

THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION SERVICE COLLECTION: AN INTRODUCTION

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Abstract: Contemporary Dutch history remains an under-researched topic in the United States. Though American social scientists have long appreciated the value of Dutch studies, American historians have been slow to develop contemporary Dutch historiography due in part to a dearth of comprehensive sources in public collections. This article is meant to serve as an introduction to the papers of the Netherlands Information Service (NIS; in Dutch, the Regerings Voorlichtingsdienst), which are now open for study, and an invitation to scholars to include the contemporary Netherlands in their research agendas. Held by the Holland Historical Trust and housed in the Holland Museum of Holland, Michigan, this repository of contemporary Dutch materials is unique in North America. The NIS collection at the Holland Museum is an excellent starting point from which to more fully examine the contemporary Netherlands. A host of contemporary developments have played themselves out in Holland, the study of which would introduce readers to the Dutch version of these events.

Keywords: Contemporary dutch history, Netherlands Information Service, historiography.

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Contemporary Dutch history remains an under-researched topic in the United States. Though American social scientists have long appreciated the value of Dutch studies, American historians have been slow to develop contemporary Dutch historiography due in part to a dearth of comprehensive sources in public collections¹. This article is meant to serve as an introduction to the papers of the Netherlands Information Service (NIS; in Dutch, the Regerings Voorlichtingsdienst), which are now open for study, and an invitation to scholars to include the contemporary Netherlands in their research agendas. Held by the Holland Historical Trust and housed in the Holland Museum of Holland, Michigan, this repository of contemporary Dutch materials is unique in North America.

1. THE NETHERLANDS INFORMATION SERVICE

The Netherlands Information Service was established during World War II by the Dutch government-in-exile in London. Its early purposes were defined by the informational needs of a nation at war, including fostering communications links with occupied Netherlands, countering Nazi propaganda, and keeping the plight of the Dutch in front of world attention². From these origins it grew into a modern

1. Among the recent English-language titles deserving attention are Andeweg, Rudy B.; Galen, A. Irwin, *Governance and Politics of the Netherlands*. Hampshire and New York, Palgrave, 2002; Cox, Robert H., *The Development of the Dutch Welfare State: From Worker's Insurance to Universal Entitlement*. Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993; Griffiths, Richard T. (ed.), *The Netherlands and the Integration of Europe, 1945-1957*. Amsterdam, NEHA, 1990; Kalb, Don, *Expanding Class: Power and Everyday Politics in Industrial Communities, The Netherlands, 1850-1950*. Durham, Duke University Press, 1997; Moore, Bob, *Victims and Survivors: The Nazi Persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands 1940-1945*. London, Arnold Publishers, 1997; Orlow, Dietrich, *Common Destiny: A Comparative History of the Dutch, French, and German Social Democratic Parties, 1945-1969*. New York, Berghahn Books, 2000; Rochon, Thomas R., *The Netherlands: Negotiating Sovereignty in an Interdependent World*. Boulder, Westview Press, 1999; Zanden, Jan L. van, *The Economic History of the Netherlands, 1914-1945: A Small Open Economy in the Long Twentieth Century*. London, Routledge, 1997.

2. There is yet no comprehensive English-language account of the Netherlands Information Service. The Chief of NIB/Holland, Willard Wichers, provided a brief synopsis of NIS functions in "The Netherlands Information Service," Introducing You to the Dutch Immigrant Society, n.d., 22, a pamphlet in the NIS papers, folder "Documents B AUS B Immigration (1953-66)", box 3.

information service typical of a postwar period in which governments aimed foreign policy not only at diplomatic elites but at foreign populations. After the war the NIS served four main purposes: to argue the Dutch case for the government's Indonesian position, to promote government policy more generally, to seek and expand export markets for Dutch products, and to attract investment capital to the Netherlands.

Despite NIS's status as an information/propaganda agency, the materials in the collection are highly conducive to scholarly purposes, for at least two reasons. First, though the NIS was a political organization, with specific policy aims, Dutch information policy was not as burdened with ideological goals as, by way of comparison, American information policy. Where the USIS and USIA sought to convince the world that civilized values were compatible with superpower hegemony, the NIS shared such obligations in a much more desultory way, generally only in connection with the Indonesian crisis. Thus NIS persuasion was far less overt and calculated than American information policy³. Since the NIS saw itself as an information center rather than a true propaganda ministry, NIS operations centered on disseminating information to selected populations, most of it produced and published by sources outside of the NIS⁴. The political purposes of the NIS, in other words, are reflected in the selection of audiences, rather than in the production of materials. The NIS did produce some of its own information, but it was primarily a collector and disseminator of government, journalistic, and cultural information produced elsewhere.

The second reason NIS materials support high-

quality scholarship relates to the structure and operation of the organization. Because the job of sifting and sorting was left to the discretion of individual bureau directors, the NIS took a comprehensive, even imprudent, approach to transmitting material to its North American bureaus. The NIS's main office was located in New York (NIB/New York), with subsidiary bureaus in San Francisco, Boston, Montreal, and in Holland, Michigan, which was responsible for the entire Midwest region⁵. The New York bureau published some material, brochures, news reports, etc., but its main focus was collecting and disseminating information to the bureaus. Bureau directors in turn promulgated this information to the public as widely as opportunities allowed and as they saw fit within their compass of responsibility. Dissemination was both active and passive; the bureau would place broadcast material, press releases, lectures and exhibitions, and it would also respond to requests for information, often from schoolchildren, teachers and libraries, journalists, and churches. As information entrepreneurs, bureau directors were responsive to NIS's general information strategy, but free to deploy resources in response to particular national or international crises or local interest. The reach of NIS material was thus limited only by the directors' regional affiliations and personal dynamism. This means that the quantity of material that NIS distributed to its bureaus, and which now resides in the NIS collection at the Holland Museum, is exponentially more voluminous than what was presented to the public by bureau directors.

Due both to its mission strategy and its organizational structure, then, the NIS was not an Orwellian propaganda factory. Like the U.S. information

In Dutch see Zwan, Bert van der, et. al. (eds.), *Het Londens Archief: Het Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken tijdens de Tweede Wereldoorlog*. Amsterdam, Boom, 2003; for a broader history of Dutch information policy see Wagenaar, Marja, *De Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst: Geheimhouden, Toedekken, En Openbaren: De Rol Van De Rijksvoorlichtingsdienst Tussen 1945 en 1994 [The Netherlands Information Service: The Role of the Netherlands Information Service between 1945 and 1994]*. Amsterdam, Sdu Uitgevers, 1997.

3. Even the relatively more ideological U.S. agencies felt that the challenge was not to alter public opinion, per se, but to inform it. International differences were caused not so much by enemy propaganda or ideology as by a simple dearth of information about the foreign other. The information agencies thus saw themselves primarily as teachers rather than propagandists. The best treatment of U.S. information policy during the Cold War is Osgood, Kenneth A., *Total Cold War: U. S. Propaganda in the 'Free World,' 1953-1960*. Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Santa Barbara, 2001. Even on the very sensitive subject of Indonesian independence, the NIS relied more on telling the story of Dutch humanitarian investment in the East Indies (i.e., promoting the Acivilizing mission@) rather than on boilerplate rhetoric discrediting the Republican movement.

4. Unlike the United States, the Netherlands information policy did not have a global audience. Its primary audience was the United States, and the translation function of NIB/New York also means that most of the collection is in English.

5. Apparently, only the NIS papers at NIB/Holland have been preserved. Similar caches in San Francisco and New York have been returned to the Netherlands.

agencies, there was a sifting of information that certainly at times bordered on public manipulation. But NIS operations centered on procuring material produced by other sources and placing it into the hands of bureau directors. In addition to feeding press, educational, and cultural outlets a never-ending stream of information about Dutch history, culture, government and society, other NIS functions included acting as a middleman between Dutch cultural purveyors and American cultural outlets, with such sponsorship reaping public relations rewards for the government. The NIS, for example, arranged for Dutch music to be played on American radio stations. The stations were kept supplied with programming, Dutch musicians and composers enjoyed an outlet, and the Dutch government presumably benefitted from increased American exposure to Dutch culture⁶. The bureaus further arranged for lecture tours of prominent speakers, promoted Dutch performances, placed art and culture exhibits throughout the U.S., and arranged tours for Dutch officials including grantees under the various U.S.-sponsored exchanges like the Fulbright and Smith-Mundt Foreign Leader programs. The NIS was also active in promoting Dutch culture within U.S. academia, and the bureau directors in San Francisco and Holland played key roles in establishing the programs in Dutch studies at Berkeley and the University of Michigan.

The strategy and structure of the NIS partly explains the extent of holdings in the collection. It's impressive breadth also owes to the unstinting energy and dedication of the Holland bureau's longtime director, Mr. Willard Wichers (1909-1991). Labeled the Aactive propagandist of cultural relations between the Netherlands and the Dutch-American Middle West@ by the distinguished Dutch writer Adriaan J. Barnouw, Wichers's range of activities in pursuit of his mission are staggering⁷. In addition to his duties as director of NIB/Holland, Wichers also founded Holland, Michigan's Netherlands Museum (now Holland Museum) in 1937 to showcase

the region's strong ties to the Netherlands. Among its early treasures were the Dutch exhibitions from the 1939 World's Fairs in New York and San Francisco⁸. Wichers's enthusiasm made him NIS's natural choice to interface between the Netherlands and a ready-made mid-western émigré audience⁹. A civic booster and public servant who also served for years as a trustee of Hope College, among his many other accomplishments, Wichers's dedication to the NIS made him a magnet for papers and artifacts even outside NIS's impressive distribution program. As bureau chief, he would often use NIS-related material in Museum exhibits; as Museum Director, he understood the mechanisms of public presentation, which helped to shape the acquisition of material for his NIS function. This blending of sources and purposes is what makes the Museum's current collection such a valuable site for students of contemporary Dutch history¹⁰. Wichers himself deserves deeper scholarly attention, as his career helps illuminate the state-private nexus that made possible the public diplomacy of the 20th century.

2. THE NIS COLLECTION

Wichers's and NIS's legacy to the scholarly community is impressive. Given the expansive operations of the NIS, and Wichers's own tendency to hoard, the collection now includes more than 42 large boxes of processed material. This does not include the 200 boxes of Willard Wichers's personal collection, much of which concerns NIS and NIB/Holland, as well as about 100 boxes of unprocessed NIS material and another thirty boxes of radio program and music recordings¹¹. When all of these papers are re-processed, a project currently under way, the NIS collection will undoubtedly swell by a multiple of its current state.

Much of what the NIS transmitted to the bureaus came directly from official government sources and it is this primary material that comprises much of the collection's great interest. There are pamphlets

6. NIS produced annually 10 to 15 hours of programs to be rebroadcast, and the Holland bureau supplied about 400 stations.

7. Barnouw, Adriaan J., "Holland's Share in the Making of America". *Progress*, XLVI-256 (Autumn 1957), 74-79.

8. It was not feasible to dismantle them and ship them back to Holland, so they were sent to, and remain at, the Museum.

9. He was made a knight and officer of the Orde van Oranje-Nassau, the most prestigious civilian award the Netherlands can bestow, as a testimony to the value the Dutch government attached to his work.

10. Many of the books in the Museum's library bear the stamped imprint of the Netherlands Information Bureau and Holland Museum, a tangling of ownership that bears testimony to Wichers's rather carefree crossing of multiple roles.

11. These are not the familiar smaller archival boxes but large (24x18x18) storage boxes. Each contains thousands of pages in perhaps hundreds of documents.

and reports from each of the Ministries on all of the greater or lesser issues of the 1940s through the late 1960s. Macro-economic data, housing data, employment data, agricultural and industrial affairs, social and educational matters, and cultural affairs received detailed treatment. In addition to reports, other government materials include minutes of Cabinet meetings, proposed budgets for the Foreign Affairs and Defense ministries, proposed laws for the Agriculture and Fisheries ministries, official proposals for foreign aid to developing nations, and general financial affairs. Parliamentary proceedings also received coverage, with extensive First and Second Chamber committee reports. Some of these are in Dutch. But one can also find, for example, an English translation with commentary of the 1950 Industrial Organization Act, one of the key pieces of postwar Dutch economic legislation. One also finds Second Chamber speeches by Ministers, members of Parliament, and other officials on such topics as defense, foreign and domestic affairs, and other matters. Whether or not bureaus found placement for all of this information, the NIS at least ensured that directors were kept fully informed about Dutch political developments.

The collection is especially strong on public statements by leading elites, and transcripts of speeches by government officials, ambassadors, intellectuals, and academics abound, on postwar topics from American business investment in Holland and foreign trade, to Indonesia, to tourism, to Netherlands legal and constitutional issues, to international affairs and the Cold War, and European integration. There is a long run of speeches by Queen Juliana and Prince Bernhard from the early 1950s through the early 1970s, when NIS ceased operations. These include, notably, Her Majesty's speeches to the opening of the Estates-General each September and, esoterically, Prince Bernhard's thoughts on *The Importance of Europe in the Cooperation of the Atlantic Countries with Respect to Aviation* which he presented to the National Aeronautic Meeting in New York City in 1952. Dozens of speeches are available by Dutch ambassadors to the U.S., J. Herman van Roijen, and also by his successors, C.W.A. Schurmann and R. Tammenoms Bakker on topics like the Atlantic Alliance, peaceful uses of atomic energy, the role of the U.N., trade, industrial productivity, military assistance, and more. There are also many com-

mencement speeches, especially to Dutch-affiliated colleges in the mid-west like Hope College, Calvin College, and Northwestern College, most of which comment on the pressing matters of the day. Finally, the NIS made sure directors were kept up to date with miscellaneous and detailed profiles and biographies of prominent government, political, and private individuals.

Articles from leading scholars and journalists provided fodder for NIS distribution. Most of the important journalistic and academic writing about the contemporary Netherlands is conveniently collected throughout the collection. These include weekly NIS digests of press commentary. Other pieces appear to have been written by NIS/NIB itself (the collection houses every NIS press release), such as the NIS Newsletter from 1946-1948. Featurettes were selected by the NIB/New York and disseminated by the bureaus and in the international press. These reported on developments, for example, in European integration, an issue on which the Dutch were keenly interested. In the 1960s, the Netherlands News Agency published a daily "Netherlands News Bulletin" and the collection has a complete run of these from 1961-1965. NIB/New York also distributed a newsletter entitled *Feminine Vignettes of the Netherlands* that were rebroadcast over the radio from 1949 until the mid-1960s. These were targeted features for an audience of American women with news on the royal family, fashion, domestic concerns, cultural glimpses, biographical sketches of prominent Dutch individuals, recipes, and other aspects of Dutch domestic life. These reached nearly 300 American radio stations throughout the 1950s.

The collection encompasses a great deal of published material including memoirs, observations, and scholarship of Dutch and Dutch-American writers in its large and well-focused library. Books on general Dutch history, occupied Holland, the royal family, Dutch immigration to America, Reformed Church history, and more are shelved. While most of this secondary literature is available in university libraries or through the interlibrary loan system, it is useful having so much of it collected in one central location where bibliographies can be easily assembled. The NIS and Wichers also collected publications by private foundations and government organizations. Foremost in this category is the vast

collection of government pamphlets on such matters as Dutch agriculture, industry and economy, trade and finance, political organization and social life, and modern and contemporary architecture, especially with respect to postwar rebuilding, but stretching back to include the 19th century architectural tradition as well. Many pamphlets and booklets detail the acute postwar housing problem and the steps the government took to address the social and architectural needs arising therefrom. In the same vein there are also pamphlets on urban and agricultural planning, land reclamation, education, the Dutch penal system, welfare, health policy and insurance, old-age pensions, and unemployment provisions.

There are also scores of business pamphlets from companies, associations, councils and boards offering detailed descriptions of Dutch industry and enterprise. The Stichting Bouw [Building Foundation] of Rotterdam, for example, published enticements such as the quarterly glossy *The Way Ahead* that detailed business conditions throughout the Netherlands. While such information intended to solicit investment and trade with the Netherlands, its utility should not be dismissed. Coupled with other sources, many of which are in the collection, historians could contribute to Dutch economic historiography detailed interpretations regarding the political, ideological, and industrial considerations relevant to the development of the postwar economy and its place within European and global economic systems.

Pamphlets published by provincial and municipal authorities offer detailed glimpses into the history and condition of dozens of large and small Dutch towns. Many detail war damage and rebuilding. In particular, there are dozens of brochures on Rotterdam and Europoort, offering rich opportunities for research into the reconstruction of this largely destroyed city-center and its growth into one of the world's leading commercial entrepôts. As a site of urban planning and contemporary architecture, Rotterdam offers itself as a topic for research by other disciplines as well, and the collection would be a natural entree point for such scholarship. More than a little of this information is promotional, but that too is part of the story and therefore historically

valuable. Other pamphlets are oriented for tourist promotion. Together such pamphlets, as with the collection as a whole, offers a composite view of the postwar Netherlands available nowhere else in the United States.

The collection also houses many journals and miscellaneous magazines. The collection contains complete runs of publications such as *Endeavour* (1956 to 1969; published by the International Archives for the Women's Movement) about women in the Netherlands. There is also a complete series of *Holland Herald: Newsmagazine of the Netherlands* (1966 to 1981). There are also large runs (1969-1982) of the journals *Planning and Development in the Netherlands* and *Higher Education in the Netherlands* (1964-1982), the latter a bulletin of the *Netherlands Universities Foundation for International Co-operation*. Individual magazines that Wichers collected as background information pepper the collection throughout.

The bureaus did not only provide copy for radio broadcasts but recorded their own features as well. Thus the collection houses both scripts and phonograph recordings. Many of these, like the broadcasts prepared by U.S. information services in the Netherlands, were gender specific. The NIS, like its American counterparts in the information business, believed that targeted programming was an effective strategy to attract a female audience. Stories of heroic female resistance to Nazi occupation demonstrated that not only had the Dutch national spirit survived, but that Dutch women were growing in understanding and fortitude with every day that passes¹². The modern Dutch woman, the NIS articles and broadcasts would demonstrate, had been matured and wizened by the war, but her conscious return to the home, informed and worldly-wise, demonstrated that she had not lost touch with her essential femininity. Such broadcasts highlight the information programs's ambivalent mediation between legitimate news and foreign policy objectives, but the anecdotes, colorful description of traditional culture, and the occasional recipe, retain their historical value. One should mention that in this context as elsewhere, the NIS did not distinguish between Dutch and Indonesian information, and stories about Dutch women in the East Indies

12. Netherlands Information Bureau, Domestic Broadcasting Division, "Netherlands Women's Commentary, 25 December 1944", 1; NIS papers, Box 1, Folder, "Broadcast B Women B Women's Commentary, Dec. 1944-June 1945".

were given equal billing with their counterparts in the European Netherlands.

In the same vein as the radio broadcasts and scripts are dozens of films with titles such as *Broken Dikes*, *Holland Carries On*, *Land Uit Zee* [Land From the Sea], *They Said it with Tulips*, *The Netherlands East Indies*, *Holland Blooms Again*, and *Happy Holland*. These films were among the most popular and effective tools of the NIS as evidenced by their wide distribution to schools, churches and civic groups. Films detailing land reclamation and flood control seemed to be of particular interest to Wichers's patrons. Most films are in need of transfer to video for preservation purposes, and the Museum is actively soliciting funds for this purpose.

Especially important are the eight full boxes of thousands of photographs depicting myriad aspects of Dutch life during the war and postwar period. Most were not random snapshots but photographic series that cluster around certain themes: the Dutch built environment, Dutch folk and fine art, modern and classic architecture, interiors, agriculture and horticulture, land reclamation and flood control, domestic life, school and children, university life, cities and urban areas, small and large-scale industrial production, and more. Hundreds of photos of dozens of Dutch towns document postwar social conditions and architectural development, as do the large-scale urban photos, many of which show stunning aerial views. Some of the architectural photos date from before the war, suggesting the indiscriminate nature of the collection's holdings. There are many photographs, for example, of the ancient architecture in the old city of Delft. However, it is in the area of contemporary Netherlands that the photo collection is strongest, such as the detailed views of the Philips works in Eindhoven showing both industrial processes and company social arrangements in this factory town. These photographs were taken with information purposes in mind, and so their use must always be governed with the same discernment that attaches to all the NIS material, but this is only to say that the researcher must be no less judicious in the use of this collection than with any other.

A wide assortment of material and artistic culture from the contemporary Netherlands comprise a valuable component of the NIS collection, and

would support in full or in part a host of research agendas. There are propaganda posters and pamphlets from occupied Holland including original prints and political cartoons, prints and lithographs depicting various scenes of daily life, and other political art. Of special note are East Indies artifacts such as textiles, metalwork, woodcarving, and two 65 ft. long Balinese temple paintings, the pride of the Museum. Gifts from the Rijksmuseum, other museums, and from provincial governments to Wichers and the Museum in gratitude for the region's assistance during the war and after the 1953 floods offer a cornucopia of research possibilities.

Finally, yet to be thoroughly processed, are all the accounting and administrative records for the operations of NIB/Holland itself. A detailed history of the NIS could be written from these documents including the activities of NIB, Wichers's reports to New York, financial records, and the thousands of sheets of administrative paper kept by a director temperamentally unable to discard anything.

3. POTENTIAL NIS RESEARCH AGENDAS

As this list of sources indicates, the collection is far too broad to admit of easy categorization. There was no discriminating logic that constrained the materials NIS disseminated to its bureaus. However, a number of scholarly themes suggest themselves for further work in the collection.

Given the conditions surrounding the NIS's origins, the collection is an extraordinarily valuable starting place for research into the Dutch resistance during the Nazi occupation. There is much information published by NIB/New York for an American audience, such as the *Netherlands News*, a fortnightly digest published in New York from 1941 to 1945. But it is the primary sources which are particularly valuable. These start, as mentioned, with hundreds and hundreds of photographs documenting the occupation and ensuing destruction. There is also a run of bounded volumes of *Vrij Nederland*, the well-known London-based resistance paper, from 1941 to 1944. The glossy magazine *Knickerbocker Weekly*, with contributions from Hendrik Willem van Loon and the ubiquitous Adriaan Barnouw, sprung from private concern over the occupation and runs from 1941 to 1946; KW provided brief international reports, vignettes, profiles and other

light reading to reassure and inspire. The issue of postwar purges and collaborationism is represented by the three volumes, in Dutch, from the A) Inquiry Commission on Government Policy, 1940-1945; B) Report Concerning the Investigation Findings B The Dutch Secret Services in London; C) Relationship with the Occupied Territory¹³. The story of postwar recovery is likewise well represented. For example, materials from the several reconstruction foundations active in Rotterdam, especially the Bouwcentrum [Building Center], are found throughout NIS.

Scholars interested in the royal family will find an especially rich collection of materials. The Dutch royals were enthusiastic promoters of the Netherlands, and they formed a prominent point of public curiosity about the Netherlands¹⁴. Queen Juliana made certain that Holland, Michigan was one of her stops during her celebrated 1952 tour of the United States. The NIS sought to promote the royal family and its story whenever and wherever possible through NIS channels. There are copious materials relating to the royal family, including biographical information, books, photographs, and copies of official papers. NIS information, both official and unofficial, would provide an excellent starting point into research on the Dutch royal family and on monarchy in the contemporary world in general.

Economic historians will find a bounty of material, such as memoranda from the Central Planning Bureau detailing the Central Economic Plan and the national budget for 1946 and 1947¹⁵. In box after box there are hundreds of items, from government and ministry reports, to quantitative reports from any number of public institutions that detail every aspect of Dutch economic life from industrial production and labor relations to agricultural output to precise statistical analysis of port traffic in Amsterdam. A nearly complete run of the 24 volumes of the Reports by the Government of the Netherlands

on the Operations and Progress under the European Recovery Program, from 1948 to 1953, offer a highly detailed sampling of economic data, statistics, comparative tables and charts, and summaries of every area of the Dutch economy in the period of the Marshall Plan¹⁶. Industrial productivity, agricultural output, housing, trade balances, employment figures, and ERP-related data paint the official portrait of the Dutch economy as it transformed destruction into prosperity. The key corporatist planning bodies such as the Foundation of Labor, the Socio-Economic Council and the Central Planning Bureau released all of their official reports to NIS, such as the valuable 1956 booklet *Scope and Methods of the Central Planning Bureau*, useful for those studying corporatism and economic planning in the postwar period¹⁷.

Connected with these authoritative government reports are advocacy brochures and pamphlets from private groups, such as the Netherlands Industrial Institute and the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in America. Some of this latter information contains data on American companies invested in the Netherlands. These brochures and articles often featured extensive coverage of the impact of European economic integration on Dutch industry and trade. Corporate historians will find useful information in NIS, such as a glossy 1955 report from Smith, Barney & Co. on the Philips factory in Eindhoven as an opportunity for investment, and another one on Unilever. Prominent banks also issued reports and brochures on the investment climate. Indeed, because one of NIS's core functions was to drum up investment activity in the Netherlands, there is copious information on industrial activity and investment possibilities. One striking theme in this regard is the regular reportage of Dutch labor tranquility; lack of industrial conflict was touted as a major enticement for American capital.

Scholars of international affairs are well-served by

13. Enquetecommissie Regeringsbeleid 1940-1945 Verslag Houdende De Uitkomsten van het Onderzoek. Deel 4 a en b, c-I tot c-III. De Nederlandse Geheime Diensten te Londen. De Verbindingen met het Bezette Gebied. Verslag en Bijlagen. Staatsdrukkerij en uitgeverijbedrijf 's, Gravenhage, 1950.

14. Prince Bernhard especially was active in promoting Dutch business abroad and foreign investment in the Netherlands, two key policy goals of many successive Dutch governments.

15. NIS papers, box 42, Central Planning Bureau of the Netherlands, Folder "Publications B World War II B Postwar Recovery (folder 1 of 4)". "First Memorandum on the Central Economic Plan 1946 and National Budget 1947. The Hague, Sep. 1946".

16. NIS papers, box 42, Folders 1-4 "Publications B World War II B Postwar Recovery".

17. NIS papers, Box 32, Folder "Publications B EFS B Economic Affairs, Industry B General B (1952-c. 1960)". "Scope and Methods of the Central Planning Bureau, 1956".

the collection. There are documents from and concerning NATO, EURATOM, the OEEC, the EEC, and other important postwar international bodies. Perhaps all of the prepared statements given at the U.N. General Assembly by the Dutch delegation, at least until the early 1960s, are preserved, as well as dozens of full-text typescripts of speeches by Dutch delegates to a wide variety of UN secretariats. Most all of these are in English. Relayed press commentary (both Dutch and U.S.), parliamentary and diplomatic speeches, industry reports, and government reports on Dutch participation in NATO and in other Cold War-era groups can be found, as well as Dutch press coverage of attitudes toward the USSR.

As to be expected, there is an abundance of material relating to colonial affairs in the Dutch East and West Indies. NIB/New York had its own Indonesian Department to handle matters relating to the postwar crisis, and so the collection is very strong, particularly with regard to materials that present and justify the Dutch case for Queen Wilhelmina's 1942 proposal for a United Kingdom of the Netherlands. These include both official press releases and formal government statements as well as unofficial materials for the instruction of bureau directors. Of particular note are telegrams and background memoranda on the September 1949 Round Table Conference at The Hague. Other materials include hundreds of unprocessed photos, material artifacts, reference books, newspaper clippings, as well as government publications and reports. Materials are not sufficient to support research on the Indonesian matter on a comprehensive basis. But they offer an excellent starting point on the government's official position as it developed through the years. Detailed economic and sociological reports reflect Dutch attitudes toward production and populations in these regions. Books, booklets, and pamphlets from government agencies as well as private interests advocate the necessity and justice of Dutch colonial administration. Many of these detail Japanese atrocities, and later nationalist atrocities, against Dutch subjects and thereby advocate continuing the civilizing mission of Dutch colonial rule. Researchers interested in this particular colonial discourse will find a rich lode of material in the NIS collection.

NIB/Holland also invested in service activities for

the local Dutch-American population, including the facilitating of Dutch immigration to the U.S. under the Refugee Relief Act of 1953. Because of Wichers's epic assistance to emigrating families, the Holland/NIB collected reams of information on emigration policy. Wichers made himself a legal authority on the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 and all of his materials are still available. There is also a complete run of Dutch Immigrant Society magazine from 1970 to the present, for which Wichers served as an editorial adviser.

The collection is less comprehensive on Dutch cultural matters, but even the fragmentary holdings in this category offer research opportunities. Material focusing on museums, education, music, drama, cinema, photography, and other Dutch cultural affairs could be effective starting points for research into these areas. The government produced many pamphlets and reports on the Dutch multi-tracked educational system (which makes no state-funding distinction between secular and confessional schools) and these are available in the collection. Social issues touched on include Dutch women and family life, Dutch jurisprudence, and other social matters.

The NIS papers are quite likely the most valuable North American resource for the study of contemporary Dutch history. Thanks to the energy and dedication of Willard Wichers over a fifty-year tenure as director of the Netherlands Museum (now Holland Museum) and Chief of the NIB/Holland, and the subsequent work of curators and directors continuing his work, the Holland Museum has become one of North America's preeminent centers for contemporary Dutch scholarship. Outside of the story of Indonesian de-colonization, contemporary Dutch history remains largely virgin territory for English readers. It offers itself as a fertile field for graduate students and for practitioners of contemporary European history. A host of contemporary developments have played themselves out in Holland, the study of which would not only introduce readers to the Dutch version of these vents, but would also offer broader contexts for our understanding of them. The fate of Dutch Jews, the social, political and cultural consequences of the occupation and resistance, the development of postwar social and Christian democratic parties, the Cold War issues of alliance and anti-war activism, the

emergence of a broad-based progressive political agenda, the Dutch style of governance, and more, all need careful study. The NIS collection at the Holland Museum is an excellent starting point

from which to more fully examine the contemporary Netherlands in both national and transnational perspective.