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THE SINGLE MARKET PROJECT AS A RESPONSE TO GLOBALISATION: THE ROLE OF THE ROUND TABLE OF EUROPEAN INDUSTRIALISTS AND OTHER NON-STATE ACTORS IN LAUNCHING THE EUROPEAN UNION'S INTERNAL MARKET (1983-1992)

By Anjo G. Harryvan

Draft version. We welcome your comments. Do not quote from it, please.

Abstract

When globalization hit Europe from the early 1980s onwards, it first and foremost took the shape of sharply increased East-Asian and American competition. The two sectors to be hit hardest were the automobile industry and consumer electronics. Pehr G. Gyllenhammar of Swedish car maker Volvo and Wisse Dekker of the Dutch electronics giant Philips, joined forces for the sake of a rescue operation for their beleaguered companies. By founding the Round Table of European Industrialists (RTE), they launched the first pan-European non-governmental driving force for the sake of overcoming the continent's economic fragmentation. True, since the Summer of 1968, the economies of the member-states of the European Economic Community (EEC) were formally united in the EEC's Customs Union. A plethora of Non-Tariff Barriers to trade (NTBs), however, had made free cross border trade in Europe a farce.

The success of RTE's campaign for the establishment of the EU internal market was the result of its effective cooperation with other NGOs, notably the Action Committee for Europe (ACE), comprising senior men of state, and with the Kangaroo group, uniting members of the European Parliament, as well as the ascendance of a new European Commission under the presidency of Jacques Delors. By establishing a pro-Single Market network of networks, RTE and its coalition allies managed to set the agenda, in convincingly proposing policy options for overcoming market fragmentation and promoting arguments for institutional change in a way that would steer Europe's national preferences formation and intergovernmental discourse towards making the Single Market its first and foremost priority.

Introduction

Late June 1985 Philips Chief executive officer (or CEO) Wisse Dekker sent a telex to the European Council, at the time deliberating on the Single European Act. He did so on behalf of over 30 captains of leading European industries. In straightforward Netherenglish Dekker did not mince his words: “As leading industrialists based in the European Communities (...) we urge you to exercise your full influence so that the forthcoming top meeting (...) will produce concrete results. Stop. Not only is the credibility of European political leaders at stake but European industry badly needs a clear signal that the major objectives of the Treaty of Rome will be realized with the next 5 years. Stop.”¹

Those major objectives in the Treaty of Rome, which Dekker was referring to, were the clauses in the European Economic Community (EEC) Treaty of 1957 in which the then Original Six member states of the EEC pledged themselves to the creation of a fully fledged common market that would do away with tariffs, quantitative restrictions and other barriers to trade and would trigger free cross-border exchanges of goods, services, capital and labour between the Community member states.

One may wonder how come that 27 years after the Treaty of Rome the pledge of a European common market had not been realized? That was precisely the question raised by Dekker and his colleague CEOs. Moreover, their sense of urgency was understandable, since by the mid-1980s the Common or Internal market appeared to have become a distant dream.

The start of the project had looked promising enough. The first step towards a common market, a so-called customs union, in which tariffs between the participating countries were to be abolished, had been realized with a certain ease, by July 1968. This was one and a half

¹ As quoted in Justin Greenwood, *Interest Representation in the European Union*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 99.

years earlier than the date prescribed by the EEC Treaty. However, from the early 1970s onwards the combined upsurge in economic crisis, recession, unemployment, exchange rate volatility and general economic misfortune made governments in the European capitals resort to a new protectionist policy measures, the so-called NTBs or non-tariff barriers to trade, to protect their national industries from competition from elsewhere – from within and outside the European Community.

These NTBs were dressed up as quality or health standards or consumer protection regulations, or as rules subjecting imports to highly complicated administrative processes. They tended to be effective, in other words highly prohibitive for producers from abroad, be it from other EC countries or from outside. Such abundance of NTBs and other barriers to trade almost brought Europe back to where it had started in 1957, as an economically fragmented patchwork of relatively small-sized national markets.²

By 1985 the hoped for common market had become an urgent affair for Wisse Dekker and his colleagues, due to a new phenomenon: globalization. From the early 1980s onwards European industries were confronted with intensified competition, especially from Japan and the United States. This intensified competition in turn was partly due to a number of successful GATT rounds in which the EEC had committed itself to lower its import tariffs for manufactured goods. It also reflected highly successful corporate strategies by American and Japanese companies, which were developing new high technology products on their large domestic markets. This enabled them to cash in on resulting economies of scale, before penetrating the European national markets with ranges of high quality products which were cheaper, often considerably cheaper, than the products of their European counterparts.

Two vital sectors of the European economy were hit particularly hard by Japanese and American competition. Notably motorcar manufacturing and the electronics industry. European producers saw their markets invaded by a tsunami of Nissans, Toyota's Subaru's and other high quality Japanese motor vehicles and – in the case of electronics - by ditto colour televisions, cd players, cassette recorders, walkmans and other gadgets. No wonder then, the leaders of European car making and electronics companies took the lead in organizing emergency action against a threatening onslaught. In the Spring of 1983 Pehr

² At the end of 1982 the European Commission found itself confronted with 770 registered examples of intra-European protectionism to be investigated. Probably the real number was considerably higher. Nicholas Colchester and David Buchan, *Europe Relunched. Truths and Illusions on the Way to 1992*, London: The Economist Books/Hutchinson, 1990, 26.

Gyllenhammar, CEO of Volvo, Umberto Agnelli, his counterpart at the Italian Fiat motorworks and Wisse Dekker of the Dutch electronics giant Phillips took the initiative and founded the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT). They did so with explicit support of then EC Industry Commissioner, Etienne Davignon, who encouraged them to create a permanent consultative body which would harness business leaders' 'expertise' in the formulation of Commission policies. In so doing he bypassed the traditional lobby organization of European enterprise UNICE which he deemed unfit for discussing big issues such as the making of a pan-European Internal Market.³ Establishing ERT was an instance of policy network formation for the sake of strengthening rather than hollowing out European governance.⁴

ERT brought together the CEO's of Europe's leading industrial companies; the three mentioned as well as Unilever, Shell, Nestlé, Siemens and many others. By 1985 the ERT members represented some 60% of Western Europe's industrial production. The promotion of a unified European market was stated as the core of its activities. In the words of the ERT Charter: "A halt to market fragmentation with Europe and the creation of unified European markets is essential"

It did make perfect sense. Compared with their American and Japanese competitors European industrial companies did not have a vast home market for product development. Rather the contrary: every few hundred kilometers or so goods had to be declared, VAT forms filled in and other often laborious administrative procedures gone through at the hundreds of custom posts within Europe. Philips' leading intellectual Dr. Coen Ramaer calculated that without internal economic frontiers in Europe his company's product costs would decrease by 10% per product unit (before taxes and distribution costs). This decrease could be the difference between surviving external competition or Philips being taken over by one of its Japanese competitors. At the time, the latter prospect was openly discussed at the Philips headquarters

³ Michael Keanly's review of Bastiaan van Apeldoorn's *Transnational Capitalism and the Struggle over European Integration*, in *Historical Materialism*, vol. 13:3 (263-284), 271. In contrast with RTE, UNICE (nowadays 'BusinessEurope') members were often small- and medium-enterprises (SME) without burning export ambitions and often rather content with the protection their national markets provided them at the time. Nevertheless, individual UNICE officials entertained contacts with RTE and supported its internal market campaign;. Personal Archive J.C. (Coen) Ramaer (henceforth PA Ramaer) Letter UNICE president Guido Carli to Dekker, 4 August 1983 and infra.

⁴ Wolfram Kaiser, "Plus ça change? Diachronic Change in Networks in European Integration Governance", in: Wolfram Kaiser, Brigitte Leucht, Michael Gehler (eds), *Transnational Networks in Regional Integration Governing Europe 1945-83* (Houndmills 2010), (221-235), 221-225.

in Eindhoven.⁵ When in May 1988 Dekker took over from Gyllenhammar as RTE chairman this sense of urgency was stronger than ever.⁶

The Round Table lobby, academic and political assessments

With few exceptions, the ERT lobby has been portrayed as extremely successful. Observers qualify it as the most successful European lobby ever.⁷ In a documentary on lobbying in the EU ‘The Brussels Business’ from 2012, lobby analyst Olivier Hoedeman claims that the Single European Act of February 1986 was a copy paste outcome of the Europe 1990 Plan of Action presented by Philips CEO Wisse Dekker, early in 1985.⁸ That is an exaggeration, but there is general political and academic support for the thesis how the Dekker Paper did heavily influence Eurocommissioner Cockfield’s famous White Paper on the 292 specific policy measures required to realize the common or internal market by the end of 1992.

The most notable exception appears to have been Andrew Moravcsik in his seminal article on the Single European Act as being the outcome of governmental preferences and intergovernmental negotiations. Moravcsik claimed that by the mid-1980s ERT focused primarily on the concerns of its members outside the European Community and that in doing so the Round Table was chiefly involved in European infrastructure projects such as the Channel tunnel. Also, the ERT was based in Geneva; it did not move to Brussels until 1988 when Dekker took over ERT chairmanship.⁹ Moravcsik’s argument on the supposedly modest role of ERT, however, was taken to the cleaners by Maria Green Cowles who demonstrated the limits of overly intergovernmentalist interpretations, by convincingly demonstrating that the ERT was indeed largely responsible for setting the agenda for the subsequent Single Market negotiations.¹⁰ Her findings on the ERT’s role were backed up by Bastiaan van Apeldoorn’s research on its contribution to “the neo-liberal transformation of European

⁵ Letter J.C. Ramaer to Ms. Geertje Tolsma, 25 July 2004. Apart from Ramaer some 30 Philips product experts were engaged in regular consultations with EEC officials, indicating the significance of European governance for the firm. PA Ramaer, Note H. Bodt to Dekker, 16 March 1983.

⁶ <https://web.archive.org/web/20150415033652/http://www.ert.eu/about#Milestones%20and%20Chairmen>. (Consulted 20 January 2020).

⁷ Jonathan Witteman, “Ze maken gebruik van de chaos”, in *de Volkskrant*, 31 August 2012

⁸ Ibidem

⁹ Andrew Moravcsik, “Negotiating the Single European Act: National Interests and Conventional Statecraft in the European Community” in *International Organization* 45, 1991, 19-56 (45).

¹⁰ Maria Green Cowles, “Setting the Agenda for a New Europe: the ERT and EC 1992” in *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 33, 1995, 501-526.

order”. As an elite platform, ERP successfully sought to shape European socioeconomic governance by means of its privileged access to European and national institutions.¹¹ Commission president Jacques Delors qualified ERT as ‘the right vehicle’, adding that UNICE could not have done the job. Referring to Dekker and cie. Delors observed: “These men are very powerfull and dynamic. (...) When necessary they can ring up their own prime ministers and make their case.” Once he decided to focus his policies on realizing a single European market Delors’ RTE relations provided him with supportive allies.¹²

How was it possible that a non-governmental framework as RTE managed to exert such decisive influence on European agenda setting? Access to the private archives of two of the protagonists of the campaign and interviews with their members of staff enable us to throw light on that very question. Tracing the origins of the so-called Dekker paper ‘Europe 1990 – an agenda for action’ may serve as a starting point for analysis.

Non-state actor policy impact: the Dekker paper

The Dekker paper was an internal Philips project led by that company’s government affairs representative in Brussel, the aforementioned Coen Ramaer. Ramaer’s job had been created precisely because of growing dissatisfaction within the Philips’ management level with the inability of government officials and the European Commission to come forward with a concrete proposal, as well as a strategy and a time table, for the creation of a truly unified European common market. That is why they drafted one themselves. The Ramaer team of experts was instructed to ignore political barriers, potential pitfalls and other complications. Instead they were to imagine themselves to be ‘the dictators of Europe’, writing down what it would take to overcome European economic fragmentation in the course of a five year programme. The internal market should be reality by 1990. When the experts cried out that such a schedule wasn’t realistic, Ramaer told them that a blueprint - whether realistic or not - was what was called for. Once the experts set to work they grew enthusiastic about the enterprise and within four weeks completed a programme that would - if the political will to

¹¹ Bastiaan van Apeldoorn, “Transnational Class Agency and European Governance: The Case of the European Round table of Industrialists” in *New Political Economy* 5, 2000, 157-181, passim.

¹² Justin Greenwood, op. cit., 98.

implement it would be sufficiently present – indeed unify the EEC countries’ national markets.¹³

Dekker first presented the plan ‘Europe 1990. An Agenda for Action’ at an expert meeting at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS) in Brussels on 13 November 1984. It was then presented at a public speech in the Brussels Hilton hotel on 11 January 1985 for an audience of 500, including many of the newly appointed Commissioners of the new European Commission lead by Jacques Delors. Europe’s poor economic condition and economic fragmentation, Dekker told his audience, were a direct result of the member-states not doing ‘the homework’ given in article 2 of the EEC Rome Treaty of 1957, pledging them to the establishment of a common market and converging their economic policies. An internal market of continental scale and European instead of national standards would decisively promote innovation and lower costs. He finished by stating the time was running out for a European answer to the American and Japanese challenge: “The clock is at five to twelve”.¹⁴

The ERT gave the Philips plan and the EEC’s subsequent ‘Europe 1992’ project its full support, before and after Dekker took over the ERT presidency in May 1988. The pressure group also campaigned for simplified and European -rather than national and hence diverging - merger and acquisition rules, as well as for road and railroad connections between England and France and between Denmark and Sweden. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the Round Table campaigned for a speedy extension of the European Community to Eastern Europe.

We fully underwrite the conclusions of Green Cowles and Van Apeldoorn (supra) on the significance of the ERT in impacting the making of Europe’s single market. A few days before its official presentation a copy of the Philips plan was sent to the new EC president Jacques Delors. When Delors attended a UNICE meeting on 8 January, Ramaer reported to Dekker enthusiastically how Delors quoted extensively from the piece.¹⁵ In his speech for the European Parliament on 14 January Delors announced the Commission’s intention to propose to the European Council to pledge itself to completing a fully unified internal market by

¹³ Anjo G. Harryvan, ‘Japan, Philips and the Making of Europe’s Single Market, 1984-1994’, in *Journal of European Integration History*, 25 (2019), 9-21 (9-12).

¹⁴ W. Dekker, “Europe 1990. An Agenda for Action” in: *European Management Journal* 3, no. 1 (1985), pp. 5-10. “Europa moet Japan in 5 jaar inlopen” in *Het Vrije Volk*, 11 January 1985. Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis, Amsterdam. Personal Archive Max Kohnstamm (henceforth: PA Kohnstamm), 891; PA Ramaer, J.C. Ramaer to various correspondents ‘Rede Dr. W. Dekker over vrije interne EG-markt per 1990’, 16 August 1984.

¹⁵ PA Max Kohnstamm, 891, letter J.C. Ramaer to Dekker, 09.01.1985.

1992.¹⁶ With the Council's assent Eurocommissioner Lord Cockfield then translated and extended the Philips plan in his famous White Paper 'Completing the New Europe' detailing near 300 concrete policy measures for making the single market a reality.

Building up public support

Precisely to build up political will to realize the proposed common European market, ERT started a public information campaign, resulting in brochures, articles in the major European newspapers and magazines, interviews with Gyllenhammar, Dekker, Agnelli and other big shots of the European industries. The message was repeated time after time. If a real European internal market, without economic frontiers and enabling free cross border exchanges of goods, services, capital and labour was not realized, the economies of Europe were doomed.

In some instances these warnings took the form of veiled threats – like the telex to the European Council this article set out with - and also in interviews with Dekker and other ERT figureheads in the Financial Times and other leading newspapers in which they stated they would have no other option but to move their companies overseas if Europe's political leaders did not follow through with their plans for an economically united Europe.¹⁷

With its Europa 1990 campaign ERT significantly impacted the agenda of the subsequent Single European Act negotiations.¹⁸ However, a public information campaign was in itself no guarantee for a successful acceptance and implementation of Round Table aims at the governmental level, both national and European. The newly consulted archival materials and interviews provide us with indicators that ERT cooperation with other lobbying actors has been of overriding importance for its success.

Among these other lobbying actors, the so-called Action Committee for Europe (or ACE) conducted an influential campaign. The Action Committee was the successor of Jean Monnet's Action Committee for the United States of Europe – and hence is sometimes referred to as the Second Action Committee established in March 1984 when twelve veteran

¹⁶ Jacques Delors, *Mémoires* (Plon 2004), p. 185; Green Cowles, op. cit., p. 515. For the (subtle) differences between a common market, single market and common market see Green Cowles, op. cit., p. 515, ft. 31.

¹⁷ Michael Nollert in collaboration with Nicola Fielder, "Lobbying for a Europe of big business: the European Roundtable of Industrialists" in Volker Bornschier *State-building in Europe. The revitalization of Western European Integration*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 187-209.

¹⁸ Paul Betts, 'The quiet knights of Europe's round table' in *Financial Times*, 20 March 2001.

statesmen, met at Stuyvenberg Castle, near Brussels. Among them were former prime-ministers Leo Tindemans (Belgium), Edward Heath (United Kingdom), Helmut Schmidt (West-Germany), Emilio Colombo (Italy) and Joop den Uyl (Netherlands), assembling under the chairmanship of Max Kohnstamm, former Jean Monnet confidant and former president of the prestigious European University Institute in Florence. Along with ERT, the Action Committee too, was to select the making of a pan-European single market as its central lobbying issue.¹⁹ Previously, on 19 August 1983, hence before ACE's inception, Kohnstamm had contacted Philips CEO Dekker in a letter which in later communications was characterized by Ramaer as the "Noodkreet van Kohnstamm" ("Kohnstamm's cry for help").

In his letter to Dekker, Kohnstamm exposed his worries about Europe's failure to "create the economic space our countries need in order to avoid lagging behind the United States, Japan, in future possible China too, Brazil etc." He then expressed his disappointment with the June 17-19 Stuttgart summit meeting of the ten EC heads of state and government earlier that year, which agreed upon a 'Solemn Declaration on European Union' without backing it up with any supporting policy measures. The prospects for their next meeting in Athens towards the end of the year were just as bad: "It looks as if the EEC will get bogged down evermore by yesteryear problems – steel, agriculture etc. – and won't be able to create the common internal market needed for the industries of the future". Hence a new impetus should be launched by those member-states willing to make progress. "And the only economic issue suitable for such an impetus appears to be the creation of a European market for electro-technical and communication industries". Kohnstamm then stated that he had noted how Dekker, too, in magazine and newspaper interviews, had repeatedly called for European action for overcoming the continent's economic disunity. Since it was of the essence to have plans on the table at the outbreak of the crisis which was to be expected, Kohnstamm asked to be informed about the thoughts on this topic "undoubtedly collected at Philips" and would Dekker kindly send a member of his staff, familiar with this thinking, over for further consultations.²⁰ Dekker was more than willing to do so. As a result, since August 1983 Kohnstamm, Ramaer and Dekker corresponded, consulted and exchanged information.²¹

¹⁹ Emanuele Gazzo, "Action Committee for Europe plans push for unity. New group brings together politicians, industrialists, labor leaders' in: *Europe*, September/October 1985.

²⁰ PA Ramaer & PA Kohnstamm, no. 89, Letter Max Kohnstamm to Wisse Dekker, 19 August 1983

²¹ PA Ramaer, Note "Europe 1990 An agenda for Action. Korte historie." (henceforth: "Korte historie")

Which enabled the protagonists of the Philips – and later RTE - lobby and the ACE campaign to demonstrate carefully orchestrated convergence and division of labour.

Non-state actor cooperation, the broader picture

The ACE campaign was as secretive as the ERT campaign was public. The political clout of its members secured them entrance to the highest governmental circles. Indeed, there appears to have been a certain *complementarity* between the two lobbies. While Dekker's ERT directed their attention to the European public at large and then at the governments of the individual member-states, Kohnstamm's influential men of state focused first and foremost on the new European Commission and its president Jacques Delors. That made sense, Philips' intellectual frontman Ramaer explained. The business lobby could spell out in technical terms what it took to create a unified European market. But the issue of what institutional and hence legal treaty changes would be needed to bring about its realization was better left to the statesmen's lobby: "We at Philips did not know sufficiently about it."²² It was Kohnstamm in particular who, in his capacity as trusted advisor of Delors, made the latter share his analysis that for the sake of realizing Cockfields 292 policy measures, unanimity voting would not do. Jérôme Vignon, Delors' right hand man at the time, vividly recalled the process: "Max Kohnstamm was very deep involved. I can remember one of those specific meetings, which took place in Brussels, I think late October 1984 and Delors participated in a meeting in a private hotel with a group of selected people, to which Max Kohnstamm belonged., but there were also some experienced civil servants of the Commission and then Delors explained his project to shape a true borderless European Community, a single economic space. And I think it is correct to underline that Mr. Kohnstamm insisted that this was not a new project, this was already embedded in the Treaty of Rome, but it failed to deliver during the seventies and there was still hesitance in the first half of the eighties, so we had to think about *why* the project had failed, if you wanted to go along the same route. Max Kohnstamm insisted that it failed because there was an institutional failure. The institutions at that time had not really been adapted since the 25 years of the Treaty of Rome and there really needed to be thought about adapting the Treaty, so that the Commission could really receive the power to implement

²² Letter J.C. Ramaer to Ms. Geertje Tolsma, 25 July 2004. In this letter Ramaer stated a second reason for Philips/RTE for staying in the background on the institutional issue: "engagement of industry, especially big industry, with political affairs was a source of suspicion for many ('private interests', 'big business' etcetera. We did understand, however, that the Single Act was a dire necessity."

effective legislation. The lack of efficiency, the lack of effectiveness, was attributed by to the unanimity voting.” Hence – to cut a long story short - the 1986 Single European Act added art. 100a to the EEC treaty, introducing Qualified Majority Voting in the Council of Ministers. Which has been the default rule ever since.²³

How come, one may ask, that in the literature on the issue, the RTE campaigns are in the limelight whereas very little was said about the role of the Action Committee? Partly because the Committee’s campaign was based on personal contacts, partly because private correspondences and interviews that disclose the Committee’s role have only now become available in the 21st century. Moreover, Kohnstamm’s attitude to his success was adamant: An effective lobbyist wants to stay out of the limelight and leave the bragging rights to the politicians. As a self-declared ‘lobbyist for Europe’ for over four decades, the Dutch diplomat knew what he was talking about.²⁴

Campaigning and lobbying cooperation for overcoming Europe’s market fragmentation, however, did not remain limited to The RTE/Philips teaming up with ACE. For effective framing of the common market issue, a broader network was called-for. To secure constructive relations with the European Parliament Ramaer started consultations with the Kangaroo Group. This latter association had started in 1979, when two members of the first directly elected European Parliament, Basil de Ferranti and Karl von Wogau exchanged horror stories about protectionist practices in the European Community. De Ferranti told about an English fork-lift firm being blocked from selling its trucks in France due to French rules demanding a particular lay-out of pedals in the cabin. Von Wogau responded with a story about a plumber from the Black Forest who had to undergo time wasting customs rituals when endeavouring to do a job over the border in France. The two pledged to tackle such NTBs in cross-border trade in Europe. The Kangaroo Group they founded – so called .given the ability of kangaroos to jump over boundaries – drew members of the European Parliament from across the political spectrum, interested in breaking down barriers between the member-states, pouring ‘good humoured scorn’ on Europe’s petty protectionism in the process. From August 1984 Ramaer was actively working on a coalition of RTE, SAC and the Kangaroo Group.²⁵ The Kangaroo Group proved a natural ally for the ERT/SAC coalition.

²³ Interview Jérôme Vignon (of Delors’ Cabinet) with Geertje Spanjaard – Tolsma, Brussels, 4 May 2004

²⁴ Anjo G. Harryvan and Jan van der Harst, *Max Kohnstamm. A European’s Life and Work*. Baden-Baden: Nomos 2011.

²⁵ PA Ramaer, letters Ramaer to Dekker, 16 August 1984 and 17 September 1984.

Tellingly, it was Kangaroo frontman De Ferranti - instead of Philips or RTE - who invited the newly appointed Commissioner for the common market Arthur Cockfield to the presentation of the Dekker Europe 1990 plan in January 1985:

“We are all of us at Kangaroo thrilled to bits to hear that your appointment as commissioner for the internal market has been confirmed. (...) We have, over the years, received great support from Dr Dekker, the chairman of Philips. Philips, living so close to the frontiers of Holland, know only too well how vital the effective working of the internal market is to the future of their great European enterprise (...) and they support it with clear thinking and excellent staff work. Dr. Dekker himself is presenting his latest ideas on concrete measures to free the internal market at a luncheon at the Hilton hotel in Brussels on 11 January. This has been a very important date in the Kangaroo calendar for a long time and now that your appointment is announced, may I respectfully put forward the view that your presence there of itself would represent an important step towards our common goal.”²⁶

Thus the RTE/SAC advocacy coalition drew actors from a wide variety of backgrounds to its cause. Essential for its future success were the contacts it managed to establish within the Council of Ministers and the European Commission. On 29 October 1983 Ramaer had made the acquaintance of Emile a Campo, Director General of the Council of Ministers. From then on Ramaer, Kohnstamm and a Campo would meet regularly.²⁷ Other regular guests at these meetings were - amongst many others - Edmund (Mom) Wellenstein, a highly influential former DG and friend of Kohnstamm as well as UNICE Director-General Sassen. In January 1989 a Campo reminisced on this cooperation in an article in Kagaroo News under the heading ‘The start of something big’:

“In 1983 a ‘brainwave’ session on how to get Europe moving again took place at the home of Max Kohnstamm. Edmond Wellenstein, Boz, Karl von Wogau and Dr. Ramaer, the Brussels representative of Dr. Dekker of Philips, were present. This resulted in a plan of action which established a clear time-schedule for the abolition of physical barriers, technical barriers, public procurement and fiscal barriers. For eighteen months I collaborated intensively with

²⁶ PA Ramaer, Telex De Farranti to Ramaer, comprising the tekst De Ferranti sent to Cockfield earlier that day, 12 December 1984.

²⁷ PA Ramaer, “Korte historie”

Dr. Ramaer in the preparation of Dr. Dekker's *Europa 1990* which led directly to Lord Cockfield's White Paper *Europe 1992*.”²⁸

After the launching of Cockfield's White Paper on the completion of the internal market, RTE's network of networks, in which Max Kohnstamm and Coen Ramaer served as kingpins, directed its attention at promoting the institutional changes deemed necessary for its realization, above all the introduction of qualified majority voting (QMV) in the Council for internal market related policy measures. Lastly, the coalition established a 'watchdog committee' to monitor its implementation, resulting in the drafting and dissemination of several 'progress reports'.²⁹

The partners in the coalition did not see eye to eye on *all* policy issues. The end date for the single market project proposed in the Dekker plan – 1990 – was deemed 'unrealistic' by Eurocommissioner Cockfield, who wrote later on that the choice for 1992 emerged in the conversations of the latter with prospective EC president Jacques Delors. In his memoirs, however, Delors revealed that it was Max Kohnstamm who convinced him of the necessity to adopt 1992 as the end date. This finds confirmation in the testimony of Jérôme Vignon, in charge of macro-economic issues in the Delors cabinet: “(...) Mr. Kohnstamm insisted that the progress in the EC was always related to the capacity to set out agendas with precise targets and I think that Max even added that two terms would be far enough to be credible. Without being too far away to be discouraging for people to engage in the project. (...) This time frame, from Max' point of view, was very important to explain the peaks and the downs in the Commission activity, and having an eight-year period, would avoid the down in Commission activity which normally took place at the end of one term. The prediction of Max proved to be very true (...)”³⁰ The prolongation from 1990 to 1992, however, came as a disappointment to Ramaer and his team.

²⁸ Emile a Campo, 'The start of something big' in *Kangaroo News*, January 1989.

²⁹ PA Ramaer, Ramaer to Dekker and Davignon 'Single Act and necessity of Watchdog Committee', 7 May 1986 and PA Ramaer, Ramaer to various correspondents, 'First progress Report on the Implementation of the White Paper on Completing the Internal Market', 12 May 1986.

³⁰ The Rt Hon The Lord Cockfield PC, *The European Union, Creating the Single Market*, London: Wiley Chancery Law 1994, 32-33. Jacques Delors, *Mémoires*, Paris: Plon 2004, 185. ³⁰ Interview Jérôme Vignon with Geertje Spanjaard – Tolsma, Brussels, 4 May 2004. Letter J.C. Ramaer to Ms. Geertje Tolsma, 25 July 2004

Conclusion

The RTE's campaign's success for the establishment of the EU internal market was the result of its effective cooperation with other NGOs, notably the Action Committee for Europe (ACE), comprising senior men of state, and with the Kangaroo group, uniting members of the European Parliament, as well as the ascendance of a new European Commission under the presidency of Jacques Delors. By establishing a pro-Single Market network of networks, RTE and its coalition allies managed to set the agenda, convincingly propose policy options for overcoming market fragmentation and promote arguments for institutional change that steered Europe's national preferences formation and intergovernmental discourse towards making the Single Market its first and foremost priority. Hence non-governmental actors have been pivotal for the construction of what "may represent the most ambitious instance of multilateral cooperation since the construction of the post-World War II international order."³¹

The fact that Dekker, Ramaer and the latter's 'Europe 1990' team of experts, as well as their counterparts and contacts in the Council and Commission, Emile a Campo and Kohnstamm's old friend former EC director-general Edmund Wellenstein, as well as ACE president Kohnstamm and UNICE Director-General Sassen were all Dutch nationals, may have acted as an extra incentive: Since the time of its establishment, the 1957 European Economic Community Treaty and its promise of overcoming market fragmentation in Europe, were deemed quintessential for the Netherlands' economic future as an export dependent trading state. Hence, the EEC Treaty was considered the most significant success of the Netherlands' post WW2 European diplomacy. Its perspective of a pan-European market had to be realized. For the sake of the realm, as well as for Europe.³²

³¹ Geoffrey Garrett, "International cooperation and institutional choice: the European Community's internal market", in: *International Organization* 46 (1992), 533-560. abstract.

³² Anjo Harryvan, *In Pursuit of Influence. The Netherlands' European Policy during the Formative Years of the European Union, 1952-1973* (Brussels: P.I.E. - Peter Lang (2009) passim.