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## Dutch policy networks and discourses in the decolonization of Indonesia<sup>1</sup>

Meindert Fennema

*Interessen (materielle und ideelle), nicht Ideen beherrschen unmittelbar das Handeln der Menschen. Aber die 'Weltbilder', welche durch Ideen geschaffen wurden, haben sehr oft als Weichensteller die Bahnen bestimmt, in denen die Dynamik der Interessen das Handeln fortbewegt.*

MAX WEBER (cited in Weber 1926: 347-348)

### Introduction

In this article we will consider the outcome of administrative decision making as a result of bureaucratic conflict and rivalry. However, contrary to conventional approaches in political science, both mainstream and radical, conflict is not interpreted here as an expression of contending bureaucratic or class *interests*, but as an expression of opposing and incompatible *discourses*. Political discourse is defined here as a system of permanent and interrelated concepts that are used in the formulation of political decisions. Outcomes are defined and legitimized not only by the internal logic of the discourse but also by the institutional site where they are produced and by the authority to speak. (See Foucault, 1972: 34-38, 50-52) We examine not only the formulation of colonial policy but also the administrative structures in which they are produced. This directs our attention to the subtle and permanent power game between different ministries as expressed in rival claims to formulate policies, to the complex hierarchical structures within these ministries as expressed by the authority to countersign documents, and to the exclusion of contending discourses from the administrative apparatus.

We will analyze the changing discourses resulting from modifications in the contexts of decision making rather than the decision making process itself. We consider discourses as a context of decision making, in so far as they determine frames of reference or policy belief systems (Hoppe et al., 1990), and also the organizational structure of the state bureaucracy. However, we do not consider these policy discourses to be restricted to the state bureaucracy. The strength of specific policy options depends heavily on support

from outside, as well as on the integration of these options into a coherent and cohesive set of ideas and theories about the way in which social order should be created and maintained. (Fennema, 1988) I am indebted to the work done by Kees van der Pijl, especially to his *The Making of an Atlantic Ruling Class* (1984), in which he developed the construct 'concept of control', calling attention to the fact that the process of administration is *always* also a process of domination.<sup>2</sup> One can define a concept of control as 'a coherent formulation of the 'general interest' which transcends narrowly defined fractional interests and which combines mutually compatible strategies in the field of labour relations, socio-economic policy and foreign policy on the basis of a class compromise, entailing specific economic and/or ideological rewards for the dominated classes and class fractions involved.' (Overbeek, 1990: 26) A concept of control, then, is a specific policy discourse; struggles over their formulation appear in periods of societal emergency. The dominant concept of control becomes 'visible' precisely when the social order underlying it crumbles. Then, supporters of the hegemonic concept are forced to defend what hitherto had been taken for granted. But by defending it against its critics, the concept of control becomes explicit, as do its internal contradictions. At the same time, critics of the old concept of control try to develop a new one which solves the contradictions of the former and creates a new consensus. New interests – which were excluded from the old concept – are now taken into consideration and articulated in the new concept of control. Some 'old' interests, which had been central in the former concept of control, become marginal in the new one, or are excluded altogether. (cf. Fennema and Rhijnsburger, 1986)

Contrary to materialist theories, we do not develop an 'objective' general interest theory. In our view, the general interest is always formulated by the articulation of some specific interests – and the exclusion of others. It should be stressed that there are no specific interests outside a discourse. By formulating a definition of the general (or national) interest, some interests are organized *in*, and others are organized *out*, as Schattschneider once argued. We want to go one step further and argue that some interests are formed and others are liquidated in the very process of formulating them. Of course, the analytical problem is to establish a relation between extra-discursive formation and discursive operations. (Harris, 1987: 105-106)

Here we will consider the relation between the mobilization of support through social networks and the elaboration of a coherent and cohesive set of political ideas. The elaboration of a concept of control takes place in specific networks in which its scope is broadened and its consistency increased. Scope and consistency tend to be inversely related. A restricted scope is more likely to produce a consistent and thus attractive concept. But the attractiveness will also be limited to a restricted set of people; and conversely, a concept

of control with a broad scope appeals to a wide range of people. A certain vagueness in its formulation is inevitable and even useful to attract people from different backgrounds. Hajer (1989) has called this a discourse coalition.

A concept of control cannot develop without a supportive policy network; when the network collapses, the concept of control is bound to decay. Fragmentation of existing policy networks resulting from intra-elite strife indicates a decline in the hegemonic concept of control. In the struggle for hegemony, the scope of an alternative concept of control must be broadened while its coherence is maintained. In addition, the supporting network of the new concept of control should be enlarged without losing its density and connectivity. A characteristic of the construct *concept of control* is the centrality of the notion of national interest. In shorthand, a concept of control is *a definition of national interest striving for hegemony*.

Our approach is similar to that of Domhoff (1979; 1987) in that it stresses the importance of personal and institutional networks in the policy formation process. However, our perspective differs from Domhoff's because we emphasize the discursive process, while he emphasizes the process of interest articulation. In addition, we focus on crisis management by the ruling class rather than on the routinized domination, that is, the exercise of hegemony, which is the subject of various Domhoff studies. We emphasize policy dynamics in terms of network opportunities that create a structural transformation of the policy networks. Some parts of the policy network disintegrate while other parts emerge in the crisis. Ruling elites do not *always* first hammer out an elite consensus before informing the general public. This is particularly the case, so it seems, where specific elites are in jeopardy of being 'left out' or stand to lose. These elites tend to mobilize their rank and file and, subsequently, public opinion. By doing so, they provide – especially if they indeed lose out – a basis for the pluralist belief that the elites are not so powerful after all. (Domhoff, 1983: 90)

We adhere to the emphasis on the institutional framework of the state bureaucracy, which is characteristic of the analysis of Weir and Skocpol (1985) in their attempt to explain the different responses to the Great Depression in the United States, Great Britain and Sweden. Referring to the importance which Keynes himself attributed to role of ideas for policy innovations, they state:

The issues raised by Keynes' brief excursus in *The General Theory* into the sociology of politically influential knowledge are indeed important, but they must be addressed with an analysis that pays more attention (than Keynes, or many others, since have paid) to the structures within and surrounding the state that pattern the mutually influential interactions of experts and politicians. (Weir and Skocpol, 1985: 117)

However, Weir and Skocpol pay little attention to the discursive practices

that not only define what experts *say* but also *who* they are. Some people may be considered experts by some while they are considered as quacks by others. Some people may be considered as objective by some while they are considered to be ideologically biased by others.

### The decolonization of Indonesia in Dutch historiography

There has been a tendency in Dutch historiography to consider the decolonization of Indonesia as a heroic struggle of the forces of progress against the forces of reaction or, in the terms of the colonialist historiographers, of the forces of law and order against communist and nationalist rebellion; this struggle would inevitably lead to chaos. Decolonization was either discussed from a Dutch perspective (Smit, 1952) or from an Indonesian perspective (Pluvier, 1978). In these views, the Dutch government was perceived as either a hero or a villain, but in both cases it failed to play its role consistently and convincingly. Dutch policy, so it was assumed, was frustrated and dictated by outside forces, especially that of the United States Government which opted for the decolonization of Indonesia and was even willing to betray the Netherlands, its former ally.

Basically only one dimension was seen in the Dutch position: conservatives wanted to maintain colonial ties with Indonesia, while progressives wanted to sever these ties. In between these two extreme positions, the moderates were presumed to opt for a solution of gradual decolonization. However, this one-dimensional approach makes it difficult to understand some of the moderate positions. Take, for example, the position of the Minister of Finance, Piet Liefstinck, who was later to become the director of the World Bank and the IMF: in 1945 he joined the Labour Party (PvdA) and became Minister of Finance in the first postwar cabinet. By 1947 he had become a strong advocate of military action against the Republik Indonesia. From his point of view the war effort was not, however, meant to reestablish colonial rule; it rather was meant to recapture the harvest of tropical products and occupy the sites where Dutch firms had been operating: 'earning territory', as Liefstinck had called it (Bakker and Van Lent, 1989: 153-154). *Operation Product*, the plan's military codename, was intended to prop up the Dutch balance of payments through the sale of the Indonesian<sup>3</sup> crop that was still owned by Dutch companies. Whatever the ethical quality of the decision to start the first military operation against the Indonesian nationalists, in July 1947, it certainly cannot be considered as an action aimed at restoring colonial rule. A simple conservative/progressive dichotomy obscures rather than clarifies postwar colonial policy formation. Bank (1983), Baudet and Fennema (1983) and more recently De Jong (1988) and Groen (1991) have

contributed to a more complex and nuanced picture of Dutch policy in the process of decolonization. Yet there exists no comprehensive analysis of the policy-making process on the Dutch side. To do so, the different policy options should be analysed as part of different discursive fields, which involves the contending world views that strived for hegemony.

### Demarcating the discursive fields

The different positions taken by politicians, civil servants, cabinet members and representatives of different interest groups, can best be analyzed in a two-dimensional space. The first dimension centres around the question of whether or not colonial ties between Holland and Indonesia should be maintained. The second dimension is defined by the question of whether or not Dutch interests should predominate over Indonesian interests.

It is only in the *traditional colonial* discourse that these two dimensions overlap, since from the colonialist perspective no conflicting interests could possibly exist between Holland and the Dutch East Indies. Hence colonial ties appeared to be unproblematic and it was impossible to juxtapose Dutch and Indonesian interests: colonial ties should be maintained forever, to the mutual benefit of both the colony and the mother country. It is interesting to note that the traditional colonial discourse has not only strong paternalistic but also anti-capitalistic overtones. Holland was obliged to protect the Dutch Indies against the 'capitalist tentacles' that stretched out from the United States. (Gerbrandy, 1951: 78)

The antinomies in the colonial discourse were also racialized: the struggle was seen as one of white against brown, as one of cosmos against chaos. Pieter Gerbrandy's book *Indonesia*, published in London in 1950, had originally been entitled *From Cosmos to Chaos*. (Bosscher, 1980:446n) Miscegenation was rejected: the relation between the races should be based on mutual respect, development should be separate, white should lead brown. Colonial diehard prof. dr Carel Gerretson called Lieutenant Governor-General H.J. van Mook a 'treacherous half-caste' (Henssen, 1983:167). Yet, a natural harmony was said to exist between the races in the colony:

Our time, our government has not understood the specificity which was so wonderfully expressed in the encounter of white and brown in Indonesia. (Gerbrandy, 1951: 214)

Decolonization, communism and capitalist plunder, all resulted in the disruption of the Divine Order of Things. For all practical purposes this discourse tied the fate of Indonesia to that of the metropolis in a completely one-sided way. In the traditional colonial discourse the right of national self-

determination was rejected. Gerretson, for example, had argued that the rights of peoples should be balanced against the rights of states. The exercise of each of these rights should never lead to the annihilation of either peoples or states. (see Henssen, 1983:146)

The *progressive colonial* discourse, on the other hand, acknowledged a divergence of interests between Holland and its colony. It recognized the nationhood of the former colony. One of the protagonists of progressive colonial discourse, H.J. van Mook, wrote in 1948:

But there is a more positive reason to declare the colonial system obsolete than the conviction that all imperialisms are bound to become immoral. Indeed, the War has proved that democratic freedom cannot be maintained in countries which do not struggle themselves to defend it, because they do not have a national existence, because they are not independent. (Van Mook, 1949: 11)

He assumed, nonetheless, that Western countries should help the new post-colonial countries to become democracies and to develop their nationhood. The progressive colonial discourse therefore held that a formal relation between Holland and Indonesia was desirable. This formal relation should, however, be aimed explicitly at the benefit of the colony, and it should also give the colony a fair amount of political autonomy. Progressive colonial discourse had many variants, of course, ranging from updated versions of the *white man's burden* task theories to gradualist or reformist versions of anti-imperialist theories. They all viewed nationalism in the colony as a positive sign, which had to be separated (both analytically and practically) from communism. The right of national self-determination was unconditionally accepted.

The third discursive field will be called the *modern 'realist'* discourse; it admitted that contending interests between Holland and Indonesia existed and that the rupture of colonial ties was inevitable: Indonesia was to be considered as any other foreign country. The realist discourse was identical to the progressive colonial discourse in all respects but one: it did not claim or accept a special responsibility of the old colonial power for the new post-colonial nation. The realist standpoint can be summarized in the adage 'Let the dead be buried'. Accordingly, Indonesia should develop on its own strength and not depend upon (financial) support from the former mother country. (Van der Wal, 1975:50) This position was taken in by Lieftinck, who refused financial support for the colony, because of its lack of creditworthiness. The *realist* discourse worked from the assumption that Dutch interests should always prevail. It ranged from a non-paternalistic *fair deal* position, which approached the anti-imperialist stance, to a cynical catch-as-catch-can position, which allowed the Dutch government to claim indemnities from the Indonesian Republic for the expenses of the two colonial wars waged in 1947 and 1948 against the very same Indonesian Republic.

Finally, the *anti-imperialist* discourse not only assumed a conflict of interests between Holland and Indonesia, but also demanded a complete break of colonial ties to the benefit of Indonesia. In fact the anti-imperialist discourse took it for granted that Indonesia would benefit from the rupturing of colonial ties, just as it implicitly assumed that decolonization would harm Dutch interests. The anti-imperialist discourse, based as it was on a theory of national oppression and exploitation, did not consider the possibility that breaking the colonial ties could actually *benefit* the mother country – at least in economic terms. If Holland were to benefit, it would be in political terms: the decolonization of Indonesia would backfire on the conservative colonial circles in the Netherlands and give more confidence and strength to the progressive forces.

Figure 1: Discursive positions in the Netherlands on the Indonesian question

		Ties should be maintained	
		yes	no
Dutch interests should prevail	yes	traditional colonialist	modern realist
	no	progressive colonialist	anti-imperialist

### Institutional basis

The different discursive positions were located in different parts of the policy network. The anti-imperialist discourse had no institutional basis outside the Communist Party and the Trade Union Unity Centre (EVC, Eenheids Vakcentrale), which was linked to the CP. The communists organized sit-ins and strikes to support the Indonesian nationalists and also helped the young men who refused to be enlisted in the colonial army. Those in the newly formed Labour Party who supported this position were silenced or left the party. Because the anti-imperialist discourse has always remained extremely marginal in the Dutch policy network, we will not discuss this discursive field in the remainder of the article, although the overlap and conflict between the progressive colonialist and anti-imperialist positions would deserve a separate study.

In 1946 the *modern realist* discourse was dominant at the Treasury, although the traditional colonial discourse was also still firmly rooted here. On policy matters the two discourses did not come into conflict initially. In both discourses military intervention was seen as a logical solution to the problem

posed by Indonesian nationalism. Since the national treasury was empty, the need to recapture the colonial properties was urgent. Moreover, it was felt that the Dutch army could not be kept in Indonesia if there were no military results. Thus, in April 1947 the minister of Finance argued that, seen from a financial point of view, the Netherlands should either abandon the Dutch Indies immediately or engage in a military operation. At that time the first option was clearly out of the question, and thus the military option prevailed. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 91-93; De Jong, 1988: 353ff) The traditional colonial and realist discourses coincided in 1947 on yet another issue: the traditional colonial discourse argued that colonial trade should be handled by Amsterdam and Rotterdam merchants for evident reasons (see Rhijnsburger and Fennema, 1981:76-77). But the realists also wanted this to prop up the abominable balance of payments. Seen from their perspective the financial thumb-screws should be put on the Dutch Indies to squeeze the last florin out of the moribund dependency. It was in fact the balance of payments position which induced the socialist Treasurer to behave like a diehard. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 91-96; De Jong, 1988: 361; Bank, 1983: 285-292)

In the beginning of 1946, traditional colonial discourse reigned supreme at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its *esprit de corps* had always been aristocratic and conservative. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was, by the very nature of its function, sensitive to international public opinion, and especially to the opinion of the United States. The need for a more 'Atlantic' orientation was eloquently expressed by the Dutch minister of Foreign Affairs, Dirk Stikker, at the signing of the NATO Treaty in Washington:

The treaty we are about to sign marks the end of an illusion: the hope that the United Nations would, by itself, ensure international peace. Regretfully we are driven to the conclusion that the Charter, though essential, is not enough in the world as it is, to protect those vital principles for which we of the Western world who have gathered here, stand. (cited by Van Staden, 1974: 20)

According to a high-placed civil servant, Stikker had reversed his position on the Indonesian question only just before the signing of the treaty. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 17) Stikker unexpectedly sided with the *realists* to the dismay of his former political associates. From 1948 onwards the *realist* vision rapidly gained support in the Foreign Service. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 68ff)

As was to be expected, the traditional colonialist discourse was also strongly present at the Ministry of Colonial Affairs. The colonies of the Netherlands had been governed by this department during the pre-war period. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 54) However, during the Second World War, when Van Mook became Minister of Colonial Affairs a group of high civil servants with 'Indian experience', most of whom had belonged to the Stuw

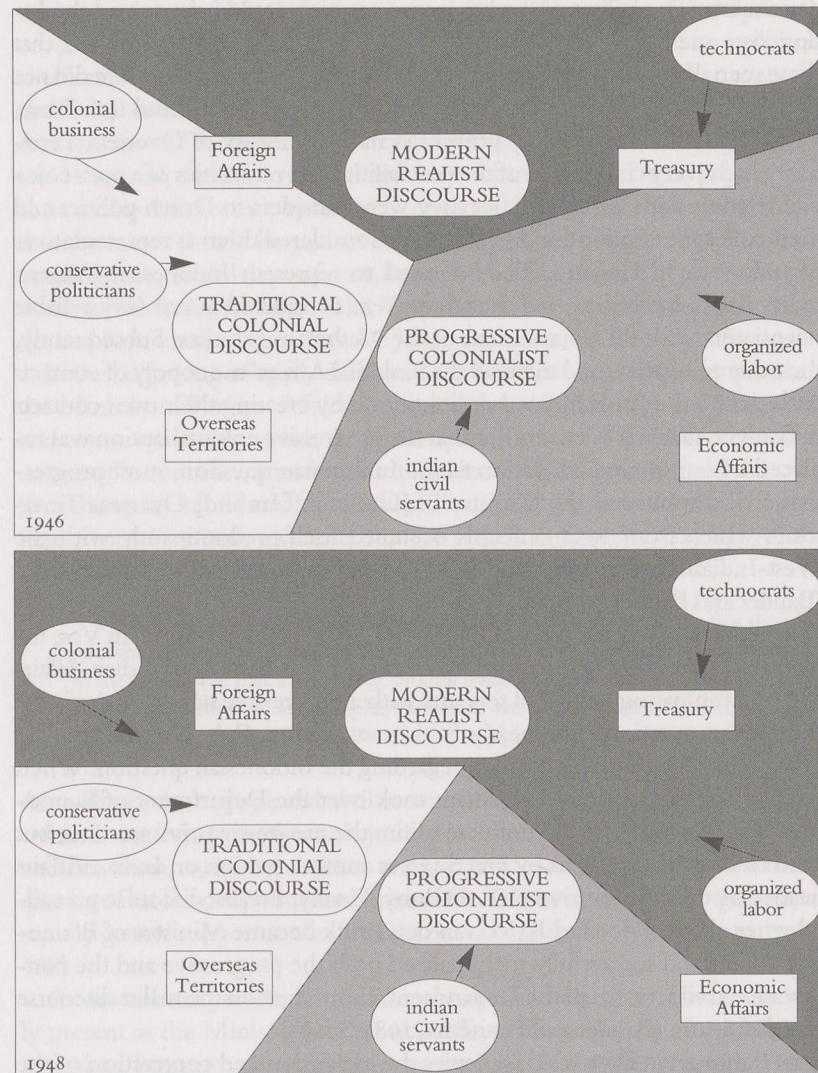
group in Indonesia, introduced a new and more progressive vision at the Ministry. In addition to Van Mook, J.H.A. Logemann, Minister of Colonial Affairs in 1945 and 1946, played a crucial role in this respect. Besides Van Mook, who was the functioning Governor of the Dutch East Indies, Logemann and Prime Minister Schermerhorn organized the 'Hoge Veluwe'-conference in 1946 in order to reach an agreement with the Indonesian nationalists. The failure of the conference, which could have solved the Indonesian question before it actually began, was due in part to the fact that these men did not have experience with Dutch politics and therefore did not understand the politics of accommodation practised in Holland. (cf. Bank, 1984) The civil servants they promoted in the Ministry of Overseas Territories had a very clear vision of the possibilities and necessities of a post-colonial relation with Indonesia, but they were outsiders to Dutch politics and their colleagues from other Departments considered them as representatives of Indonesia in Holland. They seemed to represent Indonesian interests rather than Dutch ones and thus they were considered as not very reliable negotiators with the government of the Netherlands Indies. Subsequently, the other ministries tried to break the Colonial Affairs' monopoly of contacts with the Netherlands Indies Administration by creating their own contacts in Batavia. When it became clear that the progressive colonial option was replaced by a more *realist* solution to the Indonesian question, most progressive civil servants left the Ministry of [Union Affairs and] Overseas Territories which from 1951 onwards occupied itself predominantly with the West-Indian dependencies and in 1959 was liquidated without much ado. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 54-80)

The first postwar Minister of Economic Affairs, the socialist Hein Vos, introduced a progressive discourse by creating a new section of Indian Affairs and by nominating new civil servants with a progressive stance vis-à-vis the Indonesian question. The head of this new section, P.A. Ursone, recalled being interrogated on his opinion regarding the Indonesian question. When the catholic conservative Huysmans took over the Department of Economic Affairs in 1947, he did not dare to fire the progressive civil servants, but tried to marginalize them by erecting yet another section on Indian Affairs headed by the conservative C.T. de Booy. Finally, a realist discourse prevailed when the technocrat J.R.M. van den Brink became Minister of Economic Affairs and successfully marginalized both the progressive and the conservative civil servants in the Department. From then on the realist discourse was dominant. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 81-91)

In figure 2 we have tried to depict the expansion and contraction of the contending discourses in the different ministries between 1946 and 1948. The realist discourse, which in 1946 was only dominant in the Treasury – and even there it was not unchallenged –, had conquered the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs and that of Economic Affairs by 1948. Only the ministry of Overseas Territories remained a bulwark of colonial discourse, although there was still bureaucratic rivalry between the traditional and the progressive colonialists.

Figure 2: Institutional Basis of Contending Discourses in 1946 and 1948.



Note to Figure 2: Between 1946 and 1948 the modern realists see their discursive field expanded at the expense of the progressive colonialist discourse (the line on the right has moved downwards to include Economic Affairs), and also at the expense of the traditional colonial discourse (the line on the left has moved downward to include Foreign Affairs).

### Informal networks

Having sketched the institutional basis of the different discourses, we can now start to map the different informal networks in which these discourses were developed and maintained. These networks cut across the institutional structures because they were based on *role equivalence* rather than on *exchange*, as is the case in departmental networks. In this section we look at *role* of actors rather than their *positions*. As Winship and Mandel stress:

Positions can be thought of as specific locations in a particular social structure; roles, in contrast, should provide a way of classifying positions across any number of distinct social networks, or within different parts of the same network. (Winship and Mandel, 1983: 315-316)<sup>4</sup>

Role equivalence, then, is defined here as having similar relational patterns to other actors in unrelated networks. For example, if auditors are employed in different organizations, their interrelation is based on role equivalence. Most professional organizations are based on role equivalence; because their members have similar relational patterns, they tend to have similar value orientations and also similar interests. In times of turbulence, role equivalence may induce people to establish new communication structures in order to develop a new vision about the ways in which their role should be performed; changing relational patterns may induce people to change their value orientation. Those who retain the old values do not feel such a need until these values are explicitly challenged. They then depend on the traditional networks which have already been severely damaged in the process of change.

The *traditional colonial* discourse was defended by a group of politicians of the Anti-Revolutionary party led by Gerbrandy. They formed the National Committee for the Maintenance of Empire (Nationaal Comité Handhaving Rijkseenheid), in which some conservative Catholics and conservative liberals also participated. In this dense network, we not only find conservative politicians but also high-ranking civil servants from the old colonial administration and high ranking military men, both retired and still in active service. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 81) The informal spokesman of the National Committee was the eccentric professor in the Utrecht faculty of Indology, Carel Gerretson. (Hennsen, 1983; Bank, 1983: 145, 165) Notwithstanding the presence of some very prominent politicians, a powerful colonial business lobby, and relatively strong ideological support from the public, their network soon became isolated and its discursive basis became restricted in scope. Its obsolescence was not due only to changes in the global environment, although the latter certainly played an important role; it was also due to the fact that the protagonists in the network had lost their institutional

base in the state apparatus. Of course there were still many civil servants who maintained their traditional colonial discourse and looked for leadership. Besides, the admirals and generals could underscore their argument with a vast amount of stripes and the military discipline that went with it. However, the organizational ties had been severed since the old guard did not have direct access to the ministries. Moreover, to call for their supporters to rebel against their superiors was in blatant contradiction with their own conservative and hierarchical ways of thinking. The helplessness of the conservative lobby became obvious when in 1947, amidst rumours of a coup d'état, Gerbrandy was prohibited from speaking on the radio. That such a decision could be taken against a former Prime Minister who owed a great deal of his popularity to the radio-broadcasts transmitted from London during the German occupation, was proof of the muscle of the new political regime in The Netherlands. Gerbrandy as well as Gerretson, who had been leading conservatives in prewar Holland, rapidly became political mavericks after the war. Pieter Geyl, the famous historian who held a chair at the University of Utrecht, had held his colleague Gerretson in high esteem before the Second World War, partly because of his connections with government circles. After the war Geyl, although by no means a socialist, joined the newly formed Labour Party (PvdA) and himself became an important 'organic' intellectual of the new regime. Already in December 1945 Geyl wrote to his successor at the London School of Economics that Gerretson's obsessive opposition against the Indonesian policy of Van Mook and Logemann was dangerous and verged on insanity. (Henssen, 1983: 128) The isolation of the network around Gerbrandy indicates the decadence of the traditional colonial discourse, which had become a caricature of itself and was full of impending doom: Not only Indonesia would be doomed when Sukarno and his group would take power, but also in Holland the nefarious policy of the government would result in revolution and chaos.

The *progressive colonial* discourse had developed in the 1930s both in Holland, at the University of Leiden, and in the Dutch East Indies. In the colony some progressive civil servants were loosely organized around a journal called *De Stuw* and, accordingly, were called the *Stuw* group. Many of these progressive civil servants had studied Indian law at the University of Leiden, and Leiden, therefore, can be considered the 'hub' of the network of progressive colonialists. (Locher-Scholte, 1981: 118ff) Their leaders were to play a crucial role in the formation of the colonial policy of the Netherlands in the aftermath of the Second World War. This was the case with Van Mook, who had been Minister of Colonial Affairs in the London cabinet and became the leader of the Netherlands Indies Administration after the war. Van Mook, who was born in Semarang (1894) and had studied Indian Law at the University of Leiden, had begun his career in the civil service of

the Netherlands Indies and was nominated to the pre-war Indian *Volksraad* where he expressed progressive opinions. As an 'Indian lad' and a great connoisseur of Indonesian politics, Van Mook lacked experience in – and feeling for – Dutch politics. As a matter of fact he actually disliked the pettiness and provincialism of Dutch politics, and held the moderate Indonesian intellectuals in high esteem: his book *Indonesië, Nederland en de Wereld* (1949) is dedicated to one of them, Raden Abdulkadir Widjoatmodjo. When he was forced to step down as governor of the Netherlands Indies, characteristically he did not go to Holland, but accepted a chair at the University of California at Berkeley. Other *Stuw* members were J.H.A. Logemann, who became Minister of Overseas Territories in 1945, and J.A. Jonkman, who succeeded Logemann in 1946. In 1946 most of the members of the *Stuw* group joined the newly formed Labour Party (PvdA). (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 55–56) From a network perspective this was of the utmost importance, because it linked the social-democratic elite in Holland to a section of the administrative elite in the Netherlands Indies. It provided the new party with a source of information and experience in the field of colonial policy which the pre-war social-democratic party had lacked, and it also helped to change the party's policy orientation from an anti-imperialist position to a progressive colonialist one. Of course, not all progressive colonialists belonged to the Labour Party. P.A. Kerstens, MP for the Catholic Party and chief editor of the Catholic daily *De Tijd*, and C.H.V. Devilleneuve, president of the Federation of Industry (*Ondernemersbond*) in Batavia, did not. (Bank, 1983: 217–218; Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 138–139) Both had first-hand experience in the Netherlands Indies. The network of progressive colonialists was a tight one, with a strong base in the state apparatus. Its weakness, however, were its one-sided representation in the Labour Party and the fact that nearly all of its protagonists had an Indian background and thus were unfamiliar with the political culture in Holland.

The *modern realist* discourse was developed during the Second World War among intellectuals and policy-makers who anticipated the Dutch retreat from empire and – however reluctantly – chose to face reality rather than cling to a world which no longer existed. The realist discourse gradually took shape, first among those who accepted the world hegemony of the United States and welcomed some structural changes in the economic sphere. H.M. Hirschfeld was the most important representative of the new discourse. He got his first colonial experience in the 1920s when he joined the *Javaasche Bank* in Batavia. At the beginning of the next decade he returned to The Hague to become second in command at the newly formed Ministry of Economic Affairs. (De Hen, 1980: 74) He also conducted the financial clearing negotiations with Nazi-Germany. During these negotiations he also had to act on behalf of the Dutch Indies. In the process he



learned to use the colonial relationship to strengthen the Dutch position vis-à-vis its most important trade-partner. At the same time he recognized the difference between the needs of the Netherlands Indies and those of Holland. On this basis he set out to reorganize the Dutch-Indonesian relationship, but the Second World War intervened. During the German occupation Hirschfeld became the highest civil servant of the Dutch administration and as such he conducted all important negotiations with the German authorities. However, after the liberation, Hirschfeld was accused of having 'disrespected' the Dutch resistance movement, and resigned from the administration. He was sent to Batavia to evaluate the financial and economic situation in the colony. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 71) After his political rehabilitation, Dr Hirschfeld became 'Government Commissioner in General Service', and held this post until 1952. During this period he represented the Netherlands in the negotiations on the European Recovery Program. (see Rhijnsburger, forthcoming) In this role he shaped Dutch policy towards European integration and organized the transition from a neutral to an atlantic foreign policy. As a result he became the most important political figure during this crucial period. Indonesia could, in his view, no longer fill the gap between Dutch imports and Dutch exports, as it had done before the war. The Dutch economy had to develop a new structure, based on a new conception of the national interest. Holland should not be made responsible for the recovery of the Netherlands Indies' economy. In 1947, when the 'troubles' in Indonesia threatened to hamper the economic recovery of Holland, Hirschfeld became an active supporter of military intervention in Indonesia in a desperate attempt to make the colony into an asset instead of a liability. (Bank, 1983: 286-287; De Jong, 1988: 365-366) When this was to no avail, Hirschfeld became one of the first civil servants to advise the government to 'cut its losses' and abandon Indonesia. In a letter to G.W.M. Huysmans, the Minister of Economic Affairs, he wrote in August 1947:

The action of the Security Council threatens to become a catastrophe.... But the fact remains that the Netherlands fight for its rights and only retreat in the face of force. If that force is used (severe economic sanctions or a warship to the Indies, MF) then we will confront a national crisis, but then we should hold the Big Three fully responsible, and we should consider whether we should hand over the Dutch Indies, or at least Java and Sumatra, to the United Nations. (Rhijnsburger, forthcoming)

In 1948 Indonesia became less important for the Dutch economy as a consequence of the provision of Marshall Aid, while the perpetuation of the Indonesian problem threatened relations with the United States. When – in December 1948 – the Dutch reopened hostilities during what was later called the 'second police action', the United States suspended Marshall Aid to the

Netherlands Indies. Soon after, in February 1949, Hirschfeld openly advocated the defence of Dutch economic interests against Indonesian ones:

It is high time that all Dutchmen solely defend Dutch interests and that they find themselves confronted with Indonesians, who may be supported by Dutchmen whose position is clearly defined as advisers of the Indonesian government. (Rhijnsburger, forthcoming)

This 'strictly business' position went with an acknowledgement of the right of self-determination:

As long as the regime will be anti-communist, the political structure should in the long run be of little interest to us, as long as Indonesia will have peace and order in such a way that economic life can develop and there will be no discrimination against Europe and America. (quoted in Bank, 1983: 421)

Hirschfeld's informal network consisted of technocrats, most of them affiliated with the Catholic People's Party, and they provided this party with badly needed experience in the field of international economic relations. This network of *realists* was very loosely organized, but – contrary to the network of traditional colonialists – its protagonists maintained strategic positions in the state apparatus. The position of the *realists* was not only strengthened by the United States pressure to negotiate a compromise with Indonesia, but even more so by the financial position of the Dutch Central Bank. The Dutch gold reserves were rapidly being depleted and in the first months of 1947 the Minister of Finance repeatedly warned that the country was on the brink of bankruptcy. Holland just could not afford to use its scarce resources for the maintenance of a colonial empire which – at least in the short run – was not contributing to the country's balance of payments.

The network of the *realists* was further strengthened in the departmental structure when it was connected with the network of 'economic planners' who had been lifelong opponents of the pre-war free-marketeters. This group of Rotterdam professors included the future Nobel prize winner Jan Tinbergen, who was, at the time, the head of the Government's Planning Bureau, and also more policy-oriented people like P. Liefinck, F. De Vries, J. Goudriaan, and G. J. Verrijn Stuart.

Some of these men, e.g., Tinbergen and Goudriaan, had been members of the Social Democratic Workers Party (SDAP), while others had been affiliated with the conservative Christian Historical Union (CHU). In 1946 nearly all of them joined the newly formed Labour Party. Their preoccupation had primarily been the organization of the national economy: before the war they already had promoted the idea of state intervention to overcome the Great Depression. In the postwar period they became defenders of corporatist labour relations.<sup>5</sup> They dominated academic discussion on eco-

conomic policy. But their network also controlled the recruitment of experts in the Department of Economic Affairs and the Department of Finance.

As it became increasingly clear that the new relationship between Holland and Indonesia would imply that the Netherlands would have to stand on its own feet, the linkage between the social-democratic *planners* and the *realists* became a natural alliance. Both groups were preoccupied with balance of payments problems. This involved a simultaneous repositioning of the Netherlands in the world economy and a restructuring of the Dutch economy. The actors involved did not form a 'action group' like the traditional colonialists, nor did they depend on an *old boys network* like the progressive colonialists. They formed a loosely organized network of university professors, economic policy makers and politicians (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 199–206) who were in search of a new concept of control, a new definition of the national interest in which the Dutch colonial dependencies played a much smaller role, if any at all.

#### The fate of the progressive and the traditional colonialist discourse

In Indonesia, traditional *colonialist* discourse was severely damaged during the Japanese occupation. The claim of European superiority was undermined by the Japanese military success. The Allied victory did not reestablish the traditional discourse. Not only did the United States and the Soviet Union not support such a discourse, even the British military commanders were not willing to restore Dutch authority in Indonesia. Furthermore, the creation of the Indonesian Republic (*Republik Indonesia*) complicated matters for the Dutch colonial authorities. Circumstances were extremely favourable for a progressive colonial discourse, since it permitted a great deal of colonial autonomy. Also, the old Stuw network was by now very effective, because developments in Holland had brought political forces to the fore, which, although sympathetic to the progressive colonial discourse, had neither contacts in, nor knowledge about Indonesia. Hence, the first postwar cabinet, with Logemann at the Ministry of Overseas Territories, was opting for a rapid solution of the Indonesian problem, by trying to compromise with the Sukarno government in the 1946 'Hoge Veluwe'-conference. This solution, however, was blocked by the Catholic elite, which had been excluded from participation in the negotiations with the Indonesian Republic. (Bank, 1984)

Such an offense against the rules of the game in a consociational democracy could not be tolerated by the Catholics, even though they did not have a colonial policy of their own. Most Catholic leaders were narrowly nationalist,

and thus hovered between the *traditional colonialist* and the *realist* discourse. To attack the progressive colonial fraction, the Catholic leadership used a mixture of traditional colonialist and anti-fascist rhetoric. The latter could be used effectively because the first president of the newly founded Republic, Sukarno, had collaborated with the Japanese. By doing this, the Catholics were able to alarm and mobilize the traditional colonial forces, while at the same time splitting the progressive camp into a pragmatic and an anti-Sukarno camp. (Bank, 1984: 77–78) In this way, the Catholics blocked a solution of the Indonesian problem along the lines of a progressive colonialist policy. The potential integration of the network of *progressive* colonialists and that of modern-realists was prevented by a split along pillarized lines: the Catholic 'modernizers' were tied to a colonialist discourse which was activated in an inter-elite struggle between Catholic and Socialist partisans. (Bank, 1984)

The traditional colonial discourse gained a new momentum in the rivalry between Catholics and Social-Democrats, when Catholic leaders embraced the colonialist rhetoric to undermine the Labour Party's dominance in the field of colonial policy. Among the Catholics themselves there were no intellectuals or political leaders who could possibly implement a conservative colonial policy; worse still, their most important policy-makers, such as Hirschfeld and Van den Brink, did not believe in a revival of colonial politics, nor could they have implemented such a policy in the international political arena. For a limited period, however, it looked as if the traditional discourse would be resurrected: as a consequence of the campaign for military confrontation the political climate was receptive to nationalism. By giving the army a free hand, the end of the Republik Indonesia seemed imminent. However, the Dutch government stopped short of the military liquidation of the Republican government in Djokjakarta. After the first 'police action' in the Summer of 1947, the traditionalists were either forced to adopt a more realist discourse, or were driven into a quixotic position.

#### The struggle over the links with the Netherlands Indies' administration

The Ministry of Overseas Territories – before the war the centre of traditional colonialist discourse – became the centre of progressive colonialist thought after the war. Minister J.H.A. Logemann joined the Labour Party in 1946, as did J.P. Bannier, head of the Commissariat for Indian Affairs and also a member of the Stuw group. This ministry had always had privileged access to the colonial government in Batavia and since the Lieutenant Governor-General had also belonged to the Stuw-network, the other ministries felt confronted with a progressive *old boys' network* and tried to establish

their own contacts in Batavia. This attempt was, of course, strongly opposed by the Ministry of Overseas Territories, which claimed – on historical grounds – to be the gateway to the East. Because the Catholics and other opponents of the progressive colonialists in the different ministries were not able to oust the progressive faction from the Ministry of Overseas Territories, they tried to break its monopoly. They never succeeded in achieving the latter and it was not until the end of 1947, when L. Götzen was nominated minister without portfolio at Overseas Territories, that they finally accomplished the former. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 56–62) Yet, once nominated, Götzen favored a realist rather than a conservative policy, as some had hoped he would do. The position of the progressive colonialists was dramatically weakened after the 1948 elections, when the Catholic People's Party claimed the Ministry of Overseas Territories – E.M.J.A. Sassen became Minister of Overseas Territories – and was able to remove Van Mook from his post as Lieutenant Governor-General, and replace him by the more conservative Catholic L.J.M. Beel.

At the Ministry of Economic Affairs a similar struggle took place, but here it was fought between those adhering to the traditional colonial view and the modernizers. The first Minister of Economic Affairs, Hein Vos, strongly promoted the modernizers. When he was forced to leave, after the elections of 1946, his successor, the conservative Catholic G.W.M. Huysmans, supported the traditional colonial fraction within the ministry. Since he was unable to liquidate the *modernizers* entirely, he had to set up a new directorate of Indian Affairs, parallel to the already existing department for Indian Affairs. (Baudet and Fennema, 1983: 84–87) Huysmans was the driving force behind proposals to deprive the Ministry of Colonial Affairs of its privileged access to the government in Batavia by installing a coordination committee, in which representatives from several ministries took part, to direct relations with the colony (Coördinatie-College Nederland Nederlands-Indië). When Huysmans had to step down because of illness he was succeeded by J.R.M. van den Brink, who was also a Catholic, but a staunch supporter of the *realist* position. Van den Brink effectively eliminated the traditional colonial discourse from his ministry. (Baudet and Fennema, 103–106)

The most important contribution to the development of the realist discourse, however, was the lack of foreign currency in the Central Bank. The Treasury, which was directly confronted with this problem, thus favored 'low budget' solutions to the Indonesian question. Initially Liefinck enforced a military operation with the perspective of recapturing the colonial enterprises and the unsold crops, but when it became clear, by the end of 1947, that the *Blitzkrieg* had developed into protracted and prolonged guerilla warfare, the Treasury quickly adopted the position that Indonesia should be abandoned. Thus the Treasury colluded with the Ministry of

Economic Affairs to opt for a way out which was economically sound: they preferred a financial-economic agreement with the Indonesian Republic which would protect Dutch business interests as far as possible and enforce substantial indemnities upon the Indonesian government. (Pluvier, 1978: 108–109) The realist option finally prevailed despite a last-minute military action organized by Sassen, the conservative Catholic Minister of Overseas Territories. The complete neglect of the international reaction to the military action shows that the Catholic elite was still isolated from the foreign policy networks. (cf. Gallhofer, 1982: 102)

The realist option was partly forced upon the Netherlands by its financial position and by the pressure of its allies – especially the United States – but its success was also due to the fact that the option fitted well into a concept of control which had become dominant by the end of 1948. Although this concept of control owed a great deal to the social-democratic legacy and the intellectual force of John Maynard Keynes, the architect of this new concept of control was definitely Dr Hans Max Hirschfeld. It is ironic that Hirschfeld has, until now, been remembered mainly as the highest-ranking Dutch civil servant working on the adaptation of the Dutch administration to the new circumstances during the German occupation. Immediately after the war he was accused of collaboration with the Nazis. (Rhijnsburger, 1992: 134–135; L. de Jong, 1972: 163–173 and L. de Jong, 1988: 369ff; cf. Mok, 1990: 25)

### Theoretical conclusions

We have tried to show how contending policy options concerning Dutch colonial policy strived for dominance in the aftermath of the Second World War. It is certainly true that 'objective conditions', *in casu* the guerilla warfare of the *Republik Indonesia*, made it practically impossible for the traditional colonial option to survive and also that the modern realist option had a lot to gain from these same 'objective conditions'. Yet the outcome of the struggle was also influenced by the structure of the institutional and personal networks and the strategy of its protagonists. Our research has shown that there are critical conjunctures in history, in which several policy options are available. Which option is chosen under the given circumstances depends on personal strategies and institutional barriers or possibilities, rather than on 'objective conditions'. By 'objective conditions' in this case we mean those conditions which were outside the control of the Dutch policy makers, such as the existence of a powerful nationalist movement in Indonesia, and the new global configuration of power balances which resulted from the Second World War.

It has been shown that political parties were split on the issue of decoloni-

zation. The leadership of the Labour Party was divided between those who adhered to a *progressive colonial* option and those who favored a *realist* solution.<sup>6</sup> The liberal party (VVD) exhibited a similar conflict between those who adhered to the *traditional colonial* answer, and those, like Stikker, who favoured a realist solution. The Catholic party (KVP) was divided along the same lines, but here the split did not lead to a party struggle, because the *realists* were mainly civil servants who kept a low political profile. Even the protestant parties were split on the issue. In these circumstances political parties were relatively impotent actors in the process of policy-formation. Discourse coalitions ran across party lines.

In this article we have placed more emphasis on the importance of state structures than on the strategy of individual politicians, which has been stressed in more traditional historiographic studies on the subject. But the most crucial subject area appeared to be that between the volatility of strategies of individual actors and the relative rigidity of the political institutions: that of informal networks of policy formation. In our historical research we have tried to use some of the network concepts that have been developed in sociological theory. (Freeman, 1979) We have found that the weakness of the network of the traditional colonialist, although dense and well connected, was to be found in its isolation from the institutional network of the state. Lacking a supportive policy network, the traditional colonial concept of control became fossilized and started to crumble.

The progressive colonialist network was equally dense and well connected; but in contrast with that of its direct opponent it was well embedded in the institutional network, both in Batavia and in The Hague. The weakness of the network of the progressive colonialists resulted from its narrowness: nearly all members were organized in the Labour Party, and most of them had an Indian background. Their relative isolation from the Dutch party network and the consociational political culture had a negative impact on the strategic behaviour of its proponents. Furthermore, the scope of the progressive colonial discourse was limited to the colonial question, which made it difficult to appeal to a broad range of groups and sections in Dutch society.

The network of the modern realists, whose common ground was the introduction of Keynesian economic policies, originally lacked the density and connectivity of the other networks, but it was linked to the state apparatus and was spread fairly even across the political parties. The realist discourse eventually came to be considered as the compromise between the traditional and the progressive colonial discourse because it contained elements of both. The realist discourse had the absolute prevalence of Dutch interests in common with the former, while it shared the formal acceptance of a Commonwealth concept with the latter. Its ideological structure, however, was

quite different from both of its contending discourses. This ideological structure made the discourse particularly fit for developing a concept of control that was focused on Europe, rather than on 'the East'. And this, in turn, harmonized with the strategies of the United States, and made the Netherlands a privileged partner in the negotiations on the European Recovery Program.

The extent to which bureaucratic rivalry has been determined by ideological conflict can be illustrated by the fact that the Minister of Economic Affairs in 1946 installed a new office for Indian Affairs parallel to the already existing one at the ministry, which was considered to be too progressive. Minister Huysmans obviously did not feel strong enough to dismantle or restaff the existing office and thus had to satisfy himself with the establishment of a parallel office.

Finally we would like to stress that our investigation illustrates the importance of ideological factors in policy networks in times of turbulence. We do not suggest that economic interests do not play an important role. What we do maintain is that in times of crisis there is no consensus as to *how* these interests are best served, nor is there unanimity about *what* interests should be served, and there is not even a clearcut definition of these interests.

In these circumstances discursive practices become extremely important and so does intellectual entrepreneurship which produces new concepts of control on which a new consensus can be based. Such entrepreneurial activity consists, in the words of Schumpeter, of *Durchsetzung neuer Kombinationen*. (Schumpeter, 1927: 100-101) It is the art of creative destruction and the artists are likely to be those who had a marginal position in the old constellation of interests. Their marginality enables them to have a fresh look at the old world. However, if they are to be successful structural changes are required. Their previously marginal position becomes a central one as a result of a relinking of the networks in such a way that they occupy a *bridge* position in the new one. Most of the constituent elements of the network may well remain the same, but their position undergoes a structural change. This may account for the amazing fact that so much changed while so much remained the same in postwar Dutch society. As the Dutch historian E.H. Kossmann has put it: 'It is remarkable that within the restored pillarized system a policy had to be implemented which meant a fundamental change in three areas: that of foreign, that of colonial and that of economic policy.' (Kossmann, 1986: 208)

In the area of foreign policy the Netherlands had to give up its traditional position of neutrality and was willy-nilly integrated in the new Atlantic alliance. At the same time, and even more reluctantly, it had to withdraw from Indonesia and was reduced, as contemporaries put it, 'to the rank of Denmark'. (Baudet, 1975) Finally, in the field of economic policy several

fundamental changes took place: state intervention became common practice, the labour movement was integrated into the policy structure, industrialization became the main policy goal and colonial and landed interests were curtailed.

All these changes would not have come about so smoothly without changes in the ideological structure. The fact that colonial discourse was replaced so rapidly with a modern *realist* discourse was largely due to the fact that this latter discourse fitted well into a concept of control nowadays called Keynesian. Keynesianism was effective precisely because it articulated colonial policy, foreign policy and economic policy in a coherent way and was consistent with the international realities of the post-war period.

The loss of empire soon proved an advantage for Dutch economy and society; it annihilated a colonial segment in the economic structure and gave impetus to modern multinational industry to compete on the world market without being lured into a mercantile colonialism. The political elite had to 'cut its losses' and absorb new elites: Catholics and socialist leaders whose rank and file wanted industrialization of the Netherlands itself. (Fennema and Rhijnsburger, 1992)

## Notes

1. This article is based on a research project directed by Henri Baudet and the author. Its results have been published in: Baudet and Fennema 1983. A first draft has been presented at the IX Sunbelt Conference on Social Network Analysis, Tampa, 9-13 February, 1989. In writing this paper I received help and support from Gerd Junne in Amsterdam and Sara Schatz at Berkeley. But most of all I am indebted to John Rhijnsburger and Frank Elbers with whom I discussed many of the problems involved in my theoretical approach and who also provided me with literature and citations. The translation of Dutch citations is mine.

2. This dual meaning is much better expressed in the Dutch equivalent of the concept of control, or *beheersconceptie*. The Dutch term contains the common stem of *beheren* (to administer) and *beheersen* (to dominate). However, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the verb control also has this dual meaning of *regulating* and *dominating*.

3. In this article, the term '(Dutch) Indian' is used to refer to situations and occurrences in the context of Dutch colonial rule; in all other cases the term 'Indonesian' is used, no matter whether references are made to the pre- or post-independence period.

4. Since we are not concerned here with analyzing a single well-defined population-specific network we will not use the concept of structural equivalence (two actors are structurally equivalent to the extent that they have a similar relational pattern in the system - that is, to the extent that they are tied to the same third parties; see Gargiulo, 1989).

5. Before the war the different networks described above had few links with each other. The *traditional colonialist* discourse remained dominant until 1940, and thus all other discourses were oppositional. However, these different oppositional discourses were not integrated and the networks carrying them remained separate: the anti-imperialist net-

work had little contact with the network transmitting the progressive colonialist discourse, while the latter in turn had little or no contacts with the protagonists of the realist discourse. The separation of these oppositional networks resulted not only from a lack of correspondence between the oppositional discourses, but it was also caused by social barriers, especially those resulting from the religious segmentation of Dutch society. The German occupation did a great deal to demolish the segmentation in Dutch society by fostering the sentiments of national solidarity against a common, brutal enemy. But the occupier did more: by erecting a camp in Sint-Michielsgestel where the Dutch political and intellectual elite were kept hostage, the Germans literally 'forced' the pillarized elites to communicate. During the long and lonely months in the camp the prisoners organized several discussion groups focusing on the future of their country. Thus the formerly separate networks became interlinked. (see De Keizer, 1976) Directly after the war a number of leading figures from Sint-Michielsgestel created a new political formation, the Dutch People's Movement (NVB), crosscutting the old party system. When this initiative failed, the formation of the Labour Party was an important organizational step towards the amalgamation of formerly distinct networks. This *Partij van de Arbeid* was the successor of the Social Democratic Workers' Party; it had abandoned Marxist programs and rhetoric, and attracted quite a few modernizers from other parties, especially from the Christian Historical Union.

6. The so-called left-wing opposition led by Jacques de Kadt and Frans Goedhart should be considered as the radical wing of the progressive colonialist group rather than as part of the anti-imperialist camp. (De Keizer, 1993:127).

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