlands - and the developments regarding the militarization of space (with a focus on ASAT-systems).[54]

In the first months after Reagan's speech, SDI was not an issue of any serious importance. In the fall of 1983, the Dutch Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs (*Commissie voor Buitenlandse Zaken*) traveled to Washington D.C., Bonn, Moscow, and the NATO headquarters. In its sizeable report for the Second Chamber of November 14, the committee listed a number of critical points with regards to US Cold War and East-West relations policies. This criticism was much more vocal and detailed than the Dutch governmental tone had been, including the reaction to the young SDI plan. The committee reported on public sentiments in America regarding the arms races and arms reduction, and held that "there is no technical solution to prevent a nuclear war. In this respect, a concept such as the 'Star War' is also not a solution."[55] The committee continued by stating that "the Soviet-Union has offered relevant peace proposals, such as (…) reaching an agreement of mutually agreeable terms in the UN and international fora such as Geneva and Vienna. The USSR has done the historic concession that it shall not be the first to strike with nuclear weapons, and it has set a unilateral moratorium with regards to the launching of defense systems into space." The committee went on to emphasize that the US, on the other hand, announced new '$18 to $27 billion' plans to develop new space weapons.[56] These arguments, while a bit more extreme than in later years, fit into the stance that a number of the opposition parties in the Dutch parliament, especially on the left wing, adopted.

The difference in tone between this parliamentary committee report and the explanatory memorandum (*memorie van toelichting*) of Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the budget of 1984 was striking. The memorandum featured only a few references to military use of space. Where it did, it started with strong emphasis on Dutch efforts to promote multilateral arms reduction and limitation talks, especially in the CD, however, "in the current political climate only limited progress could be made".[57] With regards to the mentioned arms reduction and limitation deliberations, the ministry once again stated that chemical, nuclear and space weapons are of the highest priority to the Netherlands' government; "the question of preventing an arms race in space is slowly receiving the attention it deserves. (…) most Western states, including the Netherlands, hold that, given current circumstances, it is not realistic to strive for a complete demilitarization of space. (…) international deliberations need

[51] Tweede Kamer, 1982-1983, 58ste vergadering (March 9, 1983): 2924
[52] FitzGerald, *Way Out There in the Blue*, 205-207
[53] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad notulen, (March 25, 1983): 6
[54] See for instance: *NRC Handelsblad* March 24,1983: 1,5, *De Volkskrant* March 25, 1983: 3, 5, and *De Telegraaf* March 25, 1983: 3,9
[55] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 16249 nrs.11-12 (November 14, 1983): 15
[56] Ibid., 53,68
[57] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 18100 "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1984. Hoofdstuk V. Departement van Buitenlandse Zaken" memorie van toelichting (1983): 12

to focus on preventing destabilizing developments in space, especially anti-satellite weapons."[58] The section on space weaponry was rather limited in size and detail, and engaged mostly with anti-satellite weaponry rather than with the ABM/BMD (Ballistic Missile Defense) systems that Reagan had announced earlier that year. This emphasis on ASATs when speaking about the military use of space, combined with the overlap between Reagan's SDI plan as announced in March and the already ongoing ASAT developments in the category of space arms race, were important features of the Dutch political narrative in 1983-1984.

These features were not unique to the political sphere – they were present in Dutch media as well. For instance, *NRC Handelsblad*, a Dutch quality newspaper, ran an article in September 1983 on space weaponry. In it, the terms "star wars" and "arms race in space" were used to describe the development of ASAT systems.[59] The linkage between ASATs and SDI's BMD capabilities in space was influenced by the fact that both fell into the same arms limitation negotiation category in the Geneva CD, but there was another link. The CIA reported in a confidential study in June 1984 that "BMD weapons can have anti-satellite capability, and French, Dutch, and Italian officials have stressed this linkage."[60] The link between these two weapon systems would continue to influence the debate on SDI until mid-1984.

In the most important governmental publications of the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs, however, SDI was still not specifically mentioned at this time; as the year 1983 came to a closing, the Dutch Ministry of Defense, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, published the important *Defensienota* 1984-1993 (Defense White Paper 1984-1993). In it, the Dutch government outlined all important policy plans regarding military and security issues for the coming decade. Under the header "technological developments", the ministries reported that new military technological developments, for instance new anti-missile defenses and space armaments, could potentially have significantly destabilizing effects if successfully implemented, and "since already implemented technologies are hard to control, it is important to keep in mind the dangerous effects of deploying new technologies. With respect to the case of defense with strategic missiles, within SALT there have been successful deliberations of the prohibition of modern, effective ABM systems."[61] It seems that this was a first allusion to the American intention to develop anti-ballistic missile defenses from space. However, the same piece goes on to say that "[i]t is of great importance that the USA and the USSR maintain the ABM treaty, however, this will depend to a large extent on the developments in offensive weaponry or on the extent to which the negotiations on limitations of such weapons are successful."[62] The argument that Reagan's SDI was essentially offensive in nature was a rarely made - especially in 1983-1984. Therefore, it is fair to say this passage did not refer directly to SDI. *The Defensienota* also reemphasized the Dutch commitment to "preventing and working against destabilizing military developments in space, such as the development of ASATs".[63] It is fair to conclude that, while the 1984 *Defensienota* did touch upon aspects related to SDI, it did not directly engage with the new American plan.

Several MP's observed the same, and some of them, including MP de Vries of the opposition party PvdA, submitted questions, asking the Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs to engage more thoroughly with the different aspects of space weaponry and especially the anti-ICBM (intercontinental ballistic missile) aspects thereof. In the answers, received on December 12, the

[58] Ibid., 13
[59] *NRC Handelsblad*, September 19, 1983: 7
[60] Central Intelligence Agency, Office of European Analysis "Memorandum: Allied Attitudes Towards the Strategic Defense Initiative and US Development of Anti-Satellite Weapons" (June 1984). Sanitized version declassified 2011: 3
[61] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 18169 nrs. 1-2 "Defensienota 1984-1993" (n.d.): 43
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid., 75

ministers first repeated the information previously provided on the satellite weapons, but then they engaged with Reagan's anti-ICBM plan for the first time. "The remarks by President Reagan concerning a shield against missiles were, at the time, made with an eye on the far future. It is a futuristic concept, with the intentions providing safety through defensive systems, but it is still in the phase of initial research. Apart from questions about the technical and financial feasibility of this plan, there are several questions that need to be addressed critically. Firstly, it must be addressed what the implementation of these systems would mean for the current NATO-strategy of 'flexible response'. It is also uncertain whether, in the period in which both sides would install such systems, there would be no instable situations, and whether there would be a new arms race in offensive and defensive weapon systems. In this context, it is also important to carefully consider the consequences with regards to arms limitation deliberations and for results already achieved in that field, especially the ABM treaty."[64] This statement, made by the Minister as representing the Dutch government, constitutes an important first insight in the concerns that the Dutch Defense and Foreign Affairs policy makers shared. However, the fact that the program was regarded to be futuristic explains to some extent the lack of detailed and vocal engagement from the government with SDI up to this point.

That these answers, submitted in a letter, did not satisfy the Second Chamber became evident in the first debate on the 1984 Defense budget (and indirectly on the *Defensienota*) on February 8. De Vries argued with regards to weapons in space that it was "a topic that (…) has not received enough attention [in the Second Chamber], in my opinion, especially since the moment President Reagan held his, by now famous or infamous, speech on March 23, 1983, on his new vision for the future that he wants to offer to mankind.(…) We have asked questions about this and I am not satisfied with the answers. (…) I think those answers do no justice to general discussion that is going on currently. They certainly don't do justice to the facts of the matter." [65] De Vries went on to emphasize the far-reaching technological and strategic implications if the United States, and perhaps the Soviet Union too, would be able to achieve such anti-ballistic systems and this level of technology in general. The crux of his interruption was his conclusion that "the Netherlands will have to take action rapidly. (…) it is time that the Netherlands prioritize this issue in both its policy analyses and its diplomatic efforts."[66] De Vries was not the only one to urge the government to be more specific and more critical of SDI; MP Engwirda, leader of the oppositional D'66 fraction, went a step further, by stating that Reagan's plans for a defensive space system were "in the opinion of our fraction a direct threat to world peace."[67] MP Ubels-van Veen, member of the oppositional Pacifist-Socialist Party (PSP) even submitted a motion, explicitly calling for the government to ask the Americans within NATO to stop the development of ASAT and SDI technology.[68] After disagreement with MP De Vries, and several interruptions, van den Broek responded that the Netherlands had already taken an active role by raising the issue of space armaments time and again, especially in Geneva, and he did not know what else De Vries wanted him to do. He did state that he was prepared to agree with the motion as submitted by Ubels-van Veen the day before, as "the conclusion supports the government's policy, namely by calling to emphasize to the Americans to exercise restraint with regard to the development of weapon systems in space."[69]

The last response by van den Broek is crucial. He could support the motion because it supported already existing government policy; to plead against the development of space armaments, most importantly ASATs, in Geneva. However, in the same debate, Minister de Ruiter acknowledged

[64] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 18100 nr. 56 "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1984. Hoofdstukken V en X." Nota naar aanleiding van het verslag (December 12, 1983): 4
[65] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, 45ste vergadering (February 8, 1984): 2890
[66] Ibid., 2891
[67] Ibid., 2897
[68] Ibid., 2908
[69] Ibid., 2947-2953

that although SDI "regards technologies of which the feasibility still have to be proven", "if such a systems proved to be feasible, this would have great consequences for NATO."[70] Surely, members of opposition parties D'66 and PvdA were just as concerned about ASATs as the ministers, but held that the governmental emphasis was too one-sided towards the ASAT systems, of which the Soviet Union had already developed a working system, and that the governmental reaction showed that the government did not recognize how urgent and problematic the American SDI plan was.

Even though a coherently outlined standpoint had not been formulated yet, the debates and documents cited above help to piece together a number of the main governmental concerns – shared with most political parties - with regards to SDI in early 1984: as a first, SDI would be a threat to existing arms control agreements, most importantly the ABM treaty, and could endanger further arms control efforts. Secondly, SDI could trigger the acceleration of Cold War arms races, especially in space. Thirdly, SDI was potentially a destabilizing factor in international relations, especially between East and West, but also within NATO. Fourthly, for NATO specifically, a number of core elements of NATO strategy, such as "flexible response" could be nullified by SDI.

Throughout the later months of 1984, the position of the government did not change much. However, these months were marked by both increasing clarity on the American intents, size, and scope of SDI, and by an increasing sense of urgency to formulate a response. Whereas the explanatory addenda to the Foreign Affairs and Defense budgets for 1983 and 1984 had featured little to no mentions of the issue of ABMs in space – often only, if at all, in the context of ASATs or arms control – the explanatory memorandum of the Ministry of Defense's budget for 1985, published in late 1984, included a full separate heading "developments in space" under the chapter "current and operational issues". In it, a four-page long commentary of SDI was provided to the Second Chamber, including a remarkably detailed technical explanation and an overview of all "political-strategic aspects" relevant, which was, though more thorough, quite similar to the arguments as pieced together above from the months before.[71]

That the Dutch government, like the fractions in the parliament, cared deeply about arms control is clearly illustrated by Minister van den Broek's visit to the United States in March. Van den Broek met – shortly - with President Reagan and vice-president Bush, among others. In an oral report to the Parliamentary Committee for Foreign Affairs, van den Broek said that in this meeting, which was, unsurprisingly, mostly about the Dutch placement of the cruise missiles, he had raised the issue of "the arms race in space and the American responsibilities therein.(…) The American president had personally emphasized that he attached great value to arms control. This was later extensively confirmed by the vice-president [Bush]."[72]

Yet, at this time, the Dutch government had still refused to openly and concretely adopt a critical opinion vis-à-vis SDI - and the arguments used by the cabinet to defend this lack of a clear opinion can be outlined, too. The relative silence, even compared to that of the French and West Germans, was remarkable.[73] An advertisement in the *NRC Handelsblad* in August 1984 from the

[70] Ibid., 2962

[71] Tweede Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18600 nr.2 "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1985. Hoofdstuk X Ministerie van Defensie" memorie van toelichting (1984): 13-17

[72] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 18100 nr. 87 "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1984. Hoofdstuk V Departement Buitenlandse Zaken" Verslag van een mondeling overleg (March 13, 1984): 5-6

[73] These states had made more serious allusions to their skepticism regarding SDI in public, especially France. French President Mitterrand had stated in September 1983 in a speech to the UNGA that there had to be an end to 'the bidding higher and higher of anti-missile, anti-submarine and anti-satellite weapons' and that 'warning people of the dangers coming from space is another imperative. Will space become one more field where ancient terrestrial antagonisms can develop without limit?' source: Fenske "France and the Strategic Defense Initiative", 232. In Germany, Defense minister Wörner had stated in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, three days after Reagan's speech, that the plan sounded like 'absolute Zukunftsmusik' i.e. a plan of the far future. Hans Rühle, director of the planning staff of the Ministry of Defense, outlined a number of serious strategic concerns with the idea of

magazine *De Tijd* read: "(…)With space as a battlefield, a new arms race has begun. Why is the *Binnenhof* [i.e. government and parliament] not concerned?"[74] As has just been shown, Second Chamber politicians were in fact openly concerned. However, this was clearly not communicated effectively to the public, nor to the media for that matter. Among the government's arguments for this relative lack of public criticism of SDI, two stand out:[75] the first was that the SDI program was vague and futuristic. This argument was not unfactual; Reagan's speech had been vague, and throughout 1983-early 1984, the exact goals, timeframe, feasibility, and scale of the SDI project had remained equally vague.[76] In April 1984, the NATO allies had been officially briefed on SDI for the first time.[77] While this effort contributed somewhat to the understanding of SDI in general, it certainly did not remove the impression that the program was a project for the far future. Four phases of SDI development and implementation were outlined, in which the recently founded SDIO that, for instance, the first phase labelled "research" would end in 1990, and implementation would take place only around 2000-2005 or later.[78] Exemplary for the government's second argument was an answer to questions raised in by members of the Second Chamber regarding "Star Wars" in February 1984 from Minister de Ruiter. While, in principle, he stated, the government shared the parliament's concerns with SDI, he emphasized that "the Soviet Union has had the possession of an operational ASAT system for quite some time (…) and it is the only one of the two superpowers to possess, albeit limited, an anti-missile system."[79] The *tu quoque* argument – precluding official criticism of SDI because the Soviets were developing similar systems - was prevalent in answers by the relevant ministers to both written and oral questions throughout 1984.

The arguments as presented above raise a number of questions. For instance: was the governmental interpretation of SDI as a space race problem, related to ASAT, a genuine case of interpretation based on available information, or a strategy to divert attention from a potentially disastrous issue in Netherlands-America relations? And did the Dutch government buy into the argument that, since the Soviets were developing ASATs and a limited ABM system, SDI was a logical counter-measure and should not to be criticized too much? Ivo Daalder argued in *The SDI Challenge to Europe* that the European governments had come up with the notion that SDI was a logical reaction to Soviet research efforts, and that the Americans, especially Reagan, had originally never intended this relation.[80] Indeed, both Soviet developments at the time, and American statements regarding SDI, make it doubtful whether SDI was truly a legitimate reaction to Soviet technological advances.

Yet, to be sure, Dutch officials were genuinely concerned about ASATs. The CIA reported in June 1984, in an internal classified memo, that "[the Dutch] have actively sought support within the Alliance in recent months for negotiations on ASAT weapons. (…) Within the Alliance, the Netherlands has proposed three alternative bans on ASAT weapons."[81] The fact that ASAT technology was more concrete and further developed, especially at this time, than SDI technology most likely contributed to the Dutch prioritization of ASATs over SDI. But it also has to do with the

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rendering nuclear missiles "impotent and obsolete". Source: Bluth "SDI: the challenge to West Germany", 247-248

[74] *NRC Handelsblad* August 29, 1984: 5

[75] See for a complete overview of the use of these arguments: Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, 46ste vergadering (February 9, 1984): 2947-2973

[76] FitzGerald *Way Out There in the Blue*, 241-242

[77] Daalder, *The SDI Challenge to Europe*, 8

[78] Berloznik and De Boosere, *Star Wars*, 52

[79] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, no. 18169 nr.9 "Defensienota 1984-1993", Derde lijst van antwoorden, (March 21, 1984)

[80] Daalder, 20-21,72

[81] CIA Office of European Analysis "Memorandum: Allied Attitudes" (1984), 8

aforementioned Dutch concern that ASAT and SDI systems would feature overlapping technology. This fact meant that, theoretically, SDI systems could be built using the technology developed for ASATs, or even more importantly, ASAT systems could be used not only against satellites but also for ABM purposes. Hence, the Dutch argued for instance in the Geneva CD, the prohibition of only one of the two types of arms would be ineffective.[82] While these insights, for instance, help to understand why the Dutch kept associating ASATs with SDI, they do not convincingly explain why the Dutch government was so hesitant to voice criticism with regards to the negative effects of SDI.

As is clear by now, Dutch government officials were hesitant to criticize SDI in public – i.e. the media and parliament – and continued to focus on ASATs rather than SDI. This could not be said, however, for their messages through the bilateral and alliance channels. In the aforementioned memo, the CIA stated that "[t]he Dutch have been outspoken in expressing their concerns in Allied discussions on the Strategic Defense Initiative"[83] and "French, Dutch and West German foreign office and defense officials have emphasized that the SDI could eventually decouple Western Europe from the US (…) in addition, [the Allies] are dubious about the ability to defend against tactical nuclear and short-range weapons. West German, French, and Dutch defense officials have voiced particular concern about this aspect."[84] Similarly, at NPG - i.e. the Nuclear Planning Group of NATO - summit of April 1984, Weinberger had explained the American plans "to develop a comprehensive space-based missile defense" and several European NATO ministers had responded rather critically, with FRG Minister Wörner being the most vocal about his skepticism about SDI's feasibility, strategic implications, and implications for arms control. De Ruiter had agreed and added that the program was "full of question marks. It has many aspects that worry us."[85] As such, neither the argument that SDI was a counter measure, nor the direct link between ASATs and SDI, were reasons for Dutch officials to abstain from outspoken criticism towards the Americans – so outspoken that the Americans specifically reported on the Dutch - about the strategic and political consequences of SDI specifically. Indeed, the lack of governmental public criticism of SDI originated in something else.

The most recurring argument for lack of a clear stance by the cabinet on SDI, namely the unclarity of SDI, was used in the debate on June 18 with the parliamentary committee on defense too. However, in this debate, the ministers somewhat contradicted themselves; they admitted that they had voiced criticism and concerns towards the Americans and other allies. Indeed, in this meeting, van den Broek stated: "[i]n our bilateral contacts, also with the United States, recently in the closed NATO session, I have insisted on progress in this regard [i.e. limiting the production of space, especially SDI, weapons] (…) an elaborate explanation of the dangers that the Netherlands sees with regards to this arms race in space has been provided thereby,"[86] thus officially confirming for the first time that the Netherlands had voiced their concerns about space armaments with the allies for the first time. PvdA MP Stemerdink was not satisfied with this vague concession about Dutch criticism – it did not mention SDI specifically - and he proposed a motion, which was rejected about a week later due to a lack of support from the conservative and rightwing fractions,[87] which warned for SDI's consequences for the arms race in space and the strategic position of Europe within NATO, after which it "ask[ed] the government to make a clear statement against a policy like "Star Wars" and to raise this issue

[82] Pericles Gasparini Alves, *Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space: A Guide to the Discussions in the Conference on Disarmament (UNIDIR/91/79)* (New York: United Nations Publication. United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in Geneva, 1991): 35
[83] CIA Office of European Analysis "Memorandum: Allied Attitudes" (1984): 8
[84] Ibid., 3
[85] Daalder, *The SDI Challenge to Europe*, 265, and *NRC Handelsblad* April 4, 1984: 5
[86] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, UCV 111 "111de vergadering: vaste commissie voor Defensie" (June 18, 1984): 111-30
[87] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, 93ste vergadering "Regeling van werkzaamheden" (June 26, 1984): 5422-5423

within NATO and the Euro-group in particular."[88] MP Wagenaar of the small Christian-Conservative RPF, even urged van den Broek to produce a *nota* on SDI, i.e. an official governmental policy statement. In a response, van den Broek argued that he and Minister de Ruiter felt that they could not "fill such a nota with relevant considerations regarding this matter (…) I once again emphasize that we are dealing with a very futuristic concept, about which we have not yet learned an awful lot yet. Several allies have initiated inquiries with the United States, but [SDI] is in a very preliminary state."[89] Thus, the preliminary state of SDI, while factual as has been shown previously, did not keep the Dutch government from voicing concerns on strategy and politics in confidential channels, yet it was used as an excuse for the ministers not to make public statements – let alone reports - against SDI.

Further explanation of the lack of public governmental criticism might be found in the CIA's observation that "The Hague fears that the current public discussion of potential US defensive and offensive weapons in space will heighten the skepticism about the US commitment to arms control already widespread in the Netherlands in connection with INF."[90] Indeed, with an eye on the sources analyzed in this chapter, it seems fair to suggest that the Dutch government tried to create as little publicity, positive or negative, as possible about SDI. This reasoning would explain why SDI was not mentioned in the *Defensienota*, why van den Broek emphasized that Reagan had told him he was committed to arms control, and why van den Broek and de Ruiter repeatedly emphasized their efforts to realize limitations of space arms while not specifically mentioning SDI. MP Wagenaar was right to say that "[t]he advantage of a [n official government standpoint in a] *nota* is that we can have committee meetings and hearings about it"[91] but van den Broek seems to have been rather unenthusiastic about an explicit governmental standpoint to be debated at length. This stance is especially unsurprising given the fact that the Dutch government was under intense pressure from domestic and foreign actors with regards to the placement of the cruise missiles at exactly this moment in time; the placement decision had to be made by June 1, 1984.[92] SDI, with the associated plan of "rendering these nuclear missiles impotent and obsolete" would have been unlikely to make the government's pro-INF placement arguments any stronger.[93] In West Germany, similar arguments - linking SDI and INF - had been made already, especially by the leftwing opposition; SDI – and official support for it by European governments - could give the INF opposition a powerful new argument.[94] Further detailed research into the motivations for the lack of an official, critical standpoint from the side of the Dutch government somewhat exceed the scope of this thesis. I believe that further archival research in the future could shed more light on this issue.

Comparison: the initial phase of SDI and Europe

Now that the Dutch political response of the "first phase" has been reconstructed and analyzed, this response can be (further) compared to the narrative in the literature on the reaction of the other European states, especially the big three in the same period. The earlier stages of the Dutch political reaction to SDI, compared to those of the big three, are characterized by overlapping concerns between the Netherlands and those three states, especially France and FRG, but oftentimes for different reasons or to different extents. Below, a number of the leading arguments in the Dutch discourse are compared with SDI and Europe.

The links made in the earlier Dutch debate on SDI between space-based BMDs and ASATs,

[88] Tweede Kamer, 1983-1984, UCV 111, 111-48
[89] Ibid., 111-52
[90] CIA Office of European Analysis "Memorandum: Allied Attitudes" (1984), 8
[91] UCV 111, 111-52
[92] Van Diepen, *Hollanditis*, 281-284
[93] Berloznik and De Boosere also suggest that the Dutch government feared a negative impact of SDI upon the already highly problematic INF controversy. See: Berloznik and De Boosere, *Star Wars*, 258
[94] Daalder, *The SDI Challenge to Europe*, 10-11

and concerns about the militarization of space, were not unique to the Netherlands *in se*. In France, SDI and ASATs were brought up under the same header oftentimes, for instance in June 1984 in the contribution to the CD by François de la Gorce - French permanent representative to the CD in Geneva - on the restriction of space weaponry.[95] British Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe did the same in March 1985 in a speech on SDI, in which he warned for the potentially destabilizing effects of both space-based ABMs and ASATs and the linkage between the two.[96] However, on the French side, the concerns about space weaponry are generally argued to have stemmed not as much from a principled arms limitation stance like with the Dutch, but primarily from the deeper French fear that Europe – and France with it – would fail to catch up with this new step in the race of armaments technology, and as a result, become more dependent on the Americans. This had to do with the French preoccupation with European political and strategic autonomy and the essential role of space technology therein. For this reason, the French had also attempted to step up Franco-European space projects such as ESA (European Space Agency).[97] In Britain, unlike in the Netherlands, ASATs never truly constituted a central part of the discourse on SDI; occasionally ASATs were an issue quite on the side.[98] As for West Germany, the leading literature suggests that ASATs were of little prominence in the West German SDI debate.[99] Yet, the French introduced a proposal in the Geneva CD on June 12 for all states, especially the US and USSR, to agree to quite far reaching technical and numerical restrictions of ABMs and ASATs in space.[100] Reporting on these developments, the CIA wrote that, apart from France, which was clearly most vocal about a treaty on the military use of space, many other allies supported talks on limiting space-based armaments, including West Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy. They reported that "[e]ven the UK, customarily the closest to the US on arms control issues, wants negotiations on ballistic missile defense during the research phase and reportedly is considering support for limits on ASAT weapons."[101] As such, the topics of ASATs and arms control in space were not completely irrelevant in other European states; they were only less prominent in the larger SDI debate than in the Netherlands, or originating from different concerns in the case of France.

The position that SDI was, at least in part, a legitimate reaction to Soviet developments was not unique to the Dutch either; this argument was used in many European countries. For instance, Belgian Foreign Affairs Minister Tindemans made the same argument in May 1985 to the Belgian paper *Knack*[102] and so did FRG Foreign Minister Wörner in December 1985 to the *Bundestag*.[103] This argument was adopted the Reagan administration, which changed its domestic and international promotion of SDI from an optimistic plan to a reaction to Soviet activities.[104] Even though this argument would become prominent in 1985[105] - and thus the Dutch government was relatively early with it in 1984 – it was far from unique in the European context.

As might be expected, the concerns as heard in France and Britain about the potential destructive impact of SDI on the autonomous nuclear capacities of these respective states – and thereby of Western Europe – were less prevalent in the Netherlands. This had to do with the obvious fact that the Netherlands did not have such capabilities, but also with the relatively anti-nuclear sentiments in the 1980s Netherlands – as can be seen with the INF debate – that would not have made

[95] Carton "SDI – The French Debate on Deterrence" in Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*, 152
[96] Taylor "SDI – The British Response" in Brauch, 132
[97] Carton in Brauch, 154-156, and Daalder, 22-24
[98] Taylor in Brauch, 129-148
[99] For instance, see: Brauch "SDI – The West German Debate" in Brauch, 166-171, and Daalder, 17-21
[100] Carton in Brauch, 152-153
[101] CIA Office of European Analysis "Memorandum: Allied Attitudes" (1984): 1-2
[102] Berloznik and De Boosere, 290-291
[103] Daalder, 20-21
[104] Reiss *The Strategic Defence Initiative*, 168-169
[105] Daalder, 72

such arguments very convincing in the Dutch context. Furthermore, the French preoccupation with Franco-European autonomy was occupying the minds of Dutch politicians to a much lesser extent. The only shared element therein was the criticism of militarization of space by both the Americans and the Soviets – for different reasons, however. Rather, the Dutch focused strongly on stability and arms control. The most significant overlap between the Netherlands and another state was clearly with the Germans. Hans Brauch, editor of *Star Wars and European Defence*, analyzed the first stages of reaction to SDI in FRG politics in the following manner: "1. From March 1983 to March 1984 the official reaction was dominated by benign neglect, and an official silence on both President Reagan's vision and the SDI research programme. 2. Between April and July 1984 Wörner shifted his position from public criticism of the negative impact of SDI for stability and arms control at the NPG meeting in Cesme to open endorsement three months later in Washington if the United States' nuclear umbrella continued to extend over Western Europe."[106] The Dutch case as shown in this chapter closely resembles the elements that Brauch identified in the FRG, save the last one. The Netherlands were even more prudent and quiet with their "benign neglect and silence" and the public criticism, but very similar tendencies were present; De Ruiter joined German criticism in Cesme, for instance. However, the public support of several German officials, such as Wörner – Chancellor Kohl would soon follow too – between mid-1984 and early 1985 was not mirrored in the Netherlands. Rather, the Dutch government, and the ministers in it, stuck to their relative silence, and mildly formulated criticism.

Chapter conclusion

It is important to note in the concluding part of this chapter that, given the uncertainty even within the American government itself on the exact implications of SDI between 1983-1984, and given the ongoing cruise missiles crisis in the Netherlands, it is unsurprising that SDI did not become a major political issue in the Netherlands in these years. To the extent that there was a clear Dutch political reaction to SDI, it was, unlike most literature and even some contemporary newspapers suggested, not characterized by complete silence, nor by an interpretational vacuum; within Dutch politics, there was a considerable tendency to link SDI to the already concerning militarization of space, most importantly through ASATs. Perhaps this was the result of the fact that the Dutch had neither been informed of the upcoming announcement of SDI nor of its strategic meanings. The fact that the Dutch government was already one of the leading actors in raising awareness about the military use of space contributed significantly to the initial political engagement with SDI. However, gradually, under pressure from critical questions from members of the opposition parties in the *Second Chamber*, the Ministers were forced to hesitantly acknowledge that SDI was not only problematic for its impact on space armaments, but also because it was designed to be a program for anti-ballistic missile technology. This resulted in the first official Dutch critical remarks vis-à-vis SDI, engaging with – mostly – the political and strategic implications of such systems, if a functioning SDI would turn out to be achievable. In substance, the governmental stance was rather critical and reflected issues generally raised among the West European governments at the time. The Ministers of Defense and Foreign Affairs took this stance, but were quick to add that they considered the project something of the far future, as if to say that this issue did not require immediate decisive action. The potential that SDI had for both anti-American reactions, and the link to the cruise missiles crisis, likely influenced the cabinet's reaction.

From the comparison of the main elements in the Dutch reaction with the dominant features of other European states' responses, it is fair to conclude that the Dutch political reaction, especially of the government, can hardly be argued to be more critical or obstructive towards the Americans than the other allies in the initial stages.

[106] Brauch "SDI – The West German Debate" in Brauch, 171-172

The high point of the SDI debate: 1985-1986

The year 1985 was, without a doubt, the most eventful year with regards to SDI in Europe, including in the Netherlands. The number of times SDI was the subject in parliamentary debates, newspaper articles, and ministerial meetings was by far highest in this year than in any other. Star Wars was not only more of a hot topic, the elements in the discussion were also much more varied. Especially technology and industry were of major importance; programs and plans to develop new technologies were sources of significant disagreements between parties, ministers, and countries in Europe – including in the Netherlands. A number of SDI-related developments took place roughly at the same time in 1985-1986. As a result, contrary to last chapter, two subtopics are outlined and analyzed separately in this chapter – for the sake of clarity and structure. These are EUREKA – the French-led initiative to work on European technological development, argued to have been presented as the alternative to European participation in SDI research -, and the EDI, which was the West German-led plan to compliment SDI by a European effort to research and develop a shield against shorter range missile threats. Both plans influenced the technology-industry debates surrounding SDI in Europe; did they do so too in the Netherlands?

In essence, this chapter attempts to show why the Dutch government chose not to officially participate in the American-led SDI research program, why the Dutch did participate in EUREKA, the extent to which there was a relationship between those two programs for the Dutch, and why EDI was – contrary to what some literature suggests – relatively unimportant in the Dutch SDI debate and decision-making. The pressure exercised upon the government, by actors such as Second Chamber fractions, Dutch industry, and the circumstances of returning cruise missile controversy, played a significant role in these decisions. Attempts at answering the questions above are partially presented in the chronological parts of this chapter, but are especially presented in the latter parts, namely the comparative and concluding sections.

Pressure, perception, and participation

Between late 1984 and early 1985, the SDI debate in Europe went through a number of rapid changes. The specific developments in the Netherlands can be understood better in the light of some Europe-wide context of the nature of these changes. While there had been little – yet increasing – attention for SDI in Western Europe throughout 1983 and 1984, by the new year, two major changes took place. First, the debate on SDI became much more pressing and concrete. Virtually all literature argues that this was influenced strongly by the fact that in November 1984, Ronald Reagan was reelected for a second presidential term. Right thereafter, in December 1984, Margaret Thatcher flew to meet Reagan in Camp David, where she voiced serious British – and general Western European – concerns with regards to SDI. The meeting - mentioned in the literature review - resulted in the establishment of four points that the Americans agreed to abide by, assuring British support for SDI research. Those points included the commitments to maintain balance between East and West, to make sure SDI deployments would fall within treaty obligations, to enhance and not undercut nuclear deterrence, and to recommit to East-West negotiations on the reduction on offensive weapons.[107] The second major change regards the subject and context. From 1983 up to early 1985, the dominant discussion in Europe on SDI had been about its strategic and political implications. Through March-June 1985, however, the debate shifted to the technological and economic implications of the program. Three main reasons for this shift rise from the literature. First, the letter US Secretary of Defense Weinberger sent on March 26, 1985, issuing a deadline to Allied governments to indicate whether they would participate in SDI research. This letter meant to the European governments that SDI research was going to be taking place soon, and that a European role was possible therein. Secondly, several European firms were

[107] Daalder, 12-13

pushing their respective governments to allow and help them obtain a share of the large American funds for SDI R&D. Thirdly, from within European governments, there were rising concerns that Western Europe would fall behind in technological developments, both military and civil, compared to the US and Japan. The US government realized this and started to exploit those sentiments to put more pressure on European governments to partake in SDI research.[108] In the meantime, a shift in the understanding and portrayal of SDI had taken place; the Reagan administration was, partially as a result of the Thatcher-Reagan four points, 'selling' SDI as a research effort primarily. Participation in this research program was presented to be separate for strategic and political support for the general notion of SDI, and the actual production and deployment of a space-based ABM. Weinberger therewith managed to convince the European Allies in NATO, after much pleading and pressuring, to officially support the SDI research effort specifically at the NATO NPG summit of 26-27 March.[109] This declaration of European political support for SDI research – which received relatively little attention in the media and public[110]- did not mean that SDI ceased to be a source of controversy – quite the opposite: the technological dimension to SDI was becoming a major issue in European politics.

For the Netherlands, similar developments took place in the first months of 1985. Up to this time, there was very little alteration of the arguments – political-strategic in nature - in parliament.[111] However, this changed radically, especially when Weinberger issued his ultimatum on allied participation in SDI research; officials from the Dutch Ministry of Defense felt "as if a gun was pointed at their heads."[112] Quickly, assessments and information regarding the technological and industrial interests needed to be gathered. It soon became clear that Dutch industrial and intellectual interests revolved around a limited number of firms, and perhaps some universities and/or research institutes. The major electronics firm Philips N.V. of Eindhoven – including its subsidiaries - was the most important candidate. Other potential candidates for SDI contracts were the airplane manufacturer Fokker, optics manufacturer Oldelft[113], the TNO (Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research)[114] and the National Aerospace Laboratory (literally: Netherlands Air- and Space Exploration Center[115]).[116] Representatives from these companies and institutes formed a focus group together with officials from the Ministries of Defense, Education and Science, Economic Affairs, and Foreign Affairs in May to make an assessment of the scope and fields in which Dutch participation in SDI research could take place. Another group was founded, led by the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs, to focus on politics and strategy related matters regarding SDI.[117]

The government indicated that the decision on official Dutch participation in SDI research would only be made after the results of the focus group's investigative work - the technological group most importantly - had been presented.[118] USAF Colonel Hughes, who worked at the US Defense

[108] Daalder, 67-74, and Berloznik and De Boosere *Star Wars*, 258-259
[109] Berloznik and De Boosere, 258, and Lucas, 222-223
[110] Berloznik and De Boosere, 258-259
[111] Like for instance Robert Berloznik suggests in "SDI and the Benelux Countries" in Brauch(ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*
[112] Ibid., 243
[113] Also known as Ol Delft or OlDelft. Although Oldelft was much smaller than Fokker and Philips, it had significant experience with contracts for military technology
[114] "Nederlandse Organisatie voor Toegepast Natuurwetenschappelijk Onderzoek" in Dutch
[115] "Nederlands Lucht- en Ruimtevaartcentrum" in Dutch
[116] Berloznik in Brauch, 250, 252, and --. *De Volkskrant* April 25, 1985: 3
[117] Tweede Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18979, nr. 1 (May 7, 1985), "Verslag van een schriftelijk overleg Strategisch Defensie Initiatief": 10
[118] Berloznik in Brauch, 250, and Maarten Huygen, "Regering kijkt naar kansen bij SDI-project" *NRC Handelsblad (*May 24, 1985): 11

Plans Division at the US mission to NATO on SDI (1984-1987),[119] reports that the Netherlands, like Canada, Turkey, France, and other states, sent a delegation to the US to investigate opportunities for Dutch participation in SDI.[120] Back in April, the 24th, the President of the Philips Board of Directors Wisse Dekker had indicated to the press that Philips was looking into the possibilities of partaking in SDI research projects: "[w]e are very interested in SDI and we would like to partake. We have notified the Dutch government of this." He even stated that reactions, including those from the Dutch state, towards the SDI research program "could have been more enthusiastic."[121] By June 7, however, sources from within the focus group, both governmental and corporate, indicated that concrete steps towards Dutch participation were impossible due to the vagueness of the SDIOs available contracts and the details on intellectual property exchange.[122] Later that month, *NRC Handelsblad* reported that sources within Philips had indicated that Philips did not expect European firms – including its own company and daughter companies - to be able to gain much from SDI. It was clear that the company preferred the recently launched EUREKA plan as a platform for R&D.[123] A statement much to the same effect had been made by a focus group member from Fokker a week earlier in the same paper.[124]

An important problem of SDIO contracts for the relevant actors - including Philips, which was relatively open about this matter - was that the contract form preferred by the Americans was that of European firms and institutes as subcontractors. This meant research into small, specific areas, paid for by America, but very little reciprocal transfers of knowledge/technology, and little to no opportunities for actual development of the research results.[125]

In internal ministerial deliberations about SDI - and EUREKA, which is shown below - participation, it was clear that the cabinet, most importantly Minister of Economic Affairs van Aardenne, was convinced that Western Europe was indeed falling behind on the US and Japan technologically and industrially. Moreover, there was also agreement in the cabinet – most clearly voiced by van Aardenne and Minister Deetman of Education and Science – that the effect of state stimulation programs on these sectors could be significant.[126] As such, the Dutch were quite susceptible to arguments based on the technological and industrial gap appearing between Europe and the US. However, the degree to which state programs to stimulate these sectors would actually serve Dutch interests would become a decisive factor. Moreover, it had become quite clear that in Dutch politics, including the cabinet itself, the American-designed distinction between support for SDI research and the geostrategic plan behind SDI was adopted.[127]

Meanwhile, the first responses of several allies to Weinberger's letter started to become clear. The Dutch government was one of the driving forces behind the attempt to formulate a common European response to Weinberger's request within the WEU, most importantly at the Bonn ministerial WEU summit of 22-23 April - where the French also presented EUREKA officially. However, it quickly became clear at this summit, and throughout subsequent months, that a concrete unified

[119] Hughes, *SDI: A View from Europe,* xvii
[120] Ibid., 93
[121] Rob Meines,"Philips wil deelnemen aan onderzoek naar ruimtewapens"*NRC Handelsblad*, (April 24,1985): 1
[122] Wubbo Tempel and Ben van der Velden, "SDI duister voor Nederlandse industrie" *NRC Handelsblad* (June 7, 1985): 9
[123] Wubbo Tempel and Ben van der Velden, "Philips verwacht weinig van SDI en ziet in Eureka meer mogelijkheden" *NRC Handelsblad* (June 25, 1985): 13
[124] Wubbo Tempel, "SDI-geld niet voor bedrijven Nederland" *NRC Handelsblad* (June 14 1985): 11
[125] Berloznik in Brauch, 250, Huygen, "Regering kijkt naar kansen bij SDI-project" *NRC Handelsblad* (May 24, 1985): 11. Other European states and companies struggled with this issue too; see for instance Daalder, *The SDI Challenge to Europe*, 88-89
[126] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad notulen (14 June 1985): 18
[127] See for instance: Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Onderraden: Raad voor Europese Zaken (REZ) notulen (24 June 1985): 6

answer was not quite possible.[128] According to the literature, this was due to a combination of reasons. Certainly, the lack of concrete information from the American side with regards to the details of European cooperation with SDIO research was problematic; by words of MP De Vries (PvdA) in the August WEU assembly, it was unclear "what exactly is the question that we have to formulate a coordinated answer to?".[129] Furthermore, there was disagreement among European states – most importantly the big three - with regards to the extent to which European political support for SDI – or rather, the open refusal of an American request - was politically acceptable. Reportedly, especially the British were doubtful of bluntly opposing an American plan and request.[130]

In April 1985, the Norwegian government had been the first state to declare it would not officially participate in the SDI research program. The Danish followed this example May. The French government followed the same route at the Bonn economic summit in early May, where it was announced that the French state would not join the SDI research effort[131] These countries thereby officially supported the SDI research effort in general, through their official approval of it at the NATO summit earlier that year – though this was not entirely so for the French case - but did not join in SDI research as a state in any official agreement. At the same time, these states did not attempt to obstruct their domestic companies and institutes if they wished to engage in SDIO contracts. This example was later followed by other states, including Canada, Belgium, and the Netherlands, as is shown below. The Netherlands – though they would respond before the end of the year - did not respond as fast as Denmark, Norway, and France.

In May, van den Broek held a speech in The Hague on the topic of SDI specifically. The essence of the speech was that European states should not accept SDI unconditionally - but neither should they reject it outright. Rather, a careful step-by-step evaluation, preferably in a joint setting, should lead to a reaction. Additionally, he stated that the Netherlands would only join SDI research on the condition that there would be a fair exchange of technology, and he added that potential official participation in research would not imply approval of the political-strategic concept of SDI, neither would it mean a final position on the matter.[132] In the second Second Chamber debate on SDI in June, van den Broek repeated the stance that governmental decisions on the exact political and military implications of the results of the SDI research program "have not been made. In all probability, this will not happen in the coming years."[133] He also stated that a decision on Dutch participation, that is, official state participation, of SDI research would have to wait until at least July, because he and minister de Ruiter "strongly prefer[red] to attempt to formulate an as coordinated as possible European response to potential participation".[134]

It had become clear by then that there was a split between the coalition fractions in the Second Chamber*;* in June, CDA spokesman De Boer spoke out against official SDI participation for technological reasons: "it is not advisable for Western European countries to be exploited in SDI research for reasons of technological self-preservation. Collectively it isn't, but especially not individually." De Boer also pleaded against a EDI. He did not, however, join the opposition – led by the PvdA - in a motion with a clear 'no' to Weinberger's letter, as that would be explained as a political rejection of the entire American plan. In the same debate, the fraction of junior coalition partner VVD, led by MP Voorhoeve, was sympathetic to official participation in SDI – mostly as a

[128] By words of Minister van den Broek. Tweede Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18979 nr. 2 "Verslag van een mondeling overleg Strategisch Defensie Initiatief" (May 29, 1985): 4-5, and Hughes, 70,93
[129] Eerste Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 17257 nr. 6 "Assemblée van de Westeuropese Unie" (August 23, 1985): 17
[130] Fenske "France and the Strategic Defense Initiative", 238
[131] Hans Günter Brauch "SDI – International Parliamentary Debate" in Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*, 271, and Hughes, 88
[132] Berloznik in Brauch, 245
[133] Tweede Kamer, 1984-1985, 94ste vergadering (June 20, 1985): 5909
[134] Ibid., 5910

boost to Dutch industry and development - preferably in cooperation with neighboring European states. He was also sympathetic to the industrial and technological potential of an EDI.[135]

In June, and again in August, the WEU states agreed to a number of shared concerns with regards to SDI, concerns which heavily relied on the four points of the year before. However, the joint concerns did not feature any mention of, let alone a solution to, the disagreement over participation in SDI research and the consequences of such participation; France had closed the door on participation, while it was rumored in August that the British were already engaged in the early stages of negotiations on a formal agreement with the US. This would take the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), outlining the terms and regulations that would govern the transfer of funds, technology, and knowledge in the context of SDI research between the two states. There were reports that the FRG had moved towards negotiating a similar MoU. Moreover, it was also rumored that several British companies and institutes were close to signing SDIO contracts.[136] While a common WEU position had been formulated, like the Dutch had hoped, it did not truly make the policy of European states any more united.

The crucial date in the Dutch case with regards to SDI research participation was October 4. On this day, ministers van den Broek and de Ruiter sent a letter to the Second Chamber on the topic of SDI. In it, the ministers concluded that "at this stage, practical considerations and the necessity to prioritize have led us, without prejudice of the concept [of SDI], to come to the conclusion that the Dutch government shall not take part in SDI research."[137] The ministers emphasized that "in our opinion, Dutch or West European participation in SDI research means in no way approval of the security concept that is the basis of, or the product of, SDI research. Inversely, non-participation also does not mean rejection of the SDI program."[138] Even though the political-strategic concerns regarding SDI, which had not changed since the ones listed earlier in this thesis, were outlined, the ministers explained the decision of non-participation in other terms. Analyzing the nature of the SDIO program, they concluded that "we are doubtful whether the costs and efforts related to governmental participation outweigh the expected beneficial effects thereof on the Dutch technological capacity and the Dutch economy."[139] They outlined three essential reasons: Dutch companies and institutes were unlikely to attract large contracts, potential contracts would be solely in areas where Dutch companies had a 'competitive edge' and would be unlikely to involve actual production, and reciprocal knowledge transfer was unlikely to be satisfactory. At the same time, the ministers emphasized that Dutch companies and institutes were free to take part if they wished so, and that they would be aided by the government like usual; if need be, a special agreement with the US could be made for specific cases.[140] Apparently, the possibility of using an adapted version of the 1978 MoU made for the development and purchase of the F-16 fighter jet, as considered in August – according to an *NRC Handelsblad* report[141] – was not deemed feasible or desirable.

The letter repeated all of the criticism voiced earlier regarding the political-strategic potential of SDI, as well as the criteria that the Dutch had set for official support – not participation (!) - for SDI research. Hereby, the cabinet presented the non-participation decision in pragmatic terms, rather than inspired by political opinions. This would prove to be considerably different from a number of other European states, especially the big three.

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[135] Ibid., Berloznik in Brauch, 245-247, and --, "Kamer niet blij met Star Wars" *Leidsch Dagblad* (June 21, 1985): 5

[136] --, "Zeven landen eens over mogelijke deelneming SDI" *NRC Handelsblad* (August 30 1985): 1. See also: Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, aanhangsel van de handelingen 159, (November 5, 1985)

[137] Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, no.18979 nr.8 (October 4, 1985): 5

[138] Ibid., 2

[139] Ibid., 3

[140] Ibid., 4

[141] --, "Zeven landen eens over mogelijke deelneming SDI" *NRC Handelsblad* (August 30, 1985): 1

The political-strategic criteria for official political support to SDI, mentioned above, were strongly based on the criticism that had come up in 1983-1984. They included the upholding of the ABM treaty and of MAD deterrence. These criteria generally mirrored those of other allies. However, the Dutch listed more criteria than any other key ally, such as the FRG and Britain, and they listed extra criteria that no other country did, such as the guarantee that the status-quo of conventional troops commitments by NATO and the US in Europe would not change. This even led Dutch scholars Colijn and Rusman in *De droom der onkwetsbaarheid* to remark that "[a]pparently, the size of the wish list is inversely proportional to the possibility of actually realizing it." [142] In this sense, it could be argued that a degree of idealism – and a relative lack of pragmatism - in Dutch foreign policy might be traceable. Alternatively, it could be argued that the Dutch were simply more vocal about concerns shared by many Europeans, and that the Dutch were simply very concerned with Dutch and European security.

There was little to no reaction from the side of the CDA and VVD parliamentary fractions to the non-participation decision. It was clear, as shown above, that there was internal disagreement between the CDA fraction in the Second Chamber, on the one hand, that had decided it was against participation, versus the junior coalition partner VVD, that was in favor. As an *NRC Handelsblad* analyst wrote: "any political dimension that this decision still could have had was removed", by means of the repeated "remarks that the cabinet's decision does not imply a rejection of the [SDI] program as a whole. (…) Thus, the cabinet restricted itself to making a simple business-economics decision. And it did so the way anyone would have done."[143] As a result of this framing, there was little reason for a detailed political debate regarding the decision, and SDI as a concept. This removed the danger that SDI would become politically divisive in the general Dutch political and public domains, or within the coalition. The PvdA, by contrast, was openly pleased with the decision against participation, and applauded and supported it, as fraction leader Den Uyl stated in a debate on October 15. He held that research cooperation within Europe, as well as in civil technology, was a much better choice.[144] CDA MP Frinking stated in January 1986 that the CDA fraction agreed with the decision against participation, and that "to prevent technological backwardness, the government must strongly support European research projects, such as EUREKA."[145]

The – classified - CIA European Review of February 1986, identified a different reason for the lack of Dutch state cooperation in SDI than an economic decision: "[w]ariness about voter reaction and possible linkage to INF also makes it unlikely that the Dutch government will sign an agreement with Washington on SDI before the elections."[146] The Americans were still mostly concerned with getting the Dutch to place cruise missiles, and in this effort, the CIA reported that "Dutch officials, according to US diplomats, are concerned that Washington might undercut The Hague's position by announcing changes in US policy about respecting the ABM and the SALT II treaties."[147] It is, indeed, important to see this participation issue in the light of the cruise missiles controversy, which had returned to prominence in 1985. The final decision in favor of placement had been taken in November 1985, sparking heavy criticism from the parliament and public. Speculations that the CDA would lose significantly in the Second Chamber elections scheduled for May 1986 as a result of this decision were prevalent.[148] In this context, a decision in favor official participation in SDI had the potential to

[142] Colijn and Rusman "Westeuropese antwoorden op SDI" in Everts, *De droom*, 131-133
[143] *NRC Handelsblad* October 8, 1985: 7
[144] Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, 10de vergadering (October 15, 1985): 423. Further party opinions on EUREKA and SDI can be found in this debate as well.
[145] Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, 40ste vergadering (January 22, 1986): 2682
[146] Central Intelligence Agency, Directorate of Intelligence "European Review" (February, 1986) Sanitized copy declassified 2012: 10
[147] Ibid., 9
[148] Van Diepen, *Hollanditis*, 330-333

become an additional source of controversy, unlikely to be beneficial to the government, especially to the CDA. Even though the cabinet never officially mentioned this, it is likely that the context of the INF controversy between mid-1985 and early-1986 made a pro-SDI research decision politically much more difficult. In any case, the May 1986 elections resulted in a major win for the CDA and the subsequent formation of Lubbers' second cabinet with the same parties CDA and VVD; the governmental stance on SDI and related issues did not change.

Interestingly, the Netherlands were relatively early with their concrete response to Weinberger's offer; though the Dutch were months later than Denmark and Norway, the Netherlands was the second WEU member state, after France, to make a decision. This was quite a contrast with the INF placement, in which the Dutch were the last to implement the 1979 Double-track Decision.[149] In December 1985, Britain became the first European state to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the US regarding SDI research. The memorandum was hailed by Weinberger and the Reagan administration as a sign of unity between these key NATO allies, but there is virtual consensus in the literature, as there was in the press at the time, that London – having serious doubts about the strategic effects of SDI – chose to sign a memorandum in order to force the Americans to abide by the four points.[150] The argument that official participation would help to influence the American plan had been briefly used by van den Broek in the summer of 1985,[151] but this argument never seems to have made a concrete impact on the Dutch debate. In mid-December, Bonn announced it had the intention to open negotiations with the US on a memorandum regarding FRG participation in SDIO contracts.[152] The FRG-US MoU was finally signed on March 27, 1986, after months of complicated negotiations. Reactions in West German media and politics ranged from mute to hostile, with the most frequent criticism that technological transfers would be unfair and that opportunities for German companies would not be significant. The German coalition and right-leaning media, however, also emphasized that the Memorandum was also a way for the Germans to exercise influence on the Americans and thereby secure core German – and European – concerns; "to prevent a technological and strategic decoupling", as Chancellor Kohl stated.[153] Clearly, this argument was much more prevalent –and more convincing - in Britain and Germany than it was in the Netherlands.

The main timeline of this thesis ends in early-mid 1986; the key decision against SDIO participation had been made, and as is shown below, discussions surrounding EUREKA and EDI had died down, too. Throughout 1986 and 1987, the SDI debate became less prominent and few new arguments were made. For instance, in 1986, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published an info booklet on SDI. In it, all aspects of SDI were covered; its inception, the ABM treaty, technology, industry, EUREKA, EDI, the Netherlands and SDI, and the future.[154] Though relatively thorough in its factual information, the booklet contained little to no new insights into any of the subtopics that are outlined in this chapter; in its part on SDI and the Netherlands, for instance, it almost literally repeated the letter of October 4.[155] Furthermore, it is telling that Minister van Eekelen of Defense in March 1987[156] publically stated that one of the main problems in deciding a stance vis-à-vis SDI was the "confusion and lack of clarity" regarding the plan. Van Eekelen stated that "it is still undecided what the plan and

[149] Ibid., 330-331
[150] Daalder, *The SDI Challenge to Europe*, 74, and Lucas "SDI and Europe", 228
[151] --, "Kamer niet blij met Star Wars" *Leidsch Dagblad* (June 21, 1985): 5
[152] Fenske, "France and the Strategic Defense Initiative", 236
[153] Brauch, "SDI -The West German Debate" in Brauch, 193-195
[154] C.C. Sanders and J. Th. Hoekema, *Het Strategisch Defensie Initiatief* ('s-Gravenhage: Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 1986)
[155] Ibid., 20-21
[156] Van Eekelen, previously State Secretary of Foreign Affairs, had replaced De Ruiter in the new cabinet as Minister of Defense in 1986

scope [of SDI] will be."[157]

So far, the 1985-1986 industry-technology debate surrounding SDI in the Netherlands has been described – with the exception of the additional factors of EUREKA and EDI. From the factors shown thus far, the following analysis of the Dutch decision against participation can be drawn: after Weinberger's letter, van den Broek and de Ruiter had argued that the cabinet had not yet decided on SDI research participation because they were waiting for two elements that would influence their decision: an assessment of the interests and opportunities of Dutch holders of technological knowledge, and a joint stance on SDI within the WEU. First the news came that there was relatively little to gain from SDIO cooperation. Then, the WEU stance took shape – that is, its rather weak shape. Thereby, the necessity for the cabinet to make its decision known grew. Meanwhile, the CDA Second Chamber fraction turned against participation – the opposition, especially the leftwing, had been opposed to it for months already. Additionally, the cruise missiles debate had flared up again due to the November 1985 decision to finally accept placement. Still, not singing an MoU could mean Dutch companies would be put at a disadvantage vis-à-vis other firms from countries that did sign (or would sign) an MoU, from the FRG and Britain for instance.[158] Even though there was consensus that Dutch industry and institutes had relatively small chances of winning SDIO contracts, it seems fair to ask what it could it hurt to sign an MoU if that would protect these actors better. The ministers argued that in their October letter that that the cost-benefit balance did not make negotiations worth the effort. Yet, there are reasons, outside of the arguments directly mentioned by the government in the source material, to argue that the real cost-benefit analysis made by the cabinet was between being a loyal ally by showing formal commitment to SDI research, versus preventing the development of another foreign policy crisis over SDI. It had become clear at that time that the Americans hoped for as much official European participation in SDI as possible, not just for research-purposes; the Reagan administration was hoping for allied commitment in the form of MoUs to boost the domestic American political legitimacy for the SDI project.[159] Yet, the Dutch government did not acknowledge this publically.

EUREKA?

The plan of EUREKA, a somewhat awkward acronym for European Research Coordination Agency, was introduced by the French government in a series of announcements between 17-23 April 1985 to the Western European allies – less than a month after Weinberger's SDI research letter. The French, especially President Mitterrand administration, had made clear that they did not support the development of SDI, and neither did they appreciate Weinberger's letter. Yet, the French foresaw a 'brain drain' of scientists and industrial activities from Western Europe to the United States if France – and other European states – did not partake in SDI research and looked on passively. To solve this problem, EUREKA was launched as a civil research program in fields closely resembling the research objectives of SDIO, such as optical electronics, lasers and particle beams, and super-computers.[160] Given this nature of the inception of EUREKA, the way a European country considered participation, and in what form, in the EUREKA program is an important part of that state's policy vis-à-vis SDI and technology. The Netherlands is no exception therein; in Dutch politics, official participation in SDI and EUREKA, and in what forms, was a source of controversy, and the two programs were often associated with each other.

In the Council of Ministers meeting of 19 April, the initial French proposal of EUREKA received a somewhat lukewarm response. The ministers were especially critical because of two

[157] Tweede Kamer, 1986-1987, no. 18979 nr. 10 "Strategisch Defensie Initiatief" (March 19, 1987): 6
[158] Daalder, 82
[159] Lucas, 228
[160] Fenske, especially 235

reasons. Firstly, they feared another – overlapping – European technological research project, next to already existing similar research programs such as ESPRIT and ESA – which are introduced below. Secondly, they were concerned with the fact that the French had indicated they did not want to found the program within the European Community; the ministers feared there would be little Dutch influence on the program, and that focus on a different program would mean the loss of focus on efforts within the European Community, such as the single market integration – which the Dutch cabinet regarded at least as important. As State Secretary van Eekelen of Foreign Affairs remarked, Prime Minister Lubbers had proposed "the founding of a European technological community not too long ago",[161] namely in a speech at the European summit in Dublin in December 1984.[162] The similarities between Lubbers' proposal and EUREKA were striking, but a main difference was that Lubbers and the other Dutch ministers had envisioned the cooperation to take form within the framework of the existing European institutions, most importantly the European Community. The latter point is relevant, because tying these programs in within the European Community (and European Commission) was a way for the Dutch to provide a counterweight against direct and relatively strong influence of the big three, especially France. In the case of EUREKA, this was especially important because the French, by words of Minister van Aardenne, were "planning to pull the EUREKA program very close to their chests."[163] Therefore, Dutch officials emphasized the opinion that EUREKA needed to be affiliated with the European Commission throughout 1985 in the WEU.[164] Yet, the link to Lubbers' proposal of December 1984 was repeated often by the government as proof of the cabinet's good will vis-à-vis European cooperation – especially EUREKA - in documents and debates on SDI research and EUREKA participation throughout 1985 and 1986.[165] Two elements are interesting about this fact; firstly, Lubbers proposed this advanced European technological cooperation before technology, industry, and economy became important factors in the SDI debate; in other words, it was not triggered by, let alone a response to, SDI. Contrastingly, EUREKA was, initially, intended exactly to be such a response by the French. Moreover, Lubbers' proposal was never mentioned in leading literature on SDI and EUREKA;[166] it is fair to say that the link between Lubbers' plan and that of the French initiative of EUREKA played a role only in the Netherlands. These two observations would turn out to be revealing to the cabinet's view of SDI – as is shown further below.

France, as briefly mentioned before, had a history of promoting joint European research projects in new technologies and developing sciences – such as the ESPRIT[167] project- and especially in terms of space technology, such as ESA, and President Mitterrand's plan for a "European Space Community" featuring civilian and military observation satellites, a space station, and a space shuttle.[168] The French preoccupation with the development of common European technology, especially space technology, was to a large extent inclined by the fear of falling behind on other great players on the world stage, especially the US and the USSR. This, in turn, would threaten the strategic,

[161] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad notulen (19 April, 1985): 5
[162] --, "Nederland eens met Frans plan over Europese Technologie" *NRC Handelsblad* (April 20, 1985): 1
[163] Literal translation: "The French are namely planning to pull the EUREKA-plan strongly towards themselves." Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad notulen (June 10 and 12, 1985): 8
[164] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad notulen (19 April, 1985): 5, and (14 June, 1985): 18-19 . See also: Jan Luijten, "Weinig geestdrift voor EUREKA" *De Volkskrant* (November 5, 1985): 2
[165] See for instance: Eerste Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18600 V nr. 150c "Rijksbegroting voor het jaar 1985. Beleidsdebat over onderwerpen rakende het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken (m.u.v. de onderwerpen Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en NAVO)" (May 23, 1985): 4
[166] See for instance: Alain Carton "EUREKA – A European Reaction to SDI" in Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*: 311-328
[167] European Strategic Program on Research in Information Technology; joint effort in information sciences and technology. Started its first project in 1983.
[168] Carton "SDI – The French Debate" in Brauch, 154-155

military, political, and economic autonomy of Western Europe; Europe needed to continuously seek to match the technological - especially space technological - developments of the other Great Powers to protect its own safety and status, in the eyes of the French.[169]

Unlike SDI, the Dutch government regarded EUREKA an issue to be chiefly dealt with by the Ministries of Economic Affairs, and Education and Science; this was exemplary for the relatively small role of military and strategic concerns in the government's policy making with regards to EUREKA. Such concerns played a larger role in the in the evaluation of SDI.[170] On May 23, minister van den Broek notified the *Eerste Kamer* – First Chamber, i.e. the Dutch upper house/Senate – of the fact that "the EUREKA plan (…) has been received with great interest [by the government]. However, a detailed study of the proposed modalities is yet to be made."[171] Yet, he did indicate that the Dutch government shared the concerns of other Western European counterparts with regards to losing technological ground to America and Japan.[172] In the Minister's Council on European Affairs (REZ, *Raad voor Europese Zaken*) of 24 June, a few days before the Milan summit of June 28, where further work would be carried out on the EUREKA plan by state delegations, Minister De Ruiter emphasized that SDI – with its subcontracts to European companies and institutes that could help the Americans to acquire further competitive edges - was a potential threat to European technological competitiveness, and therefore to economic and military autonomy and performance. Therefore, although the ministers agreed that criteria about the actual form and scope of EUREKA had to be adapted to, he did agree with the general French stance that it was necessary to boost European research in the relevant fields.[173] Minister Deetman agreed, and stated that he had "come to the conclusion that it is less attractive to participate in SDI".[174] Publically, however, the government was quick to defuse the notion that support for EUREKA and SDI research were mutually exclusive; in the parliament, decisions on participation in EUREKA were presented as separate from state participation in SDI research. In fact, the ministers attempted to – as much as possible – create the image that EUREKA was a wholly separate issue from SDI,[175] even though they themselves linked the two in classified discussions, and in the media the link was made as well throughout 1985,[176] just like in other European countries.

Meanwhile, as has been shown before, the focus group had established its estimation that few SDIO contracts would befall Dutch players in the R&D field; moreover, Philips had – most clearly of all parties involved – declared its preliminary preference for the civil and European EUREKA project. Minister van den Broek told his colleagues on June 24, in a council meeting regarding EUREKA, and indirectly SDI, that the result of his investigation among a number of firms was that "there is much more interest for EUREKA than there is for SDI."[177] However, he indicated, he agreed "with Minister Ruding [of Finances] that we must not make rash decisions; yet, we do have to [make a decision of participation] in a few months, as Minister Deetman has indicated."[178] That meeting, Prime Minister Lubbers had said that he believed the cabinet "should not preliminarily choose for one or the other program [SDI and EUREKA]. Moreover, ad hoc choices will have to be made depending on the subjects as they develop."[179] Herewith, the cabinet clearly linked the EUREKA and SDI participation decisions, and made the decisions for each program dependent on the details as they would unfold.

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[169] See for instance: Fenske, 235,244-245
[170] See for instance: Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad notulen (June 28, 1985): 5
[171] Eerste Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18600 V nr. 150c (May 23, 1985): 4
[172] Ibid.
[173] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Onderraden: Raad voor Europese Zaken (REZ) notulen (24 June 1985): 7
[174] Ibid., 8
[175] See for instance: Eerste Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18600 V nr. 150c (May 23, 1985): 4
[176] See for instance: Jan Pleus, "EUREKA" *NRC Handelsblad* (December 11, 1985): 27
[177] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, REZ notulen (24 June 1985): 12
[178] Ibid.
[179] Ibid., 9

In 1985, the influential actor of Philips was a major driving force behind the EUREKA effort, and the cabinet knew this. For instance, around this time – late June - the four largest tech companies of Western Europe, i.e. Siemens AG of the FRG, General Electric Co. of the UK, the French state-owned Thomson, and Philips, announced cooperation projects to advance European technology in a number of fields, both civil and military. These projects were proposed to take place under the new EUREKA umbrella.[180] This cooperation was intentionally made public before the Milan summit. The mentioned firms even specifically identified EUREKA as an "essential element" in Europe's ability to remain relevant in new technology in this joint declaration,[181] thereby clearly making a pro-EUREKA statement. However, by October it became clear that the start of concrete EUREKA programs would have to wait, most importantly due to disagreement within the German federal government about the funding.[182] As such, though EUREKA was supported by the industry, it was a far from a concrete alternative to SDI research; it could not yet solve the Dutch political concern for the technology gap.

In October, the Dutch government announced it would not participate in SDI research. In the parliamentary commission on science, speakers of the VVD, CDA, and PvdA all voiced concerns about a potential brain drain to the US, in combination with a loss of the competitiveness of Dutch (and European) industry. They asked whether EUREKA would be the solution. Minister Deetman argued that EUREKA had "come about in the light of SDI developments", and that the Dutch state had been committed to European scientific cooperation – as referring to funds - , as long as the research also went into fundamental knowledge and not just industrial production of technological products. With regards to EUREKA, he argued, this was slightly different due to the international context and the focus on technology.[183] If anything, support of EUREKA, albeit dependent on the exact form of the program, was still quite widespread in Dutch politics. Soon after this debate, at the Hannover EUREKA summit of 5-6 November, the Dutch government – as represented by Minister van Aardenne - voiced a number of concrete points with regards to the Dutch position on EUREKA; its main goal should be the improvement of the economic competitiveness by facilitating cooperation between European firms and institutes, its main finances should come from the private sector – with governments providing some extra funding and possible fiscal and legal aid. Lastly, the Netherlands committed, as only the second state after France, concrete funds for the program; the Ministry of Economic Affairs reserved *f*25 million for 1986.[184]

As has been noted further above, the main leftwing oppositional party PvdA had already indicated preliminary support for EUREKA, and now applauded the government's decision not to participate in SDIO and to show dedication to European technological cooperation. In this, the Dutch left did not stand alone; virtually all major leftwing European parties – such as the German SPD - supported EUREKA and opposed SDI.[185]

Van Aardenne's points certainly showed how the Dutch were seeking to move EUREKA away from simply a civil and European counterpart of SDI R&D; Dutch proposals in effect advocated the morphing of EUREKA into a project that resembled Lubbers' proposal of December 1984 for a general community of European technology. This was quite a change from the original French

[180] These technology areas included, among others, microprocessors, integrated circuits, sensors, and microwave components. Source: Carton "EUREKA – A European Reaction to SDI" in Brauch, 320,323
[181] Berloznik and De Boosere, 260
[182] Brauch "SDI – The West German Debate" in Brauch, 187
[183] Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, UCV 24 "24ste vergadering vaste commissie voor het wetenschapsbeleid: Wetenschapsbudget 1986" (November 14, 1985). Quote at: 14
[184] The Netherlands was the second country to guarantee funds for EUREKA. France had promised the equivalent of *f*350 million earlier that year. Source: --, "Geen concrete projecten op tafel in Hannover" *De Telegraaf* (November 5, 1985): 25
[185] Brauch "SDI – The West German Debate" in Brauch, 198, and Rinke van den Brink "Eurosocialisten zijn tegen Starwars, maar vóór Eureka" *De Waarheid* (November 7, 1985): 5

blueprint of EUREKA, which essentially featured the same categories of technology that SDI did; the European counterpart of SDIO. These Dutch aims were further illustrated by the fact that several Dutch companies in fields significantly divergent from SDI research were already preparing project requests with the Ministry of Economic Affairs; the PTT (the Dutch post) for civil transport and communication technologies, and AKZO for biotechnical research, for instance.[186]

With this development, the significance of EUREKA for the topic of SDI and the Netherlands slowly came to an end. An interesting last move came from the vice-president of Philips L. Heessels, who stated for the *NRC Handelsblad* in January 1986 that Philips would like to participate in Star Wars and that EUREKA was not a reasonable alternative: "EUREKA is a nice plan, but will it ever really take shape? EUREKA is becoming another case of prestige [for the European states, especially France]."[187] Heessels was clearly referring to the slowly moving process of agreeing on the framework and finances of EUREKA among European states. However, by the end of June, deliberations on the program had reached quite a concrete stage and Philips was viewing EUREKA positively, most due to its much broader scope than SDIO; EUREKA would also help enormously to bridge different technical standards, legal procedures, and difficulties in acquiring R&D grants in the patchwork of Western European states.[188] Meanwhile, by late-1985 to 1986, the British and West German governments, the two most important European states to have signed an SDI MoU, increasingly became concretely in favor of their national companies participating in EUREKA research, [189] and they would later appropriate funds for this endeavor.

The European Defense Initiative

The direct link between SDI and European missile defense systems, i.e. ATBMs (anti-tactical ballistic missiles), was the result of an proposal originally introduced by the Christian Democrats in the FRG in June 1985. The plan was soon referred to as European Defense Initiative (EDI) or Tactical Defense Initiative (TDI)[190] – hereafter EDI. It was an attempt to solve the issue of the vulnerability of Europe in the case of a deployed and working American SDI; if SDI in fact resulted in an anti-nuclear "iron dome" over the US, Europe would be left vulnerable to nuclear attacks on NATO, and solidarity of the transatlantic partnership of NATO would be threatened. With an EDI in place, realized not through the American SDI satellites but through anti-missile rocket systems – i.e. ATBMs, - Europe would be protected too. For its defense, Europe needed its own program because it was threatened by different kinds of nuclear capabilities than the US, namely short- and mid-range arms, such as Soviet cruise missiles. Those could not be attacked on their long flight trajectory like the long-range missiles threatening the US – ATBMs would be the best defense. Another advantage of EDI was argued to be that fact that it would provide European companies with the opportunity to work on their own technological program, thereby solving the technological-industrial problem that SDI presented Europe with.[191] As such, ATBMs became a major subtopic in the debates – in the media, parliaments, and literature – regarding SDI and Europe throughout 1985 and 1986. In literature that links ATBMs to SDI, the Netherlands are not rarely mentioned, especially in the context of several pro-ATBM

[186] Ibid.
[187] --, "'Philips wil graag meedoen programma van Star Wars'" *NRC Handelsblad* (January 20, 1986): 14
[188] Eefke Smit and Wubbo Tempel "EUREKA: een wolk van welwillendheid" *NRC Handelsblad* (25 June, 1986): 15
[189] Taylor "SDI – The British Response" in Brauch, 136-137,209-210
[190] In names such as ATBM and TDI, the T of 'tactical' refers to the specific missiles designed for short- and mid-range nuclear attacks, mainly in support of battle maneuvers and/or to target important military sites of the enemy. These were the main missiles to threaten the Western European NATO states.
[191] Berloznik and De Boosere, 266

statements that Minister de Ruiter[192] and Dutch General G.C. Berkhof[193] made mostly throughout mid- to late-1985; it is suggested that the Netherlands were one of the main European states to flirt with EDI within the context of the SDI debate. As such, it is valuable to investigate the subtopic of the Netherlands and EDI, both to be complimentary to the literature on EDI, SDI and Europe, and to see whether EDI played an important role in the larger SDI discussion in the Netherlands.

Debates regarding a European defense system, mainly against mid-range and short-range nuclear missiles, had been ongoing since the early stages of SDI itself, in fact even before. Yet, to remain within the scope of this thesis, the chronology starts with the inception of the SDI and the debate about its implications for the European allies. In April 1984, SDIO director Abrahamson had told the US Congress that the general concept of SDI should protect both the US and its allies. *De Volkskrant* interpreted this statement to mean that American space weapons would also be developed for the protection Western Europe.[194] Abrahamson's remarks were most likely a reaction to the fact that, as the CIA reported, "French, Dutch and West German foreign office and defense officials have emphasized that the SDI could eventually decouple Western Europe from the US if the protection was not fully extended to Europe."[195] Before the role of the Netherlands can be described, it is important to analyze the incentives that the literature identifies for different European actors to support an EDI. One is the Atlanticist tendency, which meant in this case that especially West Germans saw an EDI as the way for transatlantic relations to be saved in the scenario of a successful SDI development. At the same time, those adhering to the Europeanist/Gaullist perspective, especially prevalent in France, held that an EDI project, developed and produced in Europe and by European firms and institutes, would secure Western European independence from the US both in terms of technology and strategy.[196] Others emphasized that European politicians, especially those from the FRG, pleaded for EDI research projects because of the interests of their domestic industries.[197] In a way, EDI was seen as the way to solve a number of different SDI-related European concerns, as well as European interests, by one unifying policy.

The story of potential Dutch support for EDI developments is characterized a rapid change in May-June 1985. Answering the question "are there plans to build a so-called 'anti-tactical rocket system' for Western Europe?", Minister de Ruiter simply wrote "no" to the First Chamber in May.[198] However, in a report published in June 1985, Minister de Ruiter wrote to the Second Chamber about developments in military technology, and the response of the Dutch government. The report engaged with the concept of ATBM systems. It stated that "[a]chieving a favorable position in the air deserves a great deal of attention. ET [emerging technologies] can help achieve improvement in this area, especially in terms of defenses against missiles (ATBM)."[199] However, de Ruiter stressed that "the necessity for ATBM described before is not rooted in the same considerations that have led to SDI. Air defense against ballistic missiles is necessary in Western Europe given the developments in military-strategic strategy in the Soviet Union with regards to conventional warfare (…) ATBM-defenses for our air forces are conceptually different from SDI, even if the same technology is used for the implementation."[200] In fact, coalition party VVD had already spoken out in favor of the general idea of European ATBMs a bit earlier on – with an explicit link to SDI. In the May WEU assembly,

[192] Berloznik "SDI and the Benelux Countries" in Brauch, 245, Daalder, *The SDI Challenge to Europe*, 55
[193] Daalder, 63
[194] *De Volkskrant* April 26, 1984: 1
[195] CIA Office of European Analysis "Memorandum: Allied Attitudes" (1984), 3
[196] Hans Günter Brauch "From SDI to EDI – Elements of a European Defence Architecture" in Brauch (ed.) *Star Wars and European Defence*, 450-451
[197] Lucas, 232,236-237,240-243
[198] Eerste Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 18600 X, nr. 160a (May 15, 1985): 8
[199] Tweede Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 19061 nrs.1-2, (June 26, 1985): 29
[200] Ibid.,16-17

VVD defense spokesman MP Blaauw had voiced support for ATM research to compliment the American SDI; "Western European security aspects could then be fully incorporated into the overall SDI project (…) in this context, the opportunities for Western European companies would be more promising."[201] Colijn and Rusman wrote that De Ruiter's declaration had, against usual procedures, not been reviewed by of the high-ranking policy advisors in the ministry of defense. They argued that, in fact, there was much skepticism about ATBM systems in the ministry. As such, the aforementioned passages on ATBM had to be seen first and foremost as a declaration by minister de Ruiter of general political support of American and West German initiatives regarding ATBMs within NATO. This corresponds with the Dutch support for those initiatives in international fora around this time.[202] In this context, it is important to note that de Ruiter did not express support for European defenses against nuclear missiles specifically; rather, he spoke of protection from "conventional forces", which was generally interpreted to encompass non-nuclear missiles, and perhaps air force attacks by means of fighter jets and aerial bombers.

Manfred Wörner became one of the leading figures in the pro-EDI camp. Wörner started supporting the notion of an EDI as the European addition to SDI in September 1985, and he lobbied for this plan throughout the latter months of that year.[203] His argument was that European ATBM technology would be beneficial to NATO strategy in general and that the technology could be useful for both anti-nuclear and anti-conventional defenses. Hence, he argued, whether one was a European SDI supporter or an SDI opponent needed not determine one's position on European ATBMs *in se.*[204] The fact that surface-to-air defenses against conventional and nuclear arms strongly relied on similar technology was, in this respect, a common denominator. In this explanation of the EDI effort, De Ruiter's remarks could be considered part of the EDI camp.

In November, Minister de Ruiter stated in relation to "emerging technologies" to the Second Chamber that ATBM systems were part of NATO research and had been triggered by the increasing INF capabilities of the Warsaw Pact, which threatened European NATO states through increased capability to hit these states with conventional, chemical and nuclear charges on INF missiles. He stated that the link with SDI had to do with the fact that "[m]any of the technologies researched in [SDIO] projects could be of relevance in relation to ATBM. Besides, the necessity to strengthen air defenses, using ATBM systems, has to be seen apart from the American SDI-program."[205] De Ruiter opposed the idea of making ATBMs for Europe a solely European effort; it would have to be developed within NATO, in cooperation with the allies. The Second Chamber fractions of CDA, VVD and D'66 were – some a bit reserved – positive about efforts of NATO to develop ATBMs; it would enhance West European security and decrease the chances of a large-scale nuclear exchange. However, fears that this would trigger instability, a new arms race, as well as that this plan would require enormous funds, made the PvdA and other opposition parties oppose the plan.[206]

As stated, one of the most influential supporters of European developments of general ATBM systems was Dutch general Berkhof. In a number of articles[207], and most importantly in his book *Duel om de ruimte,* he fervently pleaded in favor of NATO-wide, and specifically Dutch support for such

[201] Brauch "SDI – Consultation and International Parliamentary Debate" in Brauch, 286-287, and Eerste Kamer, 1984-1985, no. 17257 nr. 6 "Assemblée van de Westeuropese Unie" (August 23, 1985): 9-12
[202] Colijn and Rusman, "Westeuropese antwoorden op SDI" in Everts *De droom* 140-141
[203] Reiss, *The Strategic Defence Initiative*, 127
[204] Daalder, 55
[205] Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, no. 19061 nr. 4 "Versterking van de conventionele verdediging en emerging technologies" (November 15, 1985): 11-12
[206] --, "Kamer wil Europees raketsysteem" *Trouw*, (November 26, 1985): 4. For CDA support declaration for ATBMs in January 1986, see: Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, 40ste vergadering (January 22, 1986): 2683
[207] Most importantly, see: G.C. Berkhof "Het Amerikaanse 'Strategic Defense Initiative' en de stabiliteit" *Internationale Spectator*, May 1985: 303-310

systems. His publications even made it into the debates in the parliament.[208] In *Duel om de ruimte,* Berkhof's plea for NATO to incorporate ABM and ATBM systems in its strategic plans was based on purely military strategic considerations. He had two main arguments. The first was that based on the observation that the Soviets had already started the partial deployment of ATBM systems to protect their INF sites from early destruction in the event of a nuclear exchange; if NATO did not follow this policy, its INF and other shorter-range military capabilities would be in danger. Secondly, he emphasized that the Soviets – and with them the Warsaw Pact states – held a significant numerical advantage in terms of conventional forces, as well as INF arms, over NATO. NATO's response, he argued, could and would not be to bring its conventional and INF forces on par with those of the Warsaw Pact, since the high costs and public backlash would prevent several NATO governments from adopting such policies. As a result, deployment of ATBM systems would be an important component in protecting NATO states, especially the European countries, relatively effectively for relatively low costs.[209] Berkhof was not the only European military leader, active or retired, to support ATBMs for Europe; Hans Brauch showed that, for instance, French air force General Gallois and FRG army General Schmückle too supported these systems in quite the same terms.[210] Brauch's claim that Berkhof supported EDIs specifically is, however, inaccurate; Berkhof did not argue that support for European ATBMs meant support for the general concept of SDI, or that one required the other.

By April 1986, Wörner had started to distance himself from an independent European EDI, arguing that he had been reassured by American commitments to West European security.[211] The plan of independent development of European ATBMs declined in prevalence, mostly due to issues of financing. Research into ATBM systems, including for Europe, went on afterwards, especially led by the Americans – partially by SDIO – and the French and Germans.[212] However, by late 1986 the topic was already declining in prominence, and in 1988 the notion of EDI completely disappeared from the political agendas.[213] In December 1986, Philips subsidiary Signaal was part of group of Western European companies to receive an order from the SDIO in the context of research into ATBM systems. However, the fact that Western European officials, including Minister van Eekelen, were surprised about this announcement[214] makes the chances much smaller that the Dutch were sympathetic to EDI/ATBMs for reasons of industrials interests – like the Germans had been before.

A major aspect explaining the pro-ATBM stance of parts of the Dutch political spectrum was the strategic location of the Netherlands; the country fell within the range of the shorter range systems of the Warsaw Pact, such as the SS-23 INF missiles, as well as relatively short-trajectory air forces. The Netherlands shared this strategic location with West Germany and Denmark, while other key Western European states such Britain, Italy, and France were threatened only by relatively longer-range missile systems such as the SS-20 and SS-22.[215] Additionally, a practical element in Dutch ATBM support was the fact that the Dutch were among the first – and only - American allies to purchase the expensive and advanced US-made Patriot missile system for aerial defense. This system was one of the most mentioned potential vehicles for ATBM realization.[216] At the same time, there is little to no evidence, whether literary or from other sources like policy papers or newspapers, to argue that Dutch industry had a major interest in the development of ATBMs, especially not within the scope

[208] See for instance: Eerste Kamer, 1984-1985, vergadering (May 28, 1985)
[209] Berkhof, *Duel om de ruimte*, 126-132. See also: Daalder, 63
[210] Brauch "From SDI to EDI – Elements of a European Defence Architecture" in Brauch, 438
[211] Reiss, 131
[212] Colijn en Rusman in Everts, 141
[213] Reiss, 131-132
[214] Bob Groen, "Verrassend aanbod Weinberger aan Europese ondernemingen" *De Volkskrant* (December 5, 1986): 1
[215] Daalder, 65-66, and Brauch "Elements of a European Defence Architecture" in Brauch, 441-443
[216] Reiss, 131

of SDIO; most of the SDIO research was conducted by American companies. The fact that Signaal was given an order in 1986 and that this was relatively big news – as well as a surprise to the government – only illustrates this fact. Yet, the support from De Ruiter and a majority in the Second Chamber for NATO research into ATBMs, and SDIO's role therein, did make for a degree of acceptation of SDIO's activities. It even prompted at least one Dutch company to take part in, what officially can be called, SDI research.

Considering the elements in the story of the Netherlands and EDI/ATBM as presented above, there is little reason to argue that the Netherlands supported the politicized version of European ATBMs, namely EDI, as a partner program of SDI - as the German Christian Democrats had first proposed in June 1985 – especially not from within the government. This was unlike the situation in FRG and in France, where significant parts of the coalition parties (FRG) and the rightwing opposition (France) openly supported EDI for political and industrial reasons.[217] The argument that Europe needed to be guaranteeing its safety was mentioned by the CDA fraction in January 1986,[218] just like De Ruiter and Berkhof had done, but this regarded strategic/military safety rather than technological or industrial. Indeed, a – partially hesitant – majority in Dutch politics supported European ATBM systems from the perspective of NATO strategy and vulnerability of the Netherlands in terms of aerial defenses. Arguments regarding Dutch industry specifically were hardly ever made, and European industry was only truly mentioned by the VVD. The link to SDI, therefore, is limited to the overlap in technologies to achieve an ATBM with the – enormously broad spectrum of – research that the SDIO was conducting. This meant that the only true consequence vis-à-vis SDI was Dutch support for NATO ATBM research as conducted by the SDIO – and no broader political implications.

Comparison and further analysis

The narrative presented so far in this chapter shows that Dutch politics, especially the cabinet and government in general, never were as susceptible to any of the most profiled SDI-related debates to the extent that the big three were. In the FRG, the questions of political support for SDI, participation in SDI research, EDI, and participation in SDI versus in EUREKA, caused major conflicts in the cabinet.[219] The clear French protests against SDI, and the conscious effort to make EUREKA more attractive than SDIO contribution for European states, were rooted in the deep Gaullist/Europeanist conviction that Europe needed to remain independent from America as much as possible, both strategically and technologically. Britain did not want to miss any technology boat or antagonize any major ally, and decided to bet on both horses – and thus officially participated in both SDIO and EUREKA. So did the West Germans, in the end. Yet, Britain was clearly the most pro-SDI European country. Compared to the narratives of these states, the Dutch SDI debate in 1985 and subsequent years was relatively quiet – and more importantly, relatively less politicized. While support for SDIO and EUREKA were viewed by the parties as problematic issues, especially by the opposition, SDI never became a crucial issue of domestic or foreign policy. In this sense, the cabinet's effort to depoliticize SDI and to make as few public statements as possible worked quite effectively. This is not to say, however, that the debate was insignificant.

The Dutch – or at least a majority in the Second Chamber and in the cabinet- supported both EUREKA and European ATBMs; did that put the Dutch on par with the Germans and/or French? Dutch support for EUREKA never, especially not openly, embraced EUREKA as the politicized alternative to SDI research - the way the French had initially presented it. Rather, partially under influence from Dutch pressure and with Dutch financial commitment, EUREKA became more like the

[217] Brauch "From SDI to EDI – Elements of a European Defence Architecture", in Brauch 438-439
[218] Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, 40ste vergadering (January 22, 1986): 2683
[219] Bluth, 252

original proposal Lubbers had launched in 1984 for a general community of European technology; with a much broader scope than SDIO. It is true, however, that SDI gave this process a kick start. The Dutch, similarly, never supported the politicized version of European ATBMs that was EDI – as was raised by several German leaders and some voices in France and Britain. Rather, ATBMs were approached pragmatically, as a necessary element in Dutch and NATO security, especially against conventional aerial threats. Indeed, the Dutch responses to EUREKA and EDI are cases in point that the Dutch reaction to SDI was less politicized than that of the big three.

It remains interesting that the Dutch government decided against negotiating an MoU, while for instance the FRG government decided in favor of doing so, with both states sharing a number of important factors influencing that decision. For both governments, SDIO and EUREKA were vague. In the political climate of both states, SDI was – especially initially - not received too warmly, while there was traditional and contemporary support for joint European research projects like EUREKA. Moreover, the placement of cruise missiles was a point of major controversy in the early- to mid-80s, and the wounds this controversy had caused in Dutch society were only just starting to heal in 1985-1986. Perhaps a crucial difference was that one of the main incentives for some states to sign an MoU - as identified by Daalder[220] - differently affected the Dutch and German governments: the pressure from companies and the potential benefit to domestic industries. It is true that experts in Germany, contrary to their colleagues in the Netherlands, believed that chances of acquiring SDI contracts were significant for their domestic companies, and as a consequence, corporate pressure to sign an MoU was more significant.[221] Another difference could be Chancellor Kohl and other individuals in the German cabinet were more openly committed to supporting SDI to keep transatlantic relations healthy[222] than their Dutch colleagues were – the Dutch cabinet never truly acknowledged this link in public. Surely, these two contrasts between West Germany and the Netherlands were even starker between the Dutch and the British.

Indeed, analyzing the incentives – and downsides - for the Dutch in supporting SDI research and/or EUREKA, shows that it is rather unsurprising that the Dutch responded relatively positively towards EUREKA, while they were more skeptical towards an official memorandum with the Americans on SDI research. Firstly, there was the estimation that there was little to gain from participation in SDI research for Dutch actors for a number of reasons. The result was relatively little pressure – especially corporate - upon the government to sign a memorandum with the Americans. This was rather the opposite for EUREKA, where especially Philips explicitly expressed interests in such a program multiple times. Secondly, the Dutch favored European cooperative programs even before EUREKA – albeit balanced in order not to serve one nation too strongly – and had promoted plans similar to EUREKA before the latter program's inception. Moreover, EUREKA was aimed at civil technology, as opposed to the SDIO, which was inherently associated with SDI's undesirable effects upon the military use of space, arms races and the nuclear balance. SDI participation was, therefore, a potentially controversial subject, both in the public and between the disagreeing coalition partners. EUREKA, on the other hand, was broadly supported. Like the CIA Office of European analysis expected in November 1985, the Netherlands (and Belgium) "want a coordinated response to SDI; while they probably will allow industrial participation in SDI, they will focus government attention on EUREKA as a politically more acceptable program."[223] Indeed, the fact that the cruise missiles issue – and general feeling among a part of the public of suspicion towards the American

[220] Daalder, 74
[221] Lucas, 230, and Bluth, 252,262
[222] Bluth, 250-252
[223] Central Intelligence Agency, Office of European Analysis "EUREKA: The West European High-Technology Initiative. An intelligence Assessment" (November 1985). Sanitized version declassified 2011: 6-7

commitment to peace and arms control – had not passed by 1985-1986[224] certainly did not make it any more attractive for the government to support SDI and its research projects in any way.

Chapter conclusion

During 1985-1986 the role SDI played in Dutch politics changed significantly. The topic became more pressing, but more importantly, it switched from political-strategic concerns and "benign neglect" – to use Brauch's phrasing – to active involvement in domestic, bilateral, and multilateral considerations about technological research cooperation. The political-strategic concerns did not change much since the phase of chapter 2. Concerns, among others, about the implications of SDI upon East-West relations, NATO relations, arms control and the military use of space had not disappeared. Neither had the cabinet's arguments that SDI was too uncertain to draw definitive political-strategic conclusions on, and that Soviet activities required a response from NATO states. In fact, while the Dutch did not truly support EDI for the SDI-related political reasons that some European – especially French and FRG politicians did – a majority in Dutch politics did support ATBMs for Europe to counter Soviet military activities; an argument following from the *tu quoque* argumentation first used in 1984. Indeed, the role European ATBMs in the Netherlands is restricted to strategic concerns. The only relation to SDI, in the end, is that support for NATO production of European ATBMs meant support for SDIOs efforts in this regard.

The role of EUREKA in the Dutch SDI-and-technology debate was complicated. At the time of the October decision, EUREKA was far from a concrete, full-fledged alternative to SDI participation. There are a number of reasons for this; firstly because the size of the program was much smaller, secondly because – though similar fields of technology were proposed – EUREKA was civil in nature, while SDIO was military-oriented. Thirdly, even though SDI's scope and exact goals were vague, EUREKA was much vaguer – it was even doubtful whether EUREKA would actually take off in the end. On the other hand, EUREKA provided an opportunity to realize the Western European technological cooperation that the Dutch had raised as a plan before – it just needed some changes from the French blueprint to make sure it did not only serve French (and German) interests, and that EUREKA was not restricted to the same technologies that SDI covered. Moreover, not participating in SDI research would only widen the technological-industrial gap between Europe and the US, so EUREKA participation would be wise, regardless of strategic and political concerns. Indeed, it is clearly true that, as De Ruiter said in the Council of Ministers of 21 June 1985, "there is a link, regarding technology, between SDI and EUREKA"[225] in Dutch politics. Indeed, SDI participation was even less attractive: it was estimated that there was little to gain, Dutch companies and institutes were generally not too enthusiastic, and a politically-charged declaration of official state participation had the potential to be politically disruptive. Such a declaration could provoke both another public national foreign policy crisis – interlinked with the cruise missiles debate – and an internal coalition conflict, as well as clashes with the opposition. It must be noted, for full clarity, that the Dutch sources used in this thesis do not literally show cabinet members or other functionaries of the government making literal statements to this effect – i.e. that they feared major political controversy over SDI. However, the American sources, mostly declassified memo's from the CIA's Office of European Analysis, do indicate that Dutch officials made such statements. Moreover, from the analysis of the government's policies and the cabinet's arguments, the conclusion that the government had made this assessment can reasonably be drawn.

Other reasons to enter an MoU with the Americans, such as the consideration that influence

[224] Van Diepen, *Hollanditis,* 320-336
[225] Nationaal Archief, Den Haag, Ministerraad notulen (June 21, 1985): 8

upon SDI developments was only possible from within a contractual relationship – the way the German and British government defended their MoUs – never developed as clearly in Dutch political discourse, and apparently were deciding factors for van den Broek. The same went for the argument that an MoU was necessary to keep general transatlantic and bilateral Dutch-American relations healthy.

Essentially, SDI and the Netherlands in 1985-1986 is marked the cabinet's hesitancy – contrary to the situation in the cabinets of the big three - to politicize any aspect of SDI. The ministers split the political-strategic aspects – on which any decision was postponed to the next decades - from the economic-technological-industrial concerns. Based on this distinction, non-participation in SDIO, and participation in EUREKA, were logical, and took away most political controversy. Like PvdA spokesman Stemerdink observed somewhat frustrated: "the cabinet declined [SDIO] participation because it *does not pay*!" (my emphasis);[226] the opposition did attempt to introduce the political dimension into the research debate, but the ministers never not truly joined this narrative. These considerations led to the fact that the Dutch were the second state to guarantee funds for EUREKA – behind initiator France. But, importantly, the concrete Dutch support for EUREKA, not too long after its decline of Weinberger's offer, was not necessarily a directly counter-SDI effort; it included completely different technologies and fields of research than SDIO did. Additionally, it is also quite inaccurate to argue that EUREKA offered the cabinet a way out of all problems that SDI posed.

Conclusion and discussion

As stated in the introduction, this thesis is an effort to accomplish a number of goals. The first goal is to establish the narrative of SDI and the political reaction in the Netherlands. The second is to compare this narrative to that of (Western) Europe and SDI in the literature, especially with regards to the big three. Finally, the third goal is to use the narrative of the first goal, i.e. the Netherlands and SDI, together with the result of the second goal, i.e. the comparison, to relate the Dutch reaction to SDI to the debate on Dutch foreign policy, especially to the Hollanditis vs. Loyal ally debate.

The narrative of SDI and the Netherlands has been split up into two parts in this thesis: the initial years of 1983-1984, and the height of the debate in 1985-1986.The first phase started off with "benign neglect" on the side of the government. Political parties did not respond immediately. SDI had not been announced to the Dutch government before its television announcement, and it remained a vague concept; its implications were uncertain. One of the first contexts in which SDI was mentioned was within the debate on space armaments, which had a s strong connection to ASATs. There was relative consensus in Dutch politics that an arms race in space was destabilizing and should be prevented. However, this topic and its relevance to SDI would gradually disappear throughout 1984. At the same time, a consensus was developing in Dutch politics that there were problematic strategic and political implications to SDI – as SDI was being more concretely turned into policy by the Reagan administration. These concerns were similar to those in other European countries, and included fear of the breakage of the ABM treaty, an arms race, and consequences to the NATO strategy of "flexible response". Second Chamber fractions, especially the opposition, pressed the government for concrete political reactions to SDI, but the cabinet consistently argued that the program was too new and aimed at such a long period of time that serious political conclusions could not be drawn.

The second phase started, mostly as a result of America's promotion of SDI research to Europe, with a shift to concerns about the technological and economic implications of SDI research; in late-1984 to early-1985, the Americans truly started the SDIO project and the letter by Weinberger triggered the technology debate. The focus groups started by the government with major technology

[226] Tweede Kamer, 1985-1986, 40ste vergadering (January 22, 1986): 2680

companies and institutes studied the possibilities for the Netherlands. Meanwhile, the Dutch tried to achieve a unified European response, or at least to the extent possible, within the WEU most importantly. When a truly unified response failed to take shape, the cabinet came under increasing pressure to make a decision. Meanwhile, EUREKA was launched by the French. The Dutch were supportive of European technological cooperation, but had problems with the specific setup of EUREKA. The CDA fraction in the Second Chamber, following the opposition, became convinced that SDI offered too little to the Netherlands and would mostly damage the Dutch technological and economic position. In October 1985, the government decided that there would be no official participation in SDI research, officially because the Dutch had little to offer and little to gain; this had become clear from the focus group. The cabinet split the political-strategic dimension of SDI from the purely economic-technological aspects. The government kept to the argument, as presented as early as December 1983, that a political-strategic final assessment could not be made yet. The choice regarding participation in SDIO was presented to be only economic. Thereby, the choice against SDIO participation and in favor of EUREKA participation was easy to make. In the meantime, into 1986, a majority in Dutch politics formed, supporting research into European ATBMs. However, this support never amounted to an important additional subtopic in the Dutch SDI debate.

But the crux of this thesis lays in herein: were the Netherlands disloyal regarding SDI, and was this a case of Hollanditis? That is, were the Dutch less loyal than other European states? Let us first consider possible reasons why this would indeed be the case, focusing on the government's side. The individual parties are – albeit a bit more brief – outlined below.

Firstly, the Dutch were quite open about their concerns about the military use of space and an arms race in space, not only in bilateral diplomatic channels, but also for instance within NATO and the CD. However, actions against technology such as ASATs, and later also SDI-related satellites with ABM capabilities, were less politically motivated than those by the French. Rather, they were, what can be argued to be, more idealistic in nature: the actual protection of space and the prevention of an arms race seem to have been the motivating factors for the Dutch in this respect. And while the Dutch may have been somewhat more passionate, other main European states, like West Germany and Italy, also voiced concerns about the same developments. Moreover, with regards to SDI specifically, the Dutch government said very little in public and hardly anything in relation to its pleas in the Geneva CD, while it protested more openly in private bilateral and multilateral channels.

In the second phase, there are two main elements that suggest the Netherlands were less loyal than a number of other European states: the Netherlands were the second WEU ally, after the generally rebellious French, to say no to Weinberger's participation offer. Moreover, the Netherlands were the second state, once again after France, to promise concrete funds for EUREKA, not too long after the publication of the state's rejection of SDIO participation. Did those actions actually make the Netherlands less loyal? Any detrimental effect of the Dutch refusal to join SDI research to NATO was very limited, even to US; there was little technological competitive edge to gain for the SDIO in the Netherlands. Even if there were such interests, Dutch companies were still allowed to take part if they wished to do so. Moreover, several other allied states, most of them European, made the same choice; France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, and Canada, for instance. Additionally, the Dutch refusal was carefully introduced by the government with little to no actual political arguments; there was no real political damage to SDI as a concept caused by the Dutch government's decision. As such, the Dutch refusal to officially partake in SDI research could hardly be called a clear case of neutralism and idealism, inspired by Hollanditis.

A very similar conclusion can be drawn with regards to EUREKA. The narrative that EUREKA participation was a clear 'no' to SDI was quickly rebuked in the earlier stages of the plan's announcement – the only major European state to keep protesting SDI openly during 1985 was France.

The fact that both West Germany and Britain, most concerned of all European states about the transatlantic consequences of the SDI debate, also openly became in favor of participation in EUREKA is proof thereof. Moreover, the Dutch actively lobbied to make EUREKA a broad technological cooperation effort, resembling the plan that the Netherlands had been supporting before. Partially as a result thereof, in the end, EUREKA had very little direct resemblance to SDIO, and the political consequences to SDIO of Dutch support for EUREKA were marginal.

In conclusion, possible anti-SDI policies and statements by the Dutch government, such as refusal to openly take part in SDIO research – and to sign an MoU - just like its participation in EUREKA, were not truly policies that damaged NATO relations or US-Netherlands relations the way continuous postponing of the placement of cruise missiles did. They were of little political controversy, and hardly unique compared to other European states.

Having established that most of the policies that could be argued to make the Netherlands less loyal were of little consequence and/or of no such intention, it is important to look at the policies that could be argued to have done the opposite: what made the Netherlands potentially more loyal?

Dutch support for an EDI program could have been an example, because it has been shown from the literature that several European politicians favored EDI as a means to make SDI acceptable for Western Europe. However, it became quite clear in the subchapter on EDI/European ATBMs that Dutch declaration of support for ATBM developments within NATO had little to do with SDI, and were promoted as being separate from the SDI program. Here again, the debate was less politicized and focused more on pragmatic reasons – this time of conventional strategic and financial nature. This was different from some of the most ardent EDI proponents in the big three states. The only positive effect upon SDI of Dutch support for ATBMs was the fact that ATBM research efforts by SDIO were implicitly supported by the Dutch. However, this effect was rather marginal and of little political consequence.

A more important, but more subtle and small, indicator is to be found in, for instance, the fact that the Dutch joined the other NATO states in the declaration that, in principle, they supported the American SDI research effort. This took place while the cruise missiles crisis was still going on. Moreover, this official political support was a sign that the Dutch were not neutral in the international controversy around SDI. In the voluminous *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations* – mentioned in the literature review – Duco Hellema argues that Minister van den Broek tried to do everything in his power and within the domestic political possibilities, to improve the status of the Netherlands as a good ally to NATO and the Americans. He mentions that an example thereof is that the minister "did not declare himself openly against Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative".[227] Indeed, this is illustrated by two of the most important policies vis-à-vis SDI of the Dutch government. The first was the attempt not to be too critical of SDI in public. As the CDA fraction stated about the years before in late 1986, the governmental reaction to SDI "was a rather neutral and distanced attitude towards an unstoppable initiative with a destabilizing effect."[228] In line with this attitude was the governmental effort to separate the political-strategic aspects of the project from the technological-economic consequences – the latter of which became pressing since the Reagan administration had started to put more pressure on the Europeans throughout 1985: the Reagan administration wanted access to European technologies and implicit European support for SDI. In the light of the delicate situation in Dutch society with regards to the cruise missiles and arms control, and in light of the slumbering disagreement in the coalition regarding several SDI-related issues, the two governmental efforts above are best seen as efforts to be as much of a loyal ally as reasonably possible, regarding SDI. Granted, the Dutch were not as openly loyal as the FRG and Britain, but neither can it be argued that the Dutch

[227] Hellema in Krabbendam et al. (eds.) *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations*, 592
[228] --, "Lubbers wil afzonderlijke akkoorden" *Reformatorisch Dagblad* (November 18, 1986): 5

were significantly disloyal. Moreover, the British and West German political climates allowed the respective governments to be more openly pro-SDI – and this brings us to party politics.

Similar conclusions as those on the government's stance can be drawn about the parliamentary coalition partner fractions. The CDA fraction became somewhat anti-SDI – opposing official participation in SDI research most importantly - but never concretely pressured the cabinet into denouncing SDI in political terms. The Dutch Christian Democrats did not truly support an EDI effort, contrary to their West German colleagues. This, however, was of relatively little consequence. The VVD fraction was mildly pro-SDI, and openly pro-EDI and pro-SDI research participation. However, the same cannot be said for the – mostly leftwing – opposition, led by the PvdA. Just like in the case of the cruise missiles, the PvdA was openly and fervently against the overall SDI effort, SDI research, and EDI – the socialists and social democrats were even against European ATBMs. The same was true for the second largest opposition party D'66, except for this party's hesitant support for ATBMs.

The PvdA arguments resemble the international-idealism tradition – as most clearly defined by Voorhoeve[229] - the most. In essence, the leftwing opposition's arguments came down the conviction that the Netherlands should be the one to refuse SDI and set an example for other allies – and even non-allied states – in refusing to contribute to destabilizing policies and arms races. Similarly, the opposition did not want to base the decision on official participation in SDI on its potential merits to the Netherlands and its companies, but on the ideological antipathy towards SDI in general. It is therefore hardly surprising that the same mr Voorhoeve, VVD Second Chamber fraction spokesman for Foreign Affairs at the time, fervently opposed such idealized arguments and pleaded in favor of Dutch participation in SDIO research for pragmatic reasons: industry and alliance. If the leftwing reactions to SDI, directly opposing the political reasoning behind SDI and its research, would have been the official governmental reaction, they surely would have done more significant damage to NATO and Netherlands-America relations and came closer to "Hollanditis". However, the government never adopted any such politicized arguments, and the leftwing parties remained in the opposition throughout the SDI debate's height. Since the Netherlands were – and are - a relatively small ally compared to the big three, or big four, and since any allied attention was almost exclusively focused on the Dutch cruise missiles placement, the opposition's politically charged anti-SDI arguments never did much damage to international relations.

So, when a delegation of the US State Department, in an internal classified memo in November 1983, reported that the Dutch were "very moralistic about foreign policy"[230] - this remark was directly inspired by their visit to The Hague to speak about the American invasion of Grenada and the INF issue – this did not truly count for SDI – nor would it in later years. Perhaps it would to some extent for the opposition's arguments against SDI, or for some classified bilateral protests that the Dutch raised against SDI, but not for the general line of the Netherlands regarding SDI. However, these classified diplomatic contacts does bring the narrative of this thesis to the last subtopic.

The conclusions of this thesis, as presented above, are based on extensive primary and secondary research into a range of sources – as can be seen in detail in the introduction. However, this thesis is just the start of the in-depth research into SDI and the Netherlands, and the controversy of Hollanditis in 1980s Dutch foreign policy – apart from the cruise missiles. Moreover, the set goals for this project had to be accomplished within the time and word count limitations of a bachelor thesis. As such, there is much more research yet to be conducted; I especially suggest more research into primary sources - archival sources specifically. To the extent that the following sources can be made accessible for

[229] Voorhoeve, *Peace, Profits and Principles*. See the literature review, section 'Dutch policy: Cold War, foreign relations and defense'

[230] --, "Sunday, November 6 to Wednesday, November 9, 1983" US Department of State Case No. F-2011-00929 Doc No. C05183110, November 12, 1983. Declassified 2013: 4

academic inquiry, much additional information is likely to be found in the archives of institutions such as the Dutch ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense, the AIVD and MIVD (Dutch general and military intelligence services), NATO, the former WEU, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, the United States State Department and similar ministries/departments of other European states. Such internal, declassified archival material could help to show more of the internal, i.e. national, bilateral and multilateral, assessments and negotiations about virtually all SDI-related topics. I expect there to be additional evidence for Dutch governmental criticism of SDI in confidential settings, as well as more elaborate weighing of advantages and disadvantages of support for SDI research, EUREKA, and EDI. There is yet much research to be participated in.

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