

Oral History Interview
with
DIRK STIKKER

During the period of the Truman Administration (1945-53) Stikker was a member of the Netherlands Government Delegation to the Round Table Conference on the political status of the Netherlands West Indies, 1946; member Round Table Conference with representatives of Indonesia and preparation for the independence of Indonesia, 1948; Netherlands Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1948-52; Netherlands Representative on the Council of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, 1950; and Chairman, OEEC, 1950-52. Ambassador Stikker later, in addition to service in many other distinguished positions, was Secretary-General of NATO, 1961-64.

Lovenno, Italy

July 14, 1970 by Theodore A. Wilson, University of Kansas

The Harry S. Truman Library
Independence, Missouri
May, 1986

NOTICE

This interview was done for a special research project to study foreign aid during the Truman Administration and is therefore limited in subject and scope. The project was funded by the Harry S. Truman Library Institute for National and International Affairs.

RESTRICTIONS

This oral history transcript may be read, quoted from, cited, and reproduced for purposes of research. It may not be published in full except by permission of the Harry S. Truman Library.

Oral History Interview
with
DIRK STIKKER

Lovenno, Italy
July 14, 1970
by Theodore A. Wilson, University of Kansas

[1]

WILSON: I've tried to read your memoirs quite carefully, and indeed I had an opportunity several years ago to review it for a historical journal.

STIKKER: No, I didn't see that.

WILSON: One of the American journals.

STIKKER: I would like to see that.

WILSON: Yes, I'll send you the review.

STIKKER: I try to collect all the information.

WILSON: Happily, the review, of course, had to be quite favorable so I am willing to send you a copy of it.

[2]

STIKKER: Even if it's not favorable, I would like to see it.

WILSON: In re-reading it over the course of the spring, several questions came to me, and I might run down some of these.

STIRKER: Go ahead.

WILSON: At the time was there any possibility or any consideration given to the idea that the then-existing body, the Economic Commission for Europe, might have been used as a funnel for Marshall plan aid rather than through the creation of a new organization?

STIKKER: I don't think so; because Russia was in it, all were in it, and the division between the Russian bloc and what has developed to become the Western organizations, all of them together, created two blocs right from the beginning. There was such a gap, that you couldn't welcome it into ECA (Economic Cooperation Administration) or the Economic Commission for Europe of the United Nations. You had to create something special, something new.

[3]

WILSON: What sort of relations did you have with this Economic Commission for Europe, this U.N. agency, after you came in?

STIKKER: Very little.

WILSON: It had become a statistical . . .

STIKKER: Statistical; it collected data, but it had no real influence on anything that happened at that time. I only got in touch with it later on when I was in the Economic and Social Council. Practically, it didn't play a role; anyway not in my country in those years.

WILSON: One of the bits of information that I have gathered is something about the activities of Gunnar Myrdal when he was chairman. He seemed to have in '48-'49 some hope for the ECE playing a role. Was this a Scandinavian approach?

STIKKER: It was a little bit of a Scandinavian approach. Well, you know, Myrdal is rather on the left side. He is a little bit on the left side. He is an extremely clever economist. In a way, I admire the man, just as much his wife, too.

[4]

WILSON: Yes. Yes.

STIKKER: But I don't think that he had a chance to do anything on the ECE in the field about which we are talking.

WILSON: I've noted things as they've occurred to me, so this is not well-organized. But I wonder if you might comment on, or perhaps you have some examples on, U.S. policy, or lack of U.S. policy, towards the colonial dependencies, or the dependencies of the European governments. Was there a contradiction in U.S. policy?

STIKKER: It came to us in a way as a shock, and a surprise. During the war we had been cut off from everything that happened in the rest of the world. We didn't know a thing. In the Netherlands we were preparing ourselves also for that aspect, and trying to find some new system--how it could be worked out--naturally together with the Indonesians. Then when our Queen, Wilhelmina, was in England she made a statement about our policy from London. We didn't know what it meant--what it could become. Most of the people in the

[5]

Netherlands who were working on these problems gave up, and said, "Well, it's better that we wait until the war comes to an end, and then we can see what we are going to do."

Now, when we talk about U.S. policy, I think it was a pity that at Potsdam it was decided that the military authority over happenings in the Far East would be transferred from the U.S., as far as Indonesia and that corner of Southeast Asia is concerned, to the United Kingdom. It may well be that conditions would have been different if, immediately, in Indonesia a military force of importance had come into the country and tried to put things in order again. That doesn't imply the attitude of the United States might have been different, but in any case, there would have been right from the beginning more order. The British had no forces, nothing. Mountbatten was the commander-in-chief for that area, from the Potsdam meeting onwards. He had only some very few forces, mainly Indian or Pakistani forces. Well, when they came into the country, they felt more as if they were themselves still a power under control of colonial authorities. They sympathized

[6]

to some extent with the revolutionary forces which had been created during the war.

Now there was complete chaos in Indonesia. At the very last moment when the Japanese practically were already beaten and had lost the war, still the Japanese generals transferred authority for the republic to Sukarno. And to my mind and to the mind of most people in the Netherlands, we considered Sukarno as a collaborator with the Japanese during the war. He sent

tens of thousands of Indonesians to work on the Burma Road, and he helped the Japanese and got a Japanese decoration during the war. So we considered him as a collaborator.

Now, it may well have been different in case sufficient American forces had landed, instead of the Pakistani and Indian forces, who in a way had a certain amount of sympathy with the revolutionaries, and perhaps justly so. I don't deny that there were many things wrong in that period. But in any case, the British couldn't do a thing, and the Japanese Army which was still there had to control, for a certain period, law and order in the country, and

[7]

we had forces waiting, for instance in Rangoon where we had military people waiting, but we were not allowed to get into the country. They had to hang on in Rangoon for a long time before they were allowed to land. Now that all created an atmosphere of distrust. We didn't like Mountbatten's attitude at that time, and in that atmosphere nobody knew what was going to happen, even among those who had the best intentions for the transfer of sovereignty, to do it in an orderly way, so that when a new government should come in there they would have more facilities and could get assistance from us or from others. We didn't know what to do and we were completely at a loss.

In those years, '46, '47, '48, I had been, myself, about twenty times in Indonesia to look around at what was happening there. In the beginning I had a feeling, "Well, these people like Sukarno, they are not the right sort of people, and we can't deal with them." But the more I went to the country, the more I began to understand that it was wrong to try and settle these problems in a military way. It had to be a political solution which had to be found. That is also a slow process, before you reach that solution.

[8]

I must say that I was one of the few who got that idea. And when I became Minister of Foreign Affairs most people expected me to be on the extreme, against transfer of sovereignty, but I was not. I was the only man in the Cabinet who really wanted to transfer sovereignty. My own party was absolutely against it. So I was a very lonely man at that time.

The problem was how to maneuver these things, how to manipulate, how to get away from all these feelings of resentment, because when you are a realist, which I am, you have to accept the factual situation. You can't do anything about it; you can't change that. But to convince the people that it had to be done, I sometimes had a feeling that I later on saw in a man like de Gaulle who was changing his position on Algiers. I had been thinking a lot about my own problem at that time. That's nearly the same sort of situation. England did it much more cleverly by transfer of sovereignty rather soon to Nehru and his group, so there was a good relation. Then on top of it we had the bad luck; if Nehru had been President of Indonesia, and Sukarno, President of India, things would

[9]

have been different. That's the point. Now, how did we get to this problem in the Far East?

WILSON: I was asking about the apparent contradictions in the U.S. policy toward Indonesia, in particular, and the needs of helping you in Europe, helping you revive.

STIKKER: Well, I described that in my first meetings with [George C.] Marshall about it. It was very disappointing at that time. I put it mildly in my memoirs; didn't go too far with it. You had a representative there at that time, Mr. [H. Merle] Cochran, on the Committee (U.N. Good Offices Committee for Indonesia). He had to act on instructions, and although he had made several promises that nothing would happen before the new government came in, he suddenly produced, on instructions of the State Department, a Cochran plan, which increased our difficulties. But finally we got out of it; the first transfer of sovereignty was in '49.

WILSON: This is a hypothetical question. What would have been the situation had the Korean war occurred in 1947,

[10]

say, rather than in . . .

STIKKER: Well, yes, then naturally that would have been different, all right.

WILSON: In a way, you were saying things about the role that the United States, or the West, should take in the Far East. That was what the United States recognized two years later.

STIKKER: Yes. And I can't say that I believe completely in what is happening now in the Far East because to my mind the United States should never have been mixed up in the internal politics of those countries. And so this war which is now going on--I've just been in Vietnam. I've just been in Cambodia; I've been in Laos, and I've seen all these countries. I was on a mission for the Asian Development Bank, studying the economic situation in eight countries of Southeast Asia. So I've studied all these countries again. Somewhat to my surprise, the economic situation in South Vietnam is far better than it comes out in all the statements made by the United States.

WILSON: Is that right? That's encouraging.

[11]

STIKKER: I wrote about it to the State Department. I'd been in touch with the State Department on this problem, and they asked me if I would be willing to make some statements about it. I said, "That's all right, but I'm just back now; for some reason or other, I'm waiting for the right moment to make that sort of statement.

So the timing is wrong. But it may still be that they will ask me again after a couple of months. But then I must have the latest information. I now feel that I know what is happening there. Take, for instance, in a country like South Vietnam, where 500,000 people have their weapons at home, a system which couldn't exist in any of the other countries, because to give weapons at home to 500,000 people is a hell of a lot. It only happens in Switzerland. And no other country of the world has quite a popular police force, as they call it now, and that has led to complete change internally in the situation of South Vietnam. The security is much better.

Then I talked with private business people. They had their distribution system, for instance, for dairy products, or for oil, or for pharmaceuticals.

[12]

They have it again, in about 80 percent of the total country. Then you can do that. That is an enormous change. It's often in these countries, in this sort of country, perhaps still in the Philippines, where the absentee landlords practically control the people. The absentee landlord plays an important role.

They just have adopted a law in South Vietnam, "the land to the tiller" law. It has been approved and adopted. The land they got originally belonged to the French. Of course, the French Government owned a lot of land in South Vietnam. That has now been handed over already, all of it, to the people who work on the land. The Government doesn't control the land any longer. They have now adopted a law that all the land owned by those other than the people who work on the land shall be transferred to the tiller. That is an enormous step forward. These things are going to happen. Of course, this is one of the complaints that you hear so often about all these countries. So many things are going on in South Vietnam, which to my mind are better than people realize.

WILSON: I'm encouraged. That's very interesting.

[13]

For one more minute on this question of American anti-colonialism, it has been a sort of traditional attitude toward Europeans. Did it just evaporate when the U.S. began to realize, began to give aid, under the Marshall plan, and began to realize the connections between European economic involvement with their dependencies?

STIKKER: No. I think that only now have they begun to understand these problems. Of course, they are so deeply involved in South Vietnam, and in the political situation in South Vietnam, that they know that this can't be done.

WILSON: So it took the same sort of involvement to really make America . . .

STIKKER: To really make Americans aware of it-- in the case of Americans, the American Government. Whether the people of the United States understand it, I don't know; the Government knows it.

When I talk about these methods, for instance--when I see Dean Acheson, whom I still see a lot of and we talk about it. He agrees that the United States may

[14]

have been wrong at the time about Indonesia. He had to take over for Marshall at that time.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: There was the Hickenlooper amendment in Marshall aid, which was to be applied to the Netherlands. We couldn't get any aid under the Marshall plan, unless we followed what the United States wanted to impose on us. I took the position that this can't be accepted, because then the United States is going to interfere time and again in all the affairs of the country. In some way they have to find their own way of solution, but it can't be forced on them through the Marshall aid. In order to get rid of that problem, I had a long talk with Ernie [Ernest] Bevin, and you may have it in a report. Ernie agreed that there was no place in the world where they had control; where the United States couldn't say that unless we change our course, or whatever it is.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: That was not a way to start on the Atlantic Treaty.

[15]

This was a precondition of the Treaty. So, before signing the treaty, Ernie Bevin and I had a long discussion with Dean Acheson and with others. We said forget about it; we are not going to sign unless he changes his attitude. He got in difficulty with Congress at that time; of course, the Hickenlooper amendment was an attempt in Congress to make a condition. So, the only change which was made was--and I think in a way was a pity--was that of the aid to be given to the Netherlands, no part of it could be used for the reconstruction of Indonesia.

WILSON: Well, I wasn't aware of that. I'll check that. That's very interesting. Did you consult with the French also?

STIKKER: I had full support all the time from France, and basically full support from Belgium, because they knew what sort of action I wanted to follow. I explained to them what my attitude was.

To transfer sovereignty over Indonesia we needed an amendment of our constitution. You can't transfer a part of a country without changing the constitution. The constitution indicates what belongs to the country.

[16]

I had been working for that change in the constitution. A change in the constitution means two readings in the Parliament, in both houses, and in between the readings a new election. At the first reading we had a majority, a fairly good majority. At the second reading, we needed, in order to change the constitution, 2/3 of the vote in favor. And I had calculated we can make it if I can control my Party. And it was a very small party. We had six votes in the second chamber, but just these six votes made it, one vote more than was needed.

Now, that had been my work, to prepare for the transfer of sovereignty. I expected to find some acceptance, some understanding, in the United States that we had the best intentions. I found none. I found nothing but difficulties up to the moment that Dean Acheson changed the attitude, the attitude taken by [George C.] Marshall and by [Dean] Rusk. Rusk was at that moment head of the Far Eastern Department of the State Department.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: I don't think that Truman was aware of all these things which were going on. You can't follow all the

[17]

details, as President of the United States. In any case, when Dean Acheson came, he changed that attitude. But I had full support from France. It went so far that France once vetoed in the United Nations Security Council certain decisions which otherwise would have done even more harm. I had support from Belgium, but Spaak told me at that time that we were crazy to go on.

WILSON: Belgium, with the Congo, was in a somewhat unusual position in regard to the United States, because of uranium.

STIKKER: Uranium was the common interest. I got no support at all from the Scandinavian countries, none. In Norway, I've always been great friends with Halvard Lange. He has died. He told me straight out, "I'm very sorry, but I don't agree. You have to get out immediately." We simply were to dissolve it, and risk chaos or transfer to the wrong people. But that was the choice also of the United States; Cochran knew that Sukarno was the "big boy."

It may interest you that I have just been back in Indonesia.

[18]

WILSON: Oh, you have.

STIKKER: Because I also had to study, for the Asian Development Bank, the difficulties of Indonesia. This was the first time after the transfer that I've been back in Indonesia. They had a meeting with all the people with whom I had the original discussions. It was absolutely surprising to see how the position has changed again in favor of the Dutch. The feeling towards the Dutch in Indonesia is as if we are still just as good friends as we always used to be.

WILSON: Well, that's very good, yes.

STIKKER: Later on, one of them wrote a letter to me. I think that of all the people who are trying to do something in Indonesia at that moment, we are the most popular. They are afraid of Japan. The "Co-prosperity" period is still going on in their minds. They are worried about a giant like the United States. The Dutch—well they are just a small country and they know us, and the old times. The old people still speak Dutch and they insist you speak Dutch.

[19]

WILSON: Well, its future is going to be absolutely crucial . . .

STIKKER: Oh, yes, it's crucial for the whole area. It's still a rich country. It's still chaotic. There's still a good deal of poverty; there is a lot of corruption. The new government has no control of its budget. What I expect in the next few years that a lot of oil will be found there, and then I will

have sufficient money to take care of their reconstruction and development. If they find oil, then I give it a fair chance.

WILSON: You mentioned in your book the shock of the cancellation of lend-lease.

STIKKER: Of lend-lease, yes.

WILSON: Might you elaborate on that? Did it come as absolute surprise?

STIKKER: Absolute surprise.

WILSON: Did you have any awareness of why this happened then?

STIKKER: No, none. It was just a decision taken, I think

[20]

without sufficient consideration of how serious it would be for the reconstruction effort.

WILSON: That's the information that we have. It came at a time when President Truman was feeling his way.

STIKKER: Yes. I think they hadn't studied what the consequences could do, and it had its impact on all the other countries; in England, of course, and others.

WILSON: The Netherlands, of course, as you point out quite rightly, and as I've seen from other documents, was probably the most hard hit by the war, in the sense of German policies and the war itself.

STIKKER: German policy, and all the looting that had gone on in the Netherlands; more than in any other country.

WILSON: Yes. You make a very good point in your book about how you and many other Dutch officials recognized that despite this, there had to be some working relationship between the Netherlands and Germany. You cite several people, asking you, "Don't you hate . . ."

STIKKER: And my reply to Paul Hoffman. He wrote about it in one of his articles he published. I said, "We don't

[21]

have the time to hate; we have to move on."

WILSON: One of the subjects that our book will deal with which is most baffling is the aid to Germany, which went through the Allied authorities--particularly the American Occupation Forces. A number of people with whom I've talked have described difficulties that the occupation forces had. I wonder if you might comment on this subject?

STIKKER: Well, this was rather difficult for the Netherlands because we depended to such an extent on trade with Germany before the war. And we lost, on top of that, Indonesia as a source of trade. We were, before the war, more of an agricultural country. Trade with Indonesia and an exchange of many goods with Germany--that was the basic situation for the Netherlands, economically speaking. So Indonesia and Germany were most important to us, and we had lost both. And instead of getting an opportunity to restore, in some way, our trade with Germany, we didn't have the chance because the military authorities decided it should be in a different way. I described that in some detail in my memoirs, also.

[22]

So, that was one of the reasons that from the very beginning some people in the Netherlands--I take as the most important man at that time, Mr. [H.M.] Hirschfeld, who has died, as you know. But if you saw [E.H.] Van der Buegel you must have heard a lot about Hirschfeld from him. He was an extraordinary person. And he was in an extremely difficult position with the Germans, but he was in a way the man who ran the country during the occupation, from the Dutch side. He had nearly all the departments, and economics; he was involved in financial problems, in transport problems, and the food situation. And since he was half Jewish it was quite a problem to do that. He did it, and he did it well. You must have lived through such a period, the occupation, to understand how difficult it was to negotiate, and to try and protect your countrymen and not to go too far to reach some agreement with the Germans who were extremely difficult. Now many people thought that on some occasions he went too far, and I agree that in one case he went too far. So he had quite a lot of problems after the war because they believed that he had been a wrong influence; many people thought so.

[23]

I have a different view. I still remember on one of the days before the liberation he asked me what was going to happen to him. I said, "Well, nobody can say what is going to happen to anybody, but I'm convinced that you did the right thing during the war, and I'm sure you are convinced yourself. So, stick to your conviction, and if people don't agree, well, it can't be helped; that's fate. But I think you did well, and take it easy."

The moment I saw a chance to get him back in politics or administration again--because he never was in politics, he was in the administration--I decided to bring him back to the Foreign Office. He used to be in economic affairs and he was my main advisor in the years I was Minister of Foreign Affairs.

See, the Minister of Foreign Affairs at that time had quite an extraordinary position because I was deeply involved in the Indonesian problem, and I was more involved in the economic and financial problems than is normal for a Minister of Foreign Affairs. There must be one spot where coordination takes place. I had no official position, to have that

[24]

coordination of all the activities in Indonesia, in economics and finance, and all these things that should be done by the Cabinet. But I had arranged that every Sunday morning the top people from finance, from economic affairs, and a few people from our own office came in for about

three or four hours. We discussed matters, and in that way I could arrange to coordinate what was going on.

WILSON: An informal solution.

STIKKER: The informal solution to these things worked.

WILSON: Yes. One of the questions I wish to ask you later is about what seemed to be a very complicated organizational setup, particularly on the American side. So many people have said, "Well, it was complicated but we got to know people." Personal relations . . .

STIKKER: Personal relations were such. I did it in the Netherlands because my relations with labor were always so good. I got always the support from the Labor Party, whatever I wanted to do, except that sometimes the Prime Minister saw that he couldn't carry it out himself in

[25]

Parliament. And then he'd say, "I'm sorry, I can't go as far as you want to go."

WILSON: Back to this matter of your, I think, correct objections to the occupation policy, to whom did you carry these objections?

STIKKER: Well, you see the control was really in the hands of the three foreign ministers. You may have noticed in the book that I was agitated by the tripartite setup, and that was probably because of experiences we had in the war about pooling up our ships.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: We had later on other experiences again. I was very much against this setup as far as Germany was concerned. And then all the time we were trying to get into the negotiations between the three big powers and Germany. It had taken a very long time before we really could get through. I don't think we were very successful in our efforts. Sometimes we had great difficulties.

WILSON: Is it fair to say that actions taken by persons such as General Clay, particularly General Clay, perhaps

[26]

despite what was then the position of the United States Department of State, the Truman administration, on such matters as dismantling, on reparations, decartelization -- that these presented the United States, and thus you, with a "fait accompli?"

STIKKER: No. We had no contact with Lucius Clay. Hirschfeld may have had it; I don't know. I've always been on the most friendly terms of relations with Dean Acheson. So when I didn't agree with certain things I could tell him straight out where I thought he was wrong.

WILSON: One of the unexpected developments in the research for this book is the role played by the military administration. It's quite autonomous, apparently.

STIKKER: Oh, yes. Oh, yes, quite autonomous.

WILSON: Very little control from the Department of State, except in the periods of crisis. That was surprising to me; and I guess, perhaps, dealing with the people on the spot.

STIKKER: I had that same experience later on again on the Berlin crises, in the years when I was Secretary

[27]

General of NATO. There again the tripartite had control, and they couldn't hear about it, and didn't tell you, and didn't want the other countries to interfere with their business. As a man who has always fought tripartite, when people are dealing about you, and without you, on vital problems, I could never accept that. There again, the only way to handle and to get into the business is on the basis of personal relations.

I've always been great friends with Larry [General Lauris] Norstad, for instance. We were so close together. He as the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe and I, as Secretary General of NATO, then came to the conclusion that if there was a real crisis on we should get together only on a personal basis. So, for instance, you had later on a blockade again of the road to Berlin. I had been sitting together with Larry Norstad, and General [Earle G.] Wheeler who at that time was the man who was in command of the American forces in Europe, and who is now the Supreme Allied Commander. Indeed, we had been sitting together for about twelve hours one day to handle the situation. Every three or five minutes we got the news from the

[28]

road on what was happening on the road -- how the Russians were behaving and how we were blocked, what we should do, and what discussions were going on. The three of us gave instructions to the officer in command on the road on how he should act. The three of us decided what should be done to make it clear to the Russians that we couldn't accept this situation.

Naturally, there was some contact with Washington, but none with Paris and none with the United Kingdom. The only civilian who was in it was me. And that can only be done on a personal basis.

WILSON: In that period in the early stages of the Marshall plan, did you think that Americans were perhaps too obsessed with the problem of Germany, that they gave too much attention to it?

STIKKER: No, I don't think so. The difficulty was mainly with France. France was extreme on it. Cut them down. The whole Krupp business -- all this deconcentration and all of these things were mainly France. And they insisted and they got away. I always took a different view. It changed on me when later on Robert Schuman came in, and also [Georges] Bidault.

[29]

WILSON: And again the personal . . .

STIKKER: And again the personal . . .

WILSON: . . . is in the background. That's very interesting.

STIKKER: Now, I may be wrong on this, but I attach the greatest importance to the personal contacts, just as for the division of Marshall plan aid. When I'm in New York, I always go and call on Paul Hoffman. I see a lot of Averell Harriman, although I don't agree with Averell Harriman's policy in many aspects. But I still see him. He writes to me. We have correspondence. But Lucius Clay, I never met at that time. I only meet him now because I am chairman of Radio Free Europe, and so I'm now at the time in contact with him.

WILSON: You were in office as Foreign Minister, I think, at the time of the first division of aid . . .

STIKKER: Yes.

WILSON: . . . when there was this business about the Bizone saying, "Look, we have a special right to

[30]
that."

STIKKER: Yes, I was there.

WILSON: That was a very personal sort of thing, I gather, because Harriman was also our representative of the Bizone in a way.

STIKKER: I don't know; I don't remember what his position was at that time. It may be, but I couldn't tell you.

WILSON: What did you feel was the relationship between Harriman and Hoffman?

STIKKER: It was a good relationship. The story goes, whether it's true or not I don't know, but Harriman suggested to Truman that he should appoint Paul Hoffman as head of the ECA [Economic Cooperation Administration]. Paul Hoffman at that time, I think, was still with Studebaker, which was not doing so very good at the moment. He finally accepted, on one condition. And they said, "Well, what is your condition?"
"That any man I choose to represent ECA in Europe has to accept it."

WILSON: I didn't know that.

[31]

STIKKER: And Truman and Harriman said, "All right; we'll take care of it."

He said, "All right, now I appoint Harriman."

WILSON: Very good.

STIKKER: That's a story; there may be some truth in it. I don't know.

WILSON: What might you have to say in elaboration about what you described in the book as the chairman's "torture chamber" -- the ministerial needs of OEEC, and then the chairman's torture chamber? That was very personal also.

STIKKER: It was very personal, yes. In these meetings on division of aid, on more liberalization of trade, or on EPU problems, you had to discuss it, and you needed agreement of all. I always followed the sort of system in which I tried to eliminate as many problems as I could, so that finally there was always one or two that were the difficult subjects. And I said, "All right, now we finish the discussion for the moment, and we go up to my room and I'll discuss these with you." Then we tried to put them on the table and talk about

[32]
them.

Well, that worked. It sometimes ran from six o'clock at night to three o'clock. Well, when you look at meetings which are taking place in EEC at the present moment, it also has these night discussions, and finally nobody wants to be obstructive.

WILSON: What sort of relationship did you have in these periods of discussion with the American representatives? They weren't, of course, directly involved, but when a problem came up, would you consult with . . .

STIKKER: Always. I always had either Averell in, or later on, Milton Katz, and [Richard] Bissell. They were listening to how we tried to handle it, but we wanted to have them present. Sometimes even without them, I thought, "Now we are getting into complicated problems, that may create political difficulties." It might be a case in which a minister doesn't want to act against the United States. Then we have to do it in an even smaller group. And we always had a few of the real experts, because I'm no expert. I'm kind of a political mediator, a negotiator, trying to bring people together and solve that sort of problem. I needed the experts,

[33]
so we had always a few of these people in. [Giovanni] Malagodi from Italy was one.

WILSON: I will see him tomorrow.

STIKKER: You will see him tomorrow?

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: Well, give him my best wishes.

WILSON: Yes, I will. For the first two years of the OEEC, the United States, it's quite clear, offered very strong support for the organization as a vehicle for the achievement of integration, or cooperation, or however you'd define that . . .

STIKKER: But it was never clear how far they wanted to go.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: That's the point.

WILSON: Yes, I have your quotation here. "There was no clear picture of the U.S. views on the major issue; namely, what was the real meaning of integration?"

[34]

That must have been frustrating.

STIKKER: That was frustrating, yes.

WILSON: Why was that?

STIKKER: Well, I think that the United States administration was rather divided. As always, George Ball was the strongest man making propaganda for supranationality. Years later, when I was in NATO, and when we had difficulties between Greece and Turkey and war was imminent, at that time I went to Greece and when I was there I had long discussions with [George] Papandreou. He had to do something, and I couldn't accept it. I had great difficulties in reaching Papandreou. He didn't want to receive me, and I used again personal relations to make him take part in the discussion. And I used Onassis. I said to Onassis, "If I'm well informed, you've just transferred all your money to Greece at the present moment. You haven't got it any longer in the Argentine, or wherever your money is, but you have quite an important interest now, money wise. What do you think will happen to your money when war occurs between

[35]

Turkey and Greece?"

And he said, "Is it serious as that?"

I said, "Yes, it is."

He said, "I'll ring you up in a quarter of an hour."

He got back to me. We were in a plane together when I told him this story. One of the Olympic athletes, one of his friends, said, "What is happening to this plane?"

And he said, "When we land I will ring you up in a quarter of an hour. If Papandreou doesn't want to receive him, I've got to interfere."

In a quarter of an hour in my hotel, he rang me up. He said, "Papandreou asks you to dine with him tonight. I'll be there also."

WILSON: Ah, yes.

STIKKER: Now how did we come to this point?

WILSON: Yes, we were talking about integration.

STIKKER: Well, then I got so far that Papandreou had committed himself to certain things. I thought that

[36]

the moment had come that I should inform the American Ambassador about it, of course. The American troops had to do certain things. And so I went at two o'clock in the night to [Henry] Labouisse, who was at that time the American Ambassador. He said, "All right, it is quite important and I will be in touch immediately."

So there I was. He rang up Washington, [Dean] Rusk on the telephone. Rusk said, "Well it's important. I don't think we can do it, but in any case I will tell immediately George Ball, who is at the moment in Geneva, that he will be tomorrow morning in Athens. Then you can discuss it together with him."

So George Ball came and we had luncheon. Now I'll come back to the integration problem, because then suddenly they started to talk about Europe and all the problems in Europe. We talked about how far integration should go. He said, "Well, you probably won't know, but in the time you were talking once with Jean Monnet, when you were president of the OEEC, there was a door in the corner and it stood half open. I was sitting in the room next to it." He was then the

[37]

legal adviser to Jean Monnet. Well, we found out that Labouisse was in Paris at that time also. I think he was in the Embassy doing some job.

George Ball has always been the man to support, to the extreme, the Monnet theory. I had been rather worried about it, because I was afraid that we would never get the United Kingdom in, and I wanted to have a right club and a wrong club to do this sort of thing. There should be a better balance of powers, and I thought it is better if France, Germany, and the United Kingdom are in it. We, the little people, can't do anything when France and Germany get together on these matters. So I have always been worried. He told me, "Well, you explain to Jean Monnet that you are worried about it."

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: Now I mean to say that George Ball was not in the Government at the time: he was just a legal adviser to Jean Monnet. Naturally, he was in touch with the Government of the United States in some way.

WILSON: I have material which demonstrates what you have

[38]

been saying. People such as Lincoln Gordon . . .

STIKKER: Lincoln Gordon, yes.

WILSON: . . . were quite concerned about supranationality.

STIKKER: Oh yes. Lincoln Gordon, he was more careful.

WILSON: Yes, but how was this reflected at the higher levels? Did Harriman take a position?

STIKKER: No. He was uncertain.

WILSON: He was uncertain?

STIKKER: He was uncertain how far the United States really wanted to impose its will. It should have been made clear that the United States was not imposing its will, requiring that European countries should do this or should do that. That would have been the worst of all. So, I didn't agree with George Ball. He shouldn't push the other countries. He shouldn't be involved in internal politics. You can express a hope that something will happen, but you shouldn't impose so strongly, as George Ball tried to do it at

[39]

that time.

WILSON: You, then, in your book made the point of the reaction to Paul Hoffman's speech when he came in 1949. Was that viewed by some as an attempt to impose?

STIKKER: No.

WILSON: He was calling for . . .

STIKKER: He was calling for it, and expressed a hope; then further expressed a sort of expectation, but he didn't say, "Well, this has to be done?"

I think that the attitude of the United States Government was always quite fair. They expressed opinions; they asked the Governments to react, to consider, and they expressed a hope. They expressed, sometimes, expectations, but they didn't push it so far as I'm sure George Ball would have liked to do.

WILSON: What was Dean Acheson's opinion?

STIKKER: Dean Acheson was rather outside of these problems. Once it was on its way, he was not so deeply involved. I think Averell or somebody else

[40]

would keep the State Department informed. When went to the States on these matters I saw, The President twice; then Dean Acheson came along. was mainly there, and I had once a meeting with sixty members of Congress, where I had to, in a to testify, to make a speech. So I made a speech was about EPU [European Payments Union]. Then there critical opinions; questions about what you doing; and whether there was sufficient cohesion

Well, I described something of it [integration] when I was in the United States. I had to be careful to have both aspects in mind. The United States like to see this happening sooner. On the other I knew about our difficulties in France and I never believed that France was going to accept the European Defense Community. I had always been doubtful. was one of the reasons I had pushed it as quickly possible before I left the Government, that Parliament should ratify the European Defense Community. Now, know that France was not going to do this sort of thing, but it went on and on. I don't think Dean Aches about this aspect in his own memoirs. It doesn't out. And I don't believe that he considered after his

[41]

speech in Cleveland that he ever went into the problem himself, personally. He had quite a lot of other problems on his plate.

WILSON: Did that reflect any difficulties for you? The thrust was through the ECA which was an independent body. The State Department was supposed to deal with political problems, and they were connected, but there were no serious difficulties?

STIKKER: No serious difficulties. You had it, for instance, sometimes up in NATO in those periods because under Article II you could deal also with economic and other aspects, not only the military and political. Once we made an arrangement at a meeting in -- I think in Ottawa, or Montreal, I don't know exactly where it was -- where we should speak about economic aspects of Europe and of the United States, and it should be handled in this way, that I should make an opening statement on it because I was chairman of OECD at that time, and that Dean should reply. So to handle it, they should be faced, and then we should come to a conclusion on how we were going to deal with these problems. Now, I don't know whether it was on purpose

[42]

or not, but [Paul] van Zeeland, who happened to be in the chair -- this position rotates annually at the meeting -- knowing exactly what we intended to do, asked first Dean Acheson to make his statement, and then I should read mine. Now that created a bind. You have prepared a statement, and then you have to change it suddenly. So they got muddled up from the very beginning. Now, whether Paul van Zeeland, in a way, was not happy that I had taken over from him in OECD or not, I don't know.

WILSON: We have some documentation, of course, on the attempt to secure the position for Spaak before you came in. How should we interpret that, as it reflects a desire to strengthen the OEEC, to strengthen the secretariat, to make it a stronger organization? Was that an important issue, Spaak with his reputation for...

STIKKER: Yes. Well, Spaak is a brilliant man. There is no doubt about it. I always say that he has the "disease of compromise." When you make a compromise and you have finished it, he says, "Well, but perhaps you could change it a little bit more." Then you have to

[43]

go to another compromise, and there is no end to it.

WILSON: The British were quite violently opposed to Spaak, is that correct; to the possibility of his nomination as a mediator?

STIKKER: That may be; I never found it out. This was a discussion I had with Paul Hoffman and Stafford Cripps, but at that moment the position of Spaak didn't exist any longer. Of course, you can't nominate, in a group of Ministers, an outsider who has a representative of his own country in the Ministers, as a mediator. So, whether Cripps, who was at that time mainly the representative for the United Kingdom, was against Spaak, I don't know. Spaak sometimes has had enemies. I didn't belong to them.

WILSON: I think he made some statement about the British position and that it vastly irritated Cripps.

STIKKER: It may be, and I've always been very careful that I shouldn't irritate anybody. I always wanted to have the British in. It was only later on in my years that I became riled about General de Gaulle, and then

[44]

I didn't spare him in any way.

WILSON: What about this matter of the organizational problems between the OEEC and NATO? There was some discussion, for a time, perhaps of shifting most of the economic activities of the OEEC to NATO.

STIKKER: Yes, that's what I opposed.

WILSON: What was the American position? Was it again uncertain?

STIKKER: I'll try to bring it back to my mind. We had a time, I think it was after the Lisbon meeting of NATO, when we appointed a committee of three to make a study of the economic situation of the members of NATO and how far they could do more. Then they bought an idea that NATO should make that study itself. I opposed it, as chairman of OECD. I said, "We shouldn't duplicate these matters, because this is the same sort of studies OEEC is making. Why can't they make use of all the knowledge and the skill which is available in OEEC for this study?"

But don't let's set up a new organization that is going to duplicate that sort of thing." Now, when I made that suggestion, the others

[45]

had agreed already, more or less, but I convinced them that they shouldn't do it.

That raised the problem, in how far people like [Robert] Marjolin and his staff could be used. That is meant to say that Sweden and Switzerland were in great difficulty about it, because if it were officially to be known that OECD, in which they as neutrals took part, should work for military purposes for NATO, they couldn't accept it. That was a very delicate subject. So I went to Sweden and had a long talk about it with [Bo Osten] Unden. The Danish and the Norwegians were quite willing, but he said, "Well, we can't help you on this; we can't support you; we can't take action; you will have to do it yourself, as chairman." And they had several discussions about it with Tequerre of Switzerland. I think it took me about three months to find a formula on which they agreed. But on a personal basis without being a member of the staff of OECD, Marjolin with his people should feed in the information which should be given to that group of three, which were, I think, Monnet, Harriman and from the United Kingdom, [Edwin] Plowden.

[46]

WILSON: You made a point in your book that the return to bilateral aid, under the military program, caused considerable difficulties. It didn't further the cause of integration as had this, the OEEC arrangement. Were you consulted about this decision to change from ECA to the MSA [Mutual Security Agency] and the new organizations? Was there any consultation?

STIKKER: Not that I knew about it. I was not consulted in such a way that I could influence decisions. Well, by that time, naturally, recovery in the economic field had progressed already to a large extent when the change to MSA from ECA took place.

And then I talk about figures. I bring them together, and it's 35 billions or something like that, which was the final figure. A large part of it in the end was military support.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: Now, I didn't care so much about it because the main problems in economic affairs had been solved, except the problem of coal, a fuel. The balance of

[47]

payments had improved a lot. The Korean war changed that again. But the main issues when we started with OECD, was the dollar gap and the difficulties in fuel. I think in the year '51-'52, three quarters of the aid which was given for economic problems, which was about a billion and something, had to be used for fuel. So when you asked in these questions, "What were the main problems," it's the dollar gap and the fuel.

WILSON: This is in a way a leading question; I may be wrong, but I have a feeling that with this emphasis on rearmament and the lesser demands or need for pure economic aid, there was a

clear lessening of American interest in, or support for, integration. Was that just because of events?

STIKKER: To start with, it would be difficult to say because it could have been coincidence, or influences. You never can know these things. But when the OECD and OEEC and the Marshall aid came into existence, it was, I think, a month later, they had the Berlin blockade. The Berlin blockade immediately started this sort of cold or hot or whatever you could say. Now originally

[48]

the Marshall aid was planned for the whole of Europe. Russia -- Molotov -- refused. Czechoslovakia was not allowed. And then the Berlin blockade came. Now is that a coincidence or not? I can't prove it, but I believe it was the reason why the Berlin blockade took place. From that moment on everybody became fully aware that Europe had to play its part also in the military. So the Brussels Pact, NATO, took some time.

Where the money came from to solve the difficulties in the dollar gap, I was not so very much interested, provided the gap was closed. We had advanced already in the Netherlands, to some extent. If the military efforts would not have been necessary, I think that we could have stopped earlier with economic aid. But now it had to go on in the form of military aid. That was my reaction at that time.

So when this took place, the change, and I heard about it, I did not feel it was necessary. I was in a way a sort of multilateral minister of foreign affairs, because I was all the things at the same time, always changing, and it was in coal and then steel. There was a coal committee, and I could do just any sort of

[49]

a strange job which was asked for. Provided the dollar gap was closed, and the fuel gap could be closed, and that was even in '51 and '52 where you got three quarters of the fuel gap; it could be closed by economic aid. So, I did not make great difficulties about that change, especially because I believe that a military effort had to be made.

WILSON: I see your point.

Perhaps a partial explanation could be found in the impact of the Korean war in the sense that it caused Americans, Acheson and others, Harriman, to think rather less about Europe than about the rest of the world, to shift their attention. Some of the people I've interviewed have suggested that there was too much emphasis, that there was this Europe-centered orientation of the United States which caused difficulties for you in Europe and with regard to the rest of the world.

STIKKER: Dean Acheson, not. Dean Acheson had a wider view of all these matters, than some members of Congress. Members of Congress naturally have to defend their

[50]

own position to their constituency and so they are in a different position. I think Dean had a wider view and there was not as much interest in that aspect. He always defended, in any aspect,

the Atlantic Treaty and the organization. We got full support for Korea. We sent forces, and there were others who did. That helped a lot in that time. The whole position of the United States was not a purely unilateral action. As far as I can look at it from the place where I was in that period, we were not worried about the attitude of the United States as many people at the present moment are about the possibility of a new isolationism. There are people worried at the present time in Europe, that it may come about.

WILSON: It's possible.

STIKKER: It's possible, but that feeling never existed at that time. I think that started only when Eisenhower and Dulles came into the picture, to bring the boys home from wherever they are. Then people got frightened.

WILSON: You mentioned Congress. Was the role of the

[51]

United States Congress in all of this a help or a hindrance to you? The Hickenlooper amendment . . .

STIKKER: Well, let me say the Hickenlooper amendment was absolutely wrong.

WILSON: And the Battle Act?

STIKKER: All these sorts of amendments make nonsense of it. The difficulties in Latin America at the present moment -- it's always wrong when the hands are tied by Congress. You must have the possibility to maneuver and change attitude. You can't be pinned down, "Now, we told you to do this;" that's wrong. The executive has no power any longer. Congress often has that feeling.

Take for instance the whole change in OEEC to OECD; that's due to Congress. The OECD can't have discussions any longer on trade problems; it's Congress. Of course, they consider tariffs as a prerogative of Congress, the Senate, and the executive can't take any decisions on it. He must have prior authority. So they can sit in GATT [General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade], but only on a limited basis.

[52]

There is only an executive sort of system, and it takes not a treaty -- GATT. But when you do that sort of thing in OECD, as I wanted to do it, that trade problems could be handled in the future also in OECD, that was absolutely impossible. So that's the reason why they called it liberalization of EPU, which would have failed in any case. It had to come to an end, because of the British.

We would have far less difficulties as they exist at the present between the EEC and the United States, if there had been a forum where they could meet together in OECD, and where they were obliged to, according to the articles of association of the OECD, if trade had been still one of the problems which they should discuss. I think it has been a serious mistake of the United States

that they insisted that OECD should have nothing to do anymore with trade. Now there is no forum. So all the time it is a sort of bilateral negotiation, instead.

WILSON: You saw, I'm sure, very many Congressmen as they came through Europe on various fact-finding tours. What was your impression, and also your impression

[53]

from your trips to Washington, of their awareness, their knowledge, of the problems that you were facing?

STIKKER: Well, the first thing that I would like to say about Congress, when OEEC was created it had the full support of Vandenberg. That made the bilateral policy possible. That was one of the greatest assets for Europe at that time. So, Vandenberg really played a very important role. Every time I say that to Dean Acheson, well . . .

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: Well, you can say it. That's really the man who made many of these things possible, the Rio Treaty, and all these things which led to NATO, and to the bipartisan policy on Marshall plan aid. That was Vandenberg who did it. But very often then you got "small boys" over in Europe who, by their office, are suspicious of all these things which are going on in Europe. It was clear that they were rather critical in their attitude. So when I heard Paul Hoffman or Averell Harriman tell me, "Well, you have to come over here to see a lot of

[54]

people," well I went mostly to Washington. There I met many. Dinners were given, and I had long discussions with many people. But I never wanted publicity. That's another point, see; in trying to handle these problems on a rather personal basis, you should avoid every form of publicity.

WILSON: Some people have suggested that for good or ill, actions were sometimes taken with the advice, or with the cooperation of certain American newspapermen in Europe who played very important roles. Is that true in some ways that the power of the press was used?

STIKKER: Well, later on I sometimes used the press myself. I have always been in rather close contact with Cy [Cyrus] Sulzberger, for instance. In the years I was in NATO a lot of what he had been writing at that time had really been written by me. So, he was an expert on . . .

WILSON: Have you had an opportunity to read this . . . [Cyrus Les Sulzberger's book A Long Row of Candles: Memoirs and Diaries, 1934-54. 877 pp. MacDonald & Co., 1969] .

STIKKER: No.

[55]

WILSON: It is fascinating.

STIKKER: I've not yet seen it.

WILSON: It's about 1,200 pages.

STIKKER: Yes, he has the best filing system I've ever seen.

WILSON: According to the memoirs, he was apparently so close to Eisenhower in the last year of Eisenhower's presence in Europe. He reflects on Eisenhower's position.

One small question: You had been offered in the early days of NATO, the Secretary General position, is that correct, and refused it?

STIKKER: Yes, that's true. We had a discussion in Lisbon.

WILSON: In March of '52.

STIKKER: March of '52. I never considered myself to be a man who should do all that sort of thing. I like to play it behind the scenes, and on a personal basis. I didn't feel myself completely able to do it, to build up the NATO organization, and so I really didn't want it.

[56]

But we had, on the other hand, the impression that NATO should be set up with a Secretary General, that it should have a strong organization, and that it shouldn't be any longer as it used to be that Charles Spofford or somebody else would be there as unofficial secretary, and a small group of people would be dealing in a rather unofficial way with all these problems. Instead, it should be a real organization, with terms of reference, and real authority. Again, from one point of view, there was always this tripartite influence, of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. In opposing the tripartite system, and as the three big powers always came together for a NATO meeting, I organized, on my own, at the same time that they were meeting, a meeting of the small countries also. So when they made a suggestion, and not knowing that we had been meeting also, suddenly they were faced with opposition. So in Lisbon we came out with the idea about NATO, which at that moment had its seat in London where they were meeting in rather informal ways without a real secretariat. In the United States delegation, Spofford really was the man who had to run the business, and

[57]

only the Ministers when they came together could make decisions. Our idea was that it should be changed, and that it would be better to transfer the seat from London to Paris in order to be able to work in closer relationship with OECD on economic affairs.

Now, that was quite a surprise when we sprang that on them. The evening before, we had this meeting between Mike [Lester] Pearson, Halvard Lange and myself. When we came to certain conclusions, we brought the others in. But in Lisbon so many had heard that we had been moving in this direction, that all the others wanted to be in. We said, "All right, you can come in, but we are moving as indicated in this direction."

Italy was rather angry about it, because they considered themselves also a big power and they didn't want to be grouped with the smaller ones. I think I was more active in this sort of work than Pearson or Lange. In any case, the three of us came to the conclusion that there should be transfer of the seat to Paris, and to compensate the United Kingdom, the United Kingdom should have the official position of Secretary General. We had been thinking about a man who should do it; it was Oliver Franks.

[58]

Now, it came as a surprise to [Sir Anthony] Eden and to Dean Acheson. I think that Truman was there, too, I don't know. This came as a surprise, but at the end they said, "All right." It was adopted, this whole setup. It was not cooked up in Washington or London. It was just the three of us who did it.

Then finally the United Kingdom agreed, although they were sorry to lose the seat. But Eden had forgotten to ask Oliver Franks whether he would be willing to accept the position. He was Ambassador to Washington at the time. Finally he was asked. An hour before the closing of that meeting, a telegram from Oliver Franks came, saying he wouldn't think of doing it. So then Dean Acheson said to us, "You have to think a little bit about it, so let's wait for half an hour and then come back." He made a statement that of the three people who made the suggestion, that he would like to say as one representative, that any of the three would be acceptable to him as Secretary General of NATO.

So then we were in difficulty.

WILSON: Yes, then you were caught.

[59]

STIKKER: Then we were caught. And we didn't think about it, just as Averell Harriman didn't think about it when he invited Paul Hoffman.

So first, I think, Lange and I got together, and said it should be Mike. We came to the conclusion that one of the three should do it, and that's the way it ended. Mike Pearson sent a cable to Ottawa saying that he had been asked to do so, and he probably put something in it that he didn't want to do it. The Prime Minister sent him a cable that he couldn't lose him because he wanted him to be his successor as Prime Minister. Then, finally Mike and I said Lange should do it. Lange in turn said that I should do it. I said, "I don't want it. I don't like it." I knew that I was getting out of office in The Hague in a year's time, because they didn't want to continue because of the New Guinea problem with Indonesia. Finally, Paul asked me to do it, and even sent me a beautiful letter.

But then France always knew that I was not very strongly in favor of French politics. I saw them talking about supranationality without really wanting it. I saw that he would never make it. So, France was against

[60]

me at that moment.

France got hold of Eden again, and they said to Eden, "Well, I think it's wrong that you have a chance as United Kingdom to have a Secretary General and that you will be able to run the smaller countries. What should happen then?"

So Eden got on the telephone to me and said, "Well, I'm very sorry. I just wrote a letter to you that we are delighted to do it." But then he explained that he was in difficulty because France was going to make a public statement about it, noting that the United Kingdom had been offered the place of Secretary General. It would make trouble for him in Parliament, in that if they could get a job like that for the United Kingdom they should have it. If they lost a seat and didn't get any compensation, that would be too bad.

I told him that I would be delighted for them to choose, provided they had a good man.

So, a few hours later he came to the telephone again and told me that they found Eric Plowden willing to accept it. I said to Eden, "I'm very sorry, but if I have to step down, I'm willing to step down for somebody

[61]

who has a similar function, or anything which looks like it. But he is just a Government official. He is a very intelligent man, but he has not proved that, politically, he can deal with all these problems. So I am very sorry, but you will have to come up with a better candidate. Otherwise, it's extremely difficult for me. Everybody knows that I have been invited, and I will be stepping down for Eric Plowden. I don't agree. You must have a top man." Then they appointed [General Hastings Lionel] Ismay. As a matter of fact, I appointed Ismay.

WILSON: Fascinating. I have one or two more questions. One of these would be for you to describe what you thought, at the time, of the British and the French attitudes toward OEEC. And perhaps you might comment on this issue of the special relationship which either did or did not exist between the United States and Great Britain.

STIKKER: Well, let's first go to the second point. The special relationship certainly existed. There is no question about that. But it never did any harm, to my mind, to the contacts with all the other countries

[62]

of Europe, either from the side of the United States or from Great Britain, except with France. France has always been jealous of this sort of relationship. Another point which is of importance in this aspect concerns (Konrad] Adenauer, who I had known personally very well and who stayed sometimes in this house when I was not here, and I gave him this house to live in after he had resigned as Chancellor. At the end of his life Adenauer had to come so much under the influence of de Gaulle, that although in the very beginning they acknowledged completely that Germany never could come back to any position without the help of the United States, at the end he forgot all about it. On top of that, there was in Adenauer's mind, in a way, a little admiration for the British style of life. On the other hand, he resisted the idea that the British had been more important than Germany ever had been.

So this special relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States did not disturb in any way the feelings of the other countries of Europe. There were special reasons for the "de Gaullism" in France. Also, going far back, there was a history

[63]

of jealousy or admiration, or whatever it may have been, by the Germans towards the British, and that made their relationship more difficult than it should have been.

WILSON: How well, in your view, did American representatives handle the relations with the French? The documents show me that the Americans, Harriman and his staff, through this period were very conscious of the specter of Gaullism. They always were sort of looking over the French Government's shoulder at what de Gaulle might do. Was that a correct assessment of the situation? Was France in such turmoil that de Gaulle might come to power at almost any time?

STIKKER: I never had that impression in these early years when OEEC was created. There was not at that time a feeling that de Gaulle was a sort of threatening influence about everything that happened in France. I never had that feeling; neither did Paul Hoffman, nor Averell Harriman, nor Dean Acheson, or whomever I was in contact with.

WILSON: Well, this puts it into perspective. These are

[64]

background studies that I have seen.

STIKKER: I never had that impression.

WILSON: Very good.

STIKKER: It happened only later on when Schuman got out; then [Pierre] Mendes-France had to make his fight. He timed his whole strategy for the political issues which France was facing at that time. He would concentrate on one subject where he might find a majority in favor of it, and then he would move to another problem where he might find another majority to help him. Finally, he broke his neck on the Algerian problem, where he couldn't find a majority. From that moment on, naturally, the influence of Gaullism became stronger and stronger. I have never noticed, and I may be wrong, but I never noticed any fear, or any apprehension, on the side of U.S. policy from the beginning when we were in the creative period and constructive period of Europe, when Marshall aid came in. If we were worried or frightened about what de Gaulle might do with it, I didn't notice it. And I'm a rather suspicious character.

[65]

WILSON: Yes. I think you said as we were going down to luncheon that there were some few French officials who were committed to a united Europe; Monnet, Marjolin, and Schuman, but that this was not characteristic of the overall French attitude.

STIKKER: I never believed it. Perhaps in a way that goes deeper into this; my feeling about France was that it wanted to be on its own. It would never submit itself to any controlling supranational influence above it. Louis Bonaparte Napoleon, or whoever it may be; it is so inbred in the French character -- in a way, even in a man like Schuman, who was an honest, and an extremely nice and a kind man -- sly as a fox -- but an extremely nice and honest man. He still believed, as a good Catholic, that France could be of help to Europe to bring about a sort of existence which was better for the whole people of Europe. The intention was not to dominate, but to help them. That's a different approach.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: In the beginning that was also part of the attitude of Adenauer, because Catholic influence in

[66]
the beginning was quite important.

WILSON: Yes, you make that point in your book, and I must confess that even though I may come out of an Evangelical and Reformed background . . .

STIKKER: So do I.

WILSON: . . . that it had not occurred to me that this Catholic . . .

STIKKER: Catholic influence was tremendous.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: I didn't object to it. But in the period when we tried to create a supranational system, there was only one non-Catholic minister of foreign affairs. There was [Alcide] de Gasperi of Italy, a Catholic. He was a man who had once been a member of Parliament in Austria, so he was always between two countries; Schuman had studied and had military service in Germany and lived on the border, in Alsace and Lorraine. He was a good Catholic. Adenauer was a good Catholic. He, on his part, had for a certain time been thinking about a sort of unity between Germany and the Rhine. I don't

[67]
want to call it a republic. In any case, he had been playing around with that problem. Then you had Paul van Zeeland who was a very profound Catholic character. [Joseph] Bech was the nicest man of all I've ever met; he was a delightful fellow, all his stories and the men he could talk about. He also was a man who was living nearer to Germany than to France, but a Catholic again. All this Catholic influence is part of the history of that period.

WILSON: Yes. How did the Americans, who I suppose would have come out of a rather secular tradition, handle this?

STIKKER: They didn't notice it. As a Dutchman, in Holland you know exactly who is Catholic and who is not. It's not a fight anymore. It's not an "Ulster" situation in the Netherlands. That would never come back again; we are living together. But still, there are no intermarriages, practically none, and when it happens, people say, "What is happening? There's a good Catholic whose son or daughter is marrying a Protestant," and vice versa. But there is no fighting

[68]

going on. We accept fully, as a Protestant majority, that the Catholics are part of the country and there they are.

In international affairs I had always the feeling that there was more of a connection between all these Catholic ministers, than I could have with them.

WILSON: You suggested that the special relationship did not affect the other countries except France and Germany. You make the point in the book of the difficulties caused by the Truman-Attlee conversations, the allocation of raw materials. Was that a special relationship or . . .

STIKKER: I don't think it was a special relationship. It was just power politics at that moment, in which they wanted to be in control. I think it was a great mistake of the United States to give in immediately without any consultation. All the studies on that allocation of raw materials, and whatever it was, had been made very carefully in OEEC. If you ever have a chance to see these reports, they are in detail. Suddenly, we had to let them go without any knowledge of anybody; neither [Sir Edmund] Hall-Patch nor

[69]

anybody knew about it. The United States accepted suddenly this plan. Whatever reason there may have been, I don't know. A fortnight later I came down and started to raise some problems about it. I told Dean Acheson, "This is nonsense, what they are doing here. This is against all the principles we've been talking about in NATO and in OEEC for so long a time. Suddenly, you make an arrangement that the three of you are going to arrange the whole world. I'm not going to accept it, and you will have a hell of a difficulty."

So then I went around in Washington and saw all the people I had been dealing with. I went around to at least 20 agencies at that time. You know the American administration; it's not only the ministries, but you have the agencies, and separate agencies, and this and that. So I went around to all of them and told my story, that this can't be done. We made an arrangement, and basically it didn't work -- the tripartite arrangement. So OEEC was in it.

WILSON: Did you have any feeling when this first came up that the American representatives in Europe, after

[70]

the shift to MSA, that they were caught, that they were surprised?

STIKKER: They were surprised. They were just as surprised as all of us.

WILSON: Yes. I have gotten the impression from people I've talked to in Europe that very often the ECA, particularly the ECA people here, would come to take the part of the European countries . . .

STIKKER: In a way, and they had less influence on the United States at that time. In the beginning, to my mind, people like Paul Hoffman or Averell Harriman, had the influence, but when it went down to Milton Katz, and then later on to Bissell, they had not got the same standing with the administration in Washington, as originally was intended, that ECA or MSA would have. They were not listened to any longer by higher authorities in the United States, as they had been before it.

WILSON: You had a remarkable relationship with the labor unions in the Netherlands.

STIKKER: Yes.

[71]

WILSON: What would you say about the American representatives and the American labor unions and their activities?

There were special appointees of the CIO and AF of L in Paris, but also in some of the country missions.

STIKKER: Well, Paul Hoffman asked me because he knew that I had these relations in the Netherlands with trade unions. Of course, we had that organization, The Foundations of Labor, which was sort of an idealistic movement started in the occupation period. I never believed that it would continue in the same way that we started it, because when you're working underground and you can't do anything by law, you have to do it in other ways. So this whole organization of the labor situation in the Netherlands after the war was still ruled by the original idea I had about a foundation, which means private law, not public law.

It still worked. We had very few snags at that time. It remains to be easier to share in poverty than when you are rich. So, when reconstruction and recovery had been obtained, the sharing between capital and labor, and what was the result of production at that time, became more difficult. In any case, when Paul Hoffman

[72]

heard about that, he said, "Well, you should meet some of our trade union leaders."

So he took me around and I met some of your trade union leaders. I explained to them this sort of thing, what we were trying to do. They looked on it rather critically. They just didn't believe in it.

WILSON: Yes, I can imagine.

STIKKER: In any case, it worked in a way in the Netherlands, and it helped us a lot in our reconstruction. There's no doubt about it. People tend to forget it. If there are going to be more

difficulties, I think they'll notice that this is one of the basic issues, the right kind of relations between labor and capital.

WILSON: Did you find that the American trade union people who came over to Europe had some difficulty in adjusting to the different principles?

STIKKER: No. No, I don't think so. I met them, naturally, also in ILO [International Labor Organization]. I had been one of the representatives to ILO for some time. So I knew that world. There are very few people who have been in all of these sorts of things.

[73]

WILSON: Oh, yes. Yes. One of the comments I have received was that the American trade union people with the emphasis on non-political activity, the emphasis on collective bargaining, tended to confuse legitimate political activity on the part of trade unions -- the European system - with Communist activities. That is, they somehow thought that political activities were too leftist for the United States to support.

STIKKER: Well, during the war, naturally, in all countries the Communists were very much against all Nazi systems. In every underground organization, Communists played an important role. And they were playing it loyally. Still, there was doubt about how they were going to behave after the war. And then Russia made it clear that they did not want to have a real United Nations, that they did not want really to disarm, that they wanted to have the atomic bomb for themselves and not join anybody's system of using atomic weapons or atomic forces only for civil purposes. From that moment on and that was already in '46 it became clear about Communist ideas. At that time, in so many countries, here in Italy, or in France (the C.G.T.), and in the

[74]

Netherlands, with the Communist trade union, they tried to have influence.

In any case, in the Netherlands the other trade unions were fully aware of the danger of having that influence in their organization. So in the Netherlands we adopted a system, in which only those trade unions would be acknowledged as being part of the whole system of cooperation who accepted the rules which had been laid down in the discussions during the war on future labor relations. During the war I had been just as much in touch as the Communist Party had, with the Communist trade unions. So I knew them. They had seen as much about what I was trying to prepare for the period after the war on labor relations, as had all the others.

From the moment it became clear that Russia went in a different direction, I had support. For instance, for the adoption of the NATO treaty I had more support from the leftwing labor group at that time than from any of the other parties, because they understood the dangers more. That has gone down again, and I insist upon saying that it's much easier to share in poverty than in affluence.

[75]

WILSON: Yes. Very good.

The interviews that Henry Price did, you remember, have been given to the Truman Library, and we have those.

STIKKER: Price, his book on the Marshall plan?

WILSON: Yes. All the interviews that he did . . .

STIKKER: I agree to a very large extent with everything he says. It's very good, and I didn't want to describe it again.

WILSON: I had an opportunity to read the text of the transcript of the interview, two interviews, he had with you after you went to Great Britain as Ambassador. I think this suggestion that the association of the U.S. and Canada with the OEEC was your doing. Is that correct, that you initiated this?

STIKKER: I initiated it. I wanted to have that association, yes, because they were only listening at that time, and I didn't think that was the right thing to do. So many problems in the U.S. and Canada were affected by what we were going to do in Europe. And

[76]

naturally what we were doing in OEEC was in complete contradiction with GATT.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: You called that liberalization. If anything was ever in contradiction with GATT forces, it was OEEC and its preferential system.

WILSON: Yes. This is a question that I have asked a number of people in the State Department. If the Department had any one principle during, and immediately after, the war, it was Cordell Hull's approach to world liberalization of trade. And yet that was abandoned in a way, because of the . . .

STIKKER: ITO [International Trade Organization] and all of these things. So you had only GATT. To my mind, the United States Government policy was, "Well, GATT exists. All right, we can belong to it not as a treaty, but as a sort of executive arrangement." But we fully understood. And that was a rather larger view which was taken at that time by the United States. The view was that before this can really come effective, that is, the most-favored

[77]

nation clause and everything which is connected with the most-favored nation clause, that it is extremely difficult for those countries who are at the present moment in such difficult circumstances. So, if the European countries want to build up between themselves a system of a code of liberalization, for heaven's sake let them get on with it. Then, finally, we will apply the rules of the most-favored nation clause and GATT system to them -- unless they create a free

zone, a free-trade area, or the common market system. Those are excepted under these extremely difficult clauses of the GATT.

I think that has been one of the important decisions that has been taken; I don't know who took it. It was a full understanding. I'm not aware of it being accepted by the American administration, that what OEEC was doing at that time, with its code of liberalization, was in complete conflict with the basic principles of GATT.

WILSON: There was some opposition.

STIKKER: I'm sure there must have been, but I think they considered, "Well, now this is the beginning. All

[78]

right, but then later on we find a way to put off the domination."

WILSON: The last question I might ask is -- as an observer during the transition from the Truman to the Eisenhower administration, were you concerned about the future of American support for Europe, for military assistance? Was the transition handled smoothly, satisfactorily, in your view?

STIKKER: Well, I would like to look at it: what I'm going to say now about Eisenhower. The moment Paul Hoffman rang me up I was in the Netherlands in a Cabinet meeting. He rang me up and said, "Well, I'm sitting next to a man who may play a role in the future, in the United States. That man has just come to a rather important decision, and he would like to talk to you about some problems. Can you come over right away?"

I said, "I am very sorry; I am in a Cabinet meeting and I shall help run my government. I can come tomorrow. If you say it is important, I will come tomorrow."

"But can't you come now?"

[79]

I said, "No, I can't."

So the next morning I went, and Paul was at the airfield. He drove me to Eisenhower, who was at that time still Supreme Commander. When we were there, Paul explained to me that yesterday when he rang me up he just had persuaded Eisenhower to run as candidate for the Presidency. I didn't know whether Eisenhower was a Democrat or a Republican.

So, then it was explained to me that he had accepted to run as a Republican, because the position of Eisenhower was not known before that period.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: And Paul Hoffman, who had been doing a lot for Eisenhower to get that position, was more instrumental, in my mind, in convincing him to do it than anybody else. He convinced him the day before that he had to accept the nomination. Then he told me that Eisenhower wanted to know something about the picture in Europe, about the political attitudes of the different governments. Then Eisenhower took over and said, "Well, I would like to know. Can you explain to me the position of . . .". I got worried because

[80]

when you are Foreign Secretary of one country and then you have a position in Europe, I didn't want to commit myself to a possible candidate when I have still to deal with the problem that there might also be a Democratic victory. And nobody knew about it. So, I visited with him a little bit and I explained to him some of the problems which were going on, and about supranationalism and all of that sort of thing. Then he talked about the possibility of withdrawal of forces, which made me more apprehensive. I said, "Well, if you want to know really, because it's not my problem at the present moment, France is the key to all these problems."

He said, "Who is the man in France who knows more about it?"

And so at that time [Rene] Pleven, who had quite an influence in politics up to that time, was Minister of Defense. So, I thought at that moment perhaps Eisenhower might be interested to get the views, not of me, but of Pleven. When we talked about difficulties, about European Defense Communities, and all of that sort of thing, I said, "Well, I think the man you should ask these questions is not me;

[81]

you should ask Pleven."

So, I took a telephone and called Pleven.

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: So Eisenhower said, "Well, it's difficult for me to go to Pleven because everybody would notice if I go there, but could you get Paul Hoffman to Pleven?"

I said, "Well, I can't speak about it. It's for Paul Hoffman to explain to Pleven." And he went there, and he had just had a meeting with all the generals and admirals, and then Eisenhower had asked him to receive Paul Hoffman. He kicked them all out of the room, the military staff. Pleven was just as surprised as I.

Now that gave me a very poor impression about the future possibility of a man like Eisenhower. When you behave so clumsy that you ask people who cannot reply to these questions at such a moment -- I had a very poor impression of the possibility of his going to be really a man who would understand the European problems. It was for several years that he didn't know a thing about it.

[82]

WILSON: Yes.

STIKKER: I was more than surprised, and extremely disappointed. So, I tried to explain to him objectively what the position was in the different countries, what the attitude was. Then he had to find out his own way to handle it. It was not for me to tell him what should be his platform. He asked me what should be my platform on Europe. He used that word. "I would like to have your advice. What should be my platform?" But I am not

WILSON: You're not about to write the platform . . .

STIKKER: To write the platform of an American candidate for President.

WILSON: Yes. Well, that's very interesting.

[83]

INDEX

Acheson, Dean, 26, 49, 50
 and European integration, 40-41
 and Indonesia, 13, 14, 26

Adenauer, Konrad, 62

Ball, George, 34, 36-38

Battle Act, 51

Belgium, and policy toward Indonesian independence, 16, 17

Berlin blockade, 27-28

Bevin, Ernest, 14-15

Bissell, Richard, 32, 70

Catholics in government, influence on European integration, 65-68

Cochran, H. Merle, 9, 17

Cripps, Stafford, 43

DeGaulle, Charles, 63-64

Dollar gap, 47, 48

Economic Commission for Europe, 2-4

Economic Cooperation Administration, 30-31

Eisenhower, Dwight D., 78-82

European Defense Community, 40

European integration, U.S. policy toward, 34-39

France:

 and European integration, 62-65

 and Germany, postwar, 28

 and Indonesia, 17

Franks, Oliver, 57, 58

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 76-77

Gordon, Lincoln, 38

Great Britain, and Indonesia, 5

Harriman, W. Averell, 29, 30-31, 32, 38-40

Hickenlooper amendment, 14-15, 51

Hirschfeld, H. M., 22-24

Hoffman, Paul, 20-21, 29, 30-31, 71-72

and Eisenhower, Dwight D., 78-80

Indonesia:

and Great Britain, 5

independence movement, 4-8

and the Netherlands, 17-19

and the United States, 5, 9-10, 13-16

International Labor Organization, 72

Ismay, Hastings Lionel, 61

Katz, Milton, 32

[84]

Labor unions:

and Communism, 73-74

in the Netherlands, 71-72

Labouisse, Henry, 36, 37

Lange, Halvard, 17, 59

Lend-lease, and the Netherlands, 19-20

Malagodi, Giovanni, 33

Marshall, George C., 9, 16

Monnet, Jean, 36-37

Mountbatten, Louis, 5, 7

Myrdal, Gunnar, 3, 4

Netherlands:

and Germany, 20-27

and Indonesia, 5, 7, 8, 16-21

Norstad, Lauris, 27-28

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 44-45, 56-58

and Secretary General, naming of, 59-61

Onassis, Ari, 34-35

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), 44,,45, 52

Organization for European Economic Cooperation, 31-34

allocation of raw materials, 68-69
and NATO, 44-45

Papandreou, George, 34-35

Pleven, Rene, 80-81

Plowden, Eric, 60-61

Price, Harry, 75-76

Rusk, Dean, 16, 36

Schuman, Robert, 65

Spaak, Paul, 42-43

Stikker, Dirk:

and Eisenhower, Dwight D., 79-82

and Indonesia, policy toward, 8

Sukarno, 6, 7, 17

Sulzberger, Cyrus, 54

Unden, Bo Osten, 45

UN Good Offices Committee for Indonesia, 9

United States and Great Britain, "special relationship" of, 61-62

Vandenberg, Arthur, 53

Van Zeeland, Paul, 42

Vietnam, South, economy of, 10-12

Wheeler, Earle G., 27-28