

Taming the Beast: The Long and Hard Road to the Christian Social Conference of 1952*

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During the second half of the nineteenth century, the Netherlands was confronted with the social and political integration of the working and middle classes. The contribution of Protestantism to the solution has been heavily debated. An ongoing question has been how the over-weaned, conservative, Christian social thought that always rejected a large government role in society had, after World War II, so quickly moved to support expanding the welfare state. New investigation shows that the answer is found by supplementing the existing portrait at two points. First, alongside the Kuiperian movement there already existed a social tradition far less identifiable that was rooted in the Dutch Reformed Church. Although much less visible in the social debate, it nonetheless exerted significant influence on the settlement of the social question. Second, before World War II, a decisive reversal had occurred in the acceptance of a welfare state by younger people from both traditions so that the tipping point came before 1940.

The Beast from the Abyss

The final week of May 1947 was sunny and warm, ideal weather for spending a couple of days at the rural conference center of Birkhoven, where the Dutch Christian Farmers and Growers Association (CBTB) had organized a two-day conference. The Netherlands had been liberated two years earlier, and traces of the five-year German occupation were still visible everywhere. Many supplies, especially luxury items such as coffee and tobacco, were still being rationed; the event would be a simple affair. Nevertheless, there was no evidence that the mood of the conferees suffered on that account. On the contrary, like most Dutchmen,

they were convinced that looking back and complaining made little sense, that they needed to put their shoulder to the wheel, and that unity needed to be preserved. Only in this way could the nation once again rise above its circumstances.

On the first day, the chairman of the CBTB, Chris van den Heuvel, gave an address. Van den Heuvel, at age sixty, was a leader through and through and an experienced Christian politician who operated on the right wing and was known as “the man who devoured socialists.”¹ The second day featured the young economist—he was not yet thirty—Jelle Zijlstra. He spoke on the subject of planned economy. In the days of reconstruction when the government held the reins rather tightly this was a theme discussed widely.

Zijlstra had become enamored with the ideas of John Maynard Keynes (1883–1946). There was a new world to build with this “economic penicillin,” one “free from scarcity and unemployment.” At Birkhoven, Zijlstra showed himself to be a missionary convinced of this new “gospel.”²

With a self-confidence arising more from naiveté than complacency, Zijlstra proclaimed that a free-market economy could not possibly be defended from the Bible. The government had the indisputable task of functioning as “a guiding entity” in terms of global economic issues.³ This was followed by “a very lively discussion,” which included Van den Heuvel as well. He gave Zijlstra “the broadside” by saying, “I have never heard anything good about the state,” and he referred to Revelation 13, wherein the state, clothed with absolute power, was portrayed as “the Beast from the abyss.”⁴ After a bit of reflection, the astonished Zijlstra had his answer ready. He, too, referred to the thirteenth chapter but of the biblical book of Romans, wherein it spoke very differently and much more positively about the government as opponent of evil and protector of the weak.

It looked as if a generational conflict was brewing—one in which the experienced Van den Heuvel vigorously defended his spiritual legacy, assigning responsibility for a compassionate society to believers, church, and religiously inspired organizations, rather than to the state. Protestant youth, Jelle Zijlstra included, thought Van den Heuvel was defending a world that no longer existed; the insights of Keynes had already tamed the beast of the state. Some went much further. In a yet-to-be constructed welfare state, care and support would no longer be a matter of charity but a matter of justice and righteousness to be guaranteed by the government: the beast as ally.⁵

Protestants from the various camps and traditions were convinced that a penetrating and principled debate was needed about the post-WWII organization of society and the question about what role the Christian social traditions should play in that organization. Almost immediately after the liberation, appeals were being sounded for organizing a new Christian Social Congress, similar to those

held earlier in 1891 and 1919. In this way, the Christian social traditions could come closer together and show their unanimity. The long and difficult road to this new congress, and the gathering itself, provide good illustrations of the origin and functioning of both Christian social traditions in the Netherlands.⁶

Christian Social Traditions

The Dutch Christian social traditions originated around the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1850, approximately three million Dutch people lived in a stratified society, where a liberal aristocracy of prominent merchants, wealthy citizens, and ministers ruled the roost.⁷ On economic issues they were liberal, in cultural matters they were conservative, and in religious affairs they were moderately Protestant. They harbored the self-image of being the protectors of the Protestant Netherlands. The middle class and the partly impoverished working class were kept socially undeveloped and politically dependent. From the middle of the century, resistance grew among orthodox Protestants against the dominant elite class. They found that the liberal government gave them too little room for living out their orthodox principles. The most important issue of conflict was elementary education.⁸ The government clung to a common Christian government education for everyone, while the orthodox Protestants wanted their own schools where orthodox doctrine was taught. In addition, they accused the ecclesiastical boards by saying that modernism and liberalism were not being opposed. Nevertheless, the orthodox Protestants were unwilling to separate from the large national public Dutch Reformed Church. The idea that the Dutch Reformed Church was the core of the Dutch Protestant nation kept them together. As “the educator and protector” of the nation, the Dutch Reformed Church was also the center of orthodox Dutch Reformed spirituality and activity. Evangelism strengthened the church and its members and brought the faith beyond the church; the work of diaconal and Christian philanthropy rescued their poor and socially weak fellow man; and missions carried the faith beyond the church’s boundaries.⁹ This orientation toward the church as base, starting point, and anchor for social activities inspired by Christianity supplied the roots of the first Christian social tradition, which might be identified as Dutch Reformed social action (*hervormde sociale actie*). This social action was active especially in education and philanthropic care for the poor, the sick, and the destitute.

Under the pressure of modernization and industrialization, after 1870 the chasm between the elite and the populace increased. At the same time, a process of increasing self-consciousness began to arise among the petty bourgeoisie, workers, Roman Catholics, and other minorities. Moreover, socialism gained

entrance among the working class. This early socialism was intensely revolutionary and was tied to atheism and anticlericalism. The integration of orthodox Protestant, Roman Catholic, and socialist minority groups became the overriding issue between 1870 and World War I.¹⁰

The orthodox Protestant, Abraham Kuyper, was one of the first Protestants who recognized that “the Protestant nation of the Netherlands” had become a delusion.¹¹ Thereby, he was simultaneously admitting that he no longer saw any deliverance coming from the Dutch Reformed Church. That was a divided house, in which all the groups, from liberal to strict Calvinists, no longer lived together but simply existed next to each other. He wanted the Dutch Reformed Church to be transformed into a free church, separate from the state, borne along not by elitism but by an active fellowship in faith that was unified in its orthodox confession. In order to be able to foster such a confessional church, the powerless orthodox Protestant populace—the little people, to use Kuyper’s phrase—needed to emancipate themselves so that in this way they might acquire a social and political identity within the Dutch nation. Along this route, Kuyper was implicitly moving away from the Dutch Reformed tradition of social action.

Whereas the Dutch Reformed tradition of social action wanted to resolve social problems from the top down by way of evangelism, missions, philanthropy, and patronage, Kuyper wanted to do that from the bottom up. That required not only offering to the little people the church as their spiritual and social home but also building an entire movement of political, cultural, and social organizations that presented and manifested themselves as a discernible social movement. This is how Kuyper became the architect of what in the Dutch context can be called the Christian social movement.¹² The Christian social tradition was thus split into the loose relationship of Dutch Reformed social action (*hervormde sociale actie*) and the tightly related Christian social movement (*christelijk-sociale beweging*).

Christian Social Traditions in a Pluralistic Society

Around 1890, the Netherlands was restless. Economically things were going poorly for the approximately five million inhabitants, and, as with many other Western European nations, the country was having trouble moving socially from an aristocratically stratified society into a modern industrial and democratic society. The socialist movement was growing as the power of the liberal elite eroded.

Under this pressure, the orthodox Protestants were unable to preserve their unity. Kuyper’s dominance and his rejection of the public church had split the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1892, Kuyper had formed the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands out of the group that had followed him, but, with regret, he

had to recognize that only a small group had left with him, some 8 percent of the Dutch population.

With this development, he had to face the problem of how these little people would be able to continue as part of the pluralistic society that the Netherlands had become while living at the same time according to their own values and norms. Kuyper solved this problem by developing two concepts: sphere sovereignty and the antithesis.¹³

Sphere sovereignty, according to Kuyper, meant that society was not organized hierarchically but is divided into spheres that are not subordinated to each other but coordinated alongside one another. Family, church, market, and the government each has its own domain with its unique task and responsibility. In this way, the government has a limited task within social-economic life.¹⁴ Hereby, Kuyper was emphatically placing himself within the Calvinist tradition that taught that the state did not belong to creation but is a result of sin—an emergency relationship in order to restrain sin in the fallen world.¹⁵ The organic interrelationship of society, not the state, is the creator, bearer, and protector of social life.

By means of the antithesis, Kuyper was indicating that an unbridgeable chasm exists between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. Religious principles therefore serve as the foundation of activity, not only on the personal level but also in the state and in society. In this way as well, Kuyper put the state at arm's length and created space for a self-conscious Christian social movement.

In order to cut off any dissatisfaction among orthodox Protestant workers regarding the delay in political and social reforms, in 1891 the Social Congress was organized. Naturally, Kuyper gave the opening address, "The Social Problem and the Christian Religion."¹⁶ His "architectonic critique" of the society of his day became famous, for with that he faced off against liberal individualism and capitalism as well as the socialist class struggle. In line with sphere sovereignty, Kuyper posited that the state and society are organic entities in which no one segment was allowed to dominate another. For that reason, the resolution of social problems is a matter of the initiative of private entities. Only where untenable unjust circumstances exist may (and must) the government intervene. The Social Congress became the starting point and benchmark for the Christian social movement, and Kuyper's concepts became the basis of the Christian social thinking of this tradition.

While the Christian social movement developed slowly but surely, the Dutch Reformed social action needed to register successes of its own. Although only a small segment of the Dutch Reformed had followed Kuyper into the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, that segment was active and involved and consequently represented a kind of bloodletting for the Dutch Reformed Church and

its social action. Moreover, the Dutch Reformed Church scored poorly in holding on to the working class. Especially in the large cities, workers abandoned the church in large numbers and followed the red flag of socialism.

The ecclesiastical break affected politics as well. In addition to the Antirevolutionary Party (ARP) under Kuyper's leadership, the Christian Historical Union (CHU) came into existence. The ARP recruited its members largely from among the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. This party was linked in many ways with the Christian social movement. Chris van den Heuvel was an example of that. He was a member of the House of Representatives for the ARP and chairman of the CBTB. Many Dutch Reformed leaders found political shelter in the CHU. That party was led by a mostly gentrified and patrician aristocracy, "those sirs with double names."¹⁷ Often they were devoted to the Dutch Reformed public church and to longstanding paternalistic social relationships.

Although they agreed in many matters, such as the importance of the faith for resolving social problems and in their aversion to socialism, the two Christian social traditions continued on parallel tracks alongside one another.

A Stalemate

In 1920, almost seven million Dutch were living in a country that had linked up with modern Western industrialized nations with an open, vibrant, and diverse market economy. Universal suffrage had transformed the country into a parliamentary, pluralistic democracy. The Roman Catholic and Protestant parties enjoyed a majority in the parliament and cooperated in a coalition that would continue through the period between the world wars, being frequently supplemented with liberal politicians. The socialists had transformed themselves into social democrats and represented about 20 percent of the population, but they scarcely played any role in national politics. Ministers and spiritual leaders still enjoyed widespread influence on public morality, and their leaders were often adored. The Netherlands was a neat, conservative, well-behaved nation.¹⁸

The Antirevolutionary little people had won a place in society, with the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the ARP functioning as the center, around which there were a large number of organizations. The Christian (mostly Reformed) school movement had come into existence. The Christian National Labor Union (CNV) bound workers together, the CBTB united the farmers and growers, and the patrons' association known as Boaz unified the employers.¹⁹ By contrast, the Dutch Reformed ecclesiastical activity continued to be marked by loose connectivity with little unity and structure.

On one issue—the social question—the Netherlands had registered little progress. A few social laws had been adopted and in 1918 the eight-hour workday was implemented, but the country was still lacking a comprehensive social system with collective provisions that included health insurance, a retirement system, and unemployment benefits. In the arena of business, there was much talk about shared authority, but little or nothing had been implemented. The impression did exist that much was lacking in the social sphere, but finding the best solution remained elusive. Most Christian and liberal citizens were hypersensitive about a strong government, especially if it wanted to mix itself in what they viewed as the private domain. Strengthening the government’s position in terms of social legislation was unacceptable state-led socialism. Not the state, but private initiative, must lead the way. A social system erected by the state was rejected out of principle. The Dutch Reformed social action movement feared the loss of the church’s role, as did the Christian social movement, which was able additionally to defend its position with Kuypertian principles. Another important argument was that an uncontrollable bureaucracy would develop.²⁰

Under the surface, however, long-term developments had occurred that inevitably demanded a fundamental rethinking and enriching of both Christian social traditions. The notion that in a “compassionate” society, care for the poor and for the psychologically and physically weak could become and remain an ecclesiastical-diaconal task had been outdated for a long time.²¹ The government inevitably acquired a continually increasing task. The government not only had an increasing share in the financing, which was becoming more costly due in part to the advancement of medical knowledge, but the government also strengthened its control of the social and medical services provided by institutions and professionals, ensuring an increasingly tighter legislative framework.

For the hourly wage-earning sector, an extremely complicated system of private social insurance did ultimately come into existence, but large segments—small businesses, the unemployed, the chronically ill, and the elderly—were excluded.

Isolation?

The conservative powers in Dutch Protestantism were still too great—both within Dutch Reformed social action and the Christian social movement—to achieve fundamental changes at the sociocultural level. Initiatives for that arose from young people inspired by the Swiss theologian Karl Barth. Shocked by the violence of the World War I, Barth sharply criticized the functioning of the churches and Christian organizations. The church had neglected its prophetic message by placing between the biblical message and believers a multiplicity of

Christian organizations. By putting the adjective Christian on their banner, they were arrogantly reaching ahead for the kingdom of God. The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands immediately rejected Barth's criticism, in which they saw a greater danger than lay in "the obvious attack of the godless communists."²² Within the Christian social movement, then, Barthian thinking made no headway.

However, Barth did inspire a number of young intellectuals in the Dutch Reformed Church on the left wing of the CHU. They thought that "the Christian segment of the populace" had retreated too far into their own organizational bastion and was focused only on personal salvation. Therefore, every Christian should "know himself called to fight for God's honor, for God's honor in every sphere of life, without exception. The goal is the conquering of the entire world by the Kingdom of God."²³

Among these progressive Christian historical young people was Aart van Rhijn, born in 1892, and the son of a minister. Van Rhijn had studied jurisprudence and had pursued a very successful career in civil service. His Christian social inspiration convinced him of the desirability of government intervention in economic life. In his 1939 pamphlet, *The Christian Faith and the New Economic Order*, he accused the Christian social movement of being fixated on a number of rigid operational principles. He felt that Christian social thinking should "far rather [be] dynamite under those constructs than a means for petrifying those constructs."²⁴ The quickly changing world demanded an ordering of economic life and therefore government intervention.

A second impulse arose within Christian socialism. In contrast to other European countries such as Great Britain, Christian socialism in the Netherlands had not blossomed. A number of small Christian socialist groups did exist, but those had little support and almost no influence. For most Protestants, they were too socialistic, while most socialists found them to be too Christian. Change came when Willem Banning sought to rescue Christian socialism from its isolation.

Banning, who was born in 1888 as the son of a herring fisherman, managed to work his way from teacher to minister and then to become one of the leaders of the Woodbrookers community in the Netherlands. Politically, he was active in the Social Democratic Workers Party (SDAP). Whereas Christian socialists often moved toward socialism, the path for Banning was just the opposite. After coming into contact with the Quakers as a liberal Dutch Reformed Church minister, he became convinced that Christian socialism must become a movement whose roots lay in the gospel and whose organizational basis lay in the church. He rejected the materialistic and anarchistic features of socialism, for socialism was first and foremost an ethical ideal, "becoming human through spiritual growth."²⁵ For that reason, social democrats had to show the working class the way to church.

In the 1930s, Banning acquired significant influence within the SDAP. At that time, the social democrats were seeking an escape route out of their isolation that had been caused in part by a rigid adherence to a dogmatic Marxism. Along with a number of young colleagues, Banning managed to move the party toward the middle and transform it into a left-leaning democratic party that respected humanism and religion, accepted the monarchy, and rejected pacifism.

The hopelessness of the economic crisis, the impotence of the government in resolving it, and the rise of right-wing radicalism brought together men, including Van Rhijn and Banning, in their search for alternatives. With their emphasis on the church as the foundation for social thought and action, their rejection of forms of Christian organization, and their dislike of Kuiperian principles, they were representatives of Dutch Reformed social action. Before 1940, their influence was limited to their own circle. The Second World War would change that.

The Second World War

Approximately nine million Dutch people were hoping that the violence of a new world war would pass them by again: they hoped in vain. On May 10, 1940, German troops invaded the country and after five days of mismatched fighting, the Dutch army was defeated. It took little time before the real intentions of the occupying country became evident: to Nazify the society and to press the Dutch economy into the service of the German military industry. Chris van den Heuvel was one of the victims. In the summer of 1941, he and ninety other members of the ARP were arrested as hostages. He landed in the concentration camp of Buchenwald, where he suffered a severe lung infection. Expecting that he would not survive, the camp director freed him in October 1942. He recovered, however, and returned home. Meanwhile, the CBTB, like many labor unions and other political and social organizations, was outlawed. Throughout the rest of the war, he tried by hook or by crook to maintain contact with his political and agrarian supporters.

Willem Banning was arrested as well. In 1942, he was taken hostage together with a large number of members of the Dutch political and social elite. The authorities in the hostage camp were relatively flexible, such that there was abundant opportunity for exchanging ideas. Banning became the informal leader of a group who discussed the future of the Netherlands after the war. Their starting point was a humanistically oriented, social democratic ideal where the emphasis lay on human responsibility. Banning and his cohorts wanted to break through the prewar division within Dutch society and transform that into an open democratic

nation of citizens who accepted personal responsibility, were religiously inspired, and had an eye for the needs of the underprivileged.

Van Rhijn spent the war in London. Among other things, he was the chairman of a commission he had appointed to investigate social security in the Netherlands after the war. The occasion was the appearance in 1942 of the English *Beveridge Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services*. Within the occupied Netherlands, this report became known quickly and was received relatively positively.²⁶ The Van Rhijn Commission accepted the principles on which the *Beveridge Report* was based: no patchwork, only seeing to an integrated social system focused on social progress and cooperation between the individual and the state. “Social insurance is the watchword of this era, whereby people hope to open the gates to a better future,” the report claimed.²⁷

The Van Rhijn Commission tried to apply the starting points of the *Beveridge Report* to the Dutch situation because the commission members were realistic enough to see that it was necessary to tie into the system that had developed historically.²⁸

Regarding one particular point, Van Rhijn changed his mind. To obtain some orientation, he took a study trip to the United States. He returned with a firm judgment. According to Van Rhijn, among the populace of that country, there lived a “dogmatic acceptance” of the notion that economic freedom and a free business environment were valued more than social security, whereas—as Van Rhijn thought—there was a crying need for the latter. The Americans had the stick by the wrong end. In his judgment, “the correct foundation of social life is not *freedom* but *social justice*. Social justice supplies a principled form for the control of the government in the business environment.”²⁹ Thus, social security was a right, not a courtesy, and it was the task of government, not of individual charity or private initiative.

United by Threat

On May 5, 1945, nine million Dutch people celebrated the end of German occupation, and, among many, the hope for a new and better future was bright. However, when the rose of liberation had faded, the country appeared to be saddled with almost insoluble problems. The costs of reconstruction were immense, the Cold War quickly cast its shadow, and the issue of whether the Dutch East Indies should become a sovereign nation split the Dutch people.

The populace wished to leave behind them the austere years of crisis and occupation, but a radical revolution was rejected. What seemed attractive to many

people was the goal of restoration and renewal by means of a breakthrough of the prewar social relationships that had become so petrified.

The first signal for such a breakthrough was that in 1946, social democrats, progressive Protestants, and left-leaning liberals founded the Labor Party (PvdA) to be the successor of the SDAP.³⁰ The hope was that in this way a left-leaning, non-Marxist people's party would come into existence that would be broadly supported by the Dutch people—one that would be supported by religious-humanistic and socialistic ideals as Banning had understood them. Prominent Dutchmen—among them Van Rhijn—joined their ranks.

This struggle for unity was echoed in the Dutch Reformed Church as well. This church had been one of the sources of spiritual resistance against the Nazis; thereby winning respect, self-confidence, and fervor. Ecclesiastical leaders saw here the momentum for breathing new life into the notion of the Dutch Reformed Church as the national public church. The church deserved to become the center of spiritual and social life once again, including an active diaconate.

Many Barthian ministers supported both the new direction of the Dutch Reformed Church and the breakthrough. Although Barth had rejected forming organizations on a Christian foundation, he had emphasized the church's prophetic speaking not only in religious matters but also in political and social issues. By being spiritually equipped in the public church, believers ought to serve church and society, not only in Christian organizations but especially in common ventures. Important Barthian leaders, therefore, joined the Labor Party.

To undergird the renewal process in the church, the Dutch Reformed Academy for Church and World was established where "workers in ecclesiastical labor" were educated. The workers would support the Dutch Reformed ministers in various forms of ecclesiastical activity and, in addition, fulfill functions in social organizations; for example, in labor unions. Willem Banning became the head instructor for church and world. The ecclesiastical renewal movement can be characterized as a form of Dutch Reformed social action, although pursued with a different outlook than before World War II.

Banning had always spoken out against organizations that were based on a Christian foundation, and now many from the Dutch Reformed renewal movement followed him in this conviction. They often viewed it as "a principal resistance against the antithesis." Taking down "the antithesis fence" would be liberating, renewing, and purifying.³¹ The Dutch Reformed workers were encouraged by the advocates of renewal to join the general—in fact, socialistic—workers movement.

Another sign of change was the composition of the Cabinet that assumed power after the elections of 1946. Although just as before the war, Christian parties had obtained the majority, the Catholic People's Party (KVP) chose to

cooperate with the Labor Party, giving rise to the “Roman Catholic coalition.” The new administration almost immediately implemented important social measures; for example, solving the retirement issue. In 1947, a provisional law was adopted that gave every Dutch citizen a government subsidy after retirement at sixty-five years of age.

All of this did not lead to “the breakthrough” in sociopolitical relationships. The Labor Party did not become the broad left-leaning people’s party that the advocates of renewal had hoped. In the earliest postwar elections, the party acquired fewer seats than the parties that composed it had won before the war. The leftist-humanistic ideas excited a small elite group but scarcely appealed to the socialistic working class. Many Dutch people had the sentiment after the war of living in a divided and threatened country, and perhaps for that reason they rejected the breakthrough as the path toward unity among the populace. Instead they chose the restoration of the prewar society. In this atmosphere of problems and threats, the idea surfaced of organizing a new Christian Social Congress in the tradition of 1891 and 1919,³² a congress that served to radiate the unity of Protestants and provide a testimony of the power of the Christian social traditions and the relevance of Christian social thought.

Slavery to the State

Many orthodox Protestants shared in the gloom that arose after the liberation. The Netherlands was “robbed completely and demoralized,” as well as being prey to “economic and moral upheaval,” according to the judgment of the organization of orthodox Protestant employers in 1946. The breakthrough got the blame, for “all Christian organizational entities, both in the political and in the social-economic spheres as well as elsewhere, fell under the ban in principle.”³³ With that, the first obstacle was erected on the path toward the Congress, for how could people who spoke against explicitly Christian organizations participate in a Christian congress?

A second obstacle was the report *Social Security* from the Van Rhijn commission, which did not escape the notice of the leaders of the Christian social movement. Immediately after the report appeared in 1946, Van den Heuvel sat down to write a vigorous counter-report. According to him, the mistake began with the title, for that title betrayed “the arrogant human delusion” and false pretention of being able to care for the nation from cradle to grave. Thereby, the “notion of security” was being totally and mistakenly replaced by the “notion of welfare.” His conclusion was not any less soft. The Van Rhijn report had dismantled everything that Antirevolutionary leaders (such as Kuyper) had constructed, and

did so “in a manner so revolutionary as we never before thought possible.” For him it was obvious: the CBTB had to “respond with every means at its disposal against these proposals that in every respect were mistaken.” He found support among fellow board members who found every form of social state support an affront to human responsibility that could lead only to recklessness.

Van den Heuvel obtained support from the Christian National Labor Union that also responded to the report. The union praised the intention of addressing the shattered social law but resisted the fundamental change of direction that Van Rhijn was advocating. The notion of security was being abandoned in favor of the welfare principle, which threatened to undermine the concept of responsibility among the people. “Why should I exert any effort, since the State will do it for me?” Finally, the CNV lashed out bitterly by charging the report with paving “the path of slavery to the state,” and by using expressions like, “this national socialistic view of welfare ought to be rejected out of principle,” certainly the most bitter accusation one could level right after the war.³⁴

Van Rhijn was not impressed and stoked the fire once more in another speech. Once again, he accused the Christian social movement of not being compassionate enough and of being too rigid. For that reason, he pleaded for “redistributing social income” for the sake “of the primary but as yet unsatisfied needs of the great masses.”³⁵ The message was clear: The Kuyperian principles of antithesis and sphere sovereignty would have to be shelved.

As the advocates of the breakthrough continued agitating so vigorously, the desire for the congress dwindled among the CBTB, but people did not want to cancel it. Perhaps a tactical element played a role in this adjustment. As the most outspoken opponent of the breakthrough, the union was hoping that immediately after the war the reestablished organizations in the Christian social movement would function quickly once more, so that they could unanimously attempt to regain the territory of “the enemy.”³⁶ The first hope was realized. The CNV and the CBTB functioned rather quickly as they had before and watched the number of members grow to exceed the prewar numbers. The orthodox Protestant trades people and employers managed to achieve powerful organization in the Christian Trades People’s Union and the Association of Protestant Christian Employers, respectively. Creating a unanimous platform against the breakthrough and the social-economic implications of that would be a much more difficult matter.

The Enemy within the Gate

Van den Heuvel’s severe condemnation of *Social Security* had not fallen on good soil everywhere, not even in his own union. A number of CBTB board members

agreed with him in principle, but a more positive approach for taking the wind out of the sails of “threatening state socialism” was more desirable if only out of tactical considerations.

The posture of Jelle Zijlstra toward the breakthrough and social renewal was of an entirely different caliber. Zijlstra was the exponent of a new generation of Antirevolutionary Party members who had grown up during the years of crisis and reached adulthood during World War II. It was a generation that had known a strong bond with the Reformed world from which they had come and felt an affinity for the Christian social movement. These young people did not favor the breakthrough for that reason, and, for the most part, they belonged to the Antirevolutionary Party. By means of education and study, they had expanded their view of the world, however, and dared to put the Kuyperian principles up for discussion. That is what happened to Zijlstra. He grew up in the North Frisian village of Oosterbierum in a warm, ecclesiastically devoted family and, despite the crisis years, he was able to study economics.

In 1947, Zijlstra had just graduated, and, with the optimism and dynamism of youth, he wanted to change the world. He wrote, “The world of the 1930s, full of economic misery and thereby guilty of the political extremism that the Second World War unleashed, that world we never wanted back again.” For Zijlstra, Keynesian economic policies were the recipe for a better world. “Only skilled and decisive politicians” were needed “to be able to build a new world, free from scarcity and unemployment.”³⁷

In 1948, he was appointed professor of economics at the Free University, which led to furrowed brows and protests, certainly when in his inaugural address he expressed himself about the economic order in the same manner that he had done in Birkhoven and continued to tackle the Kuyperian principles people thought were unshakeable. In the beginning of 1951 in a speech to the Union of Protestant Christian Employers, he declared that he had lost faith in “the great magician”—the price mechanism of the free-market economy—along with the Kuyperian views about the relationship between state and society. He concluded his lecture by saying, “For a long time I have felt that the commonly accepted views about the ‘sphere sovereignty’ of ‘society’ with respect to the ‘state’ should be seen as one of the ‘empty boxes’ left over from the political struggle . . . that qualify for removal from the political arsenal.”³⁸ Van den Heuvel responded immediately by accusing him of paving the way for the “Almighty State.”³⁹

The generation to which Van den Heuvel belonged had often made facile connections between the Bible and the social-economic reality. Zijlstra and his generational compatriots were much more careful in that respect. In 1951, however, Zijlstra published an English-language article entitled “Christian Economic

Policy,” in which he demonstrated his Christian inspiration more than he usually did.⁴⁰

For his starting point, he chose the thesis that the Western world was threatened by communism, which in the era of the Korean War was not a remarkable position. In his judgment, a just society was the best means for resisting this threat. Zijlstra did not mention the time-honored Antirevolutionary principles, for explicit biblical or principal norms did not belong in economic politics. What counted were the results of the economic measures. “And with a view to these consequences a defensible opinion must be formed, founded on the really Christian principle of the love of one’s neighbor. This is the only standpoint we can reasonably adopt on *principle*.”⁴¹

Zijlstra considered this Christian love command to be crucial in economic politics, for it involved giving shape to a social order in which space was created and preserved for Christian living, in other words, for fulfilling God’s law out of gratitude.⁴² In this ethical approach, in principle hardly anything stood in the way if a government wanted to intervene in social-economic life.⁴³

When Zijlstra gave his lecture at Birkhoven in 1947, however, he was still at the beginning of his career. Zijlstra did not meet Van den Heuvel’s expectation that he deliver the ammunition for defending the Antirevolutionary principles and for opposing the breakthrough. Perhaps the latter responded so grimly because he sensed that the enemy was already within the gate.

The Glory Has Departed

In 1950, the more than ten million Dutch people had helped get their country on its feet again, through austerity, hard work—these had been “the years of discipline and asceticism”—and the support of the Marshall Plan.⁴⁴ The nation still resembled the public society of the interbellum period. The majority of the population was still involved with church, political party, and cultural organization. Church attendance was remarkably high and public morality was still strongly rooted.⁴⁵

Plans for the Christian Social Congress did not proceed smoothly. The biggest problem was the character of the congress. The CBTB let it be known through Van den Heuvel that the congress would have to give “a clear, lucid testimony” that included “explicitly positive guidelines” regarding the direction of social-economic politics.⁴⁶ That meant the congress would have to declare itself to be opposed to the breakthrough and in favor of a Christian social movement that propagated the Kuyperian principles.

The Christian National Labor Union had a more nuanced position. Marius Ruppert, the new, young chairman of the union—a Lutheran but a loyal Antirevolutionary advocate—was an ambitious, skilled, and self-confident chairman who could compete with dominant personalities, Van den Heuvel included. He shared the latter's antisocialism and the principal choice for a Christian social movement but provided different content to these. He and the CNV preferred to speak about sphere responsibility instead of sphere sovereignty. In that way, they placed the emphasis on the fact that employers and employees were mutually responsible for social-economic policy and not, as many Protestant Christian employers argued, only the entrepreneurs.

That complicated the relationship between Van den Heuvel and Ruppert. Sometimes Ruppert counted Van den Heuvel among the old guard, whom he preferred to see on the sidelines, while other times he spoke with ironic tenderness about "Uncle Chris."⁴⁷

In order to arrange the event smoothly, a committee was formed from the various organizations, churches, and their groups. Van den Heuvel participated in this way, as did the director of the Dutch Reformed church and world. Ruppert became the chairman. Among the board of the CBTB, people were less positive about the composition of the committee. They were afraid that too many concessions had been made to the wishes of the CNV.⁴⁸

Not much could be achieved when so many different visions had been brought together. One segment of the members, with Van den Heuvel as their spokesman, continued to hold out for a congress that would declare its opposition to the breakthrough and socialism. Others wanted to include the joint study and reflection of liberals and orthodox, socialists and nonsocialists.⁴⁹

Numerous problems arose as well in connection with the list of speakers. When Willem Banning was removed from the list as one who was an outspoken opponent of Christian organizations, a painful wrangling ensued with regard to Van Rhijn. With him, the issue essentially involved the question: "Must we exclude a member of the Labor Party from participating in the Congress?"⁵⁰ After intense resistance, the CBTB backed down and agreed. However, Van den Heuvel announced that as far as he was concerned, the enthusiasm for the congress had dissipated.⁵¹

In the spring of 1951, the committee appointed a daily administration that was charged with organizational matters. The chairman was Ruppert's contemporary and confidant, W. F. de Gaay Fortman. Born in 1911, de Gaay Fortman belonged to the group of young Antirevolutionary intellectuals, to which Jelle Zijlstra also belonged. In his student years, he showed himself to be a skilled jurist; the crisis years made him lose his faith in capitalism. When in 1937 he addressed

unemployed people in a summer camp, he announced, “Capitalism has failed.” In its place, a new order needed to arise, one where the economic process was not handed over “to the variable sport of competing egoism.” Furthermore, the state must help in that transition. In 1943, living in the then-occupied Netherlands, he became acquainted with the *Beveridge Report*. Not long after the war, he commented, “For me it was as though a window had been opened in a dank room and a gust of fresh air had blown in.” Finally, someone was offering an alternative to stalled capitalism, so that the “economic and moral curse of massive unemployment” could be eliminated and a suitable retirement provision could become available.⁵²

In 1947, de Gaay Fortman became Zijlstra’s colleague at the Free University as professor of private law and criminal law. The following year he was appointed as teacher and principal of the training college of the CNV.

While the daily administration began working on the organization of the congress, the committee attempted diligently to find a solution for the as yet unresolved issue of the character of the congress. In October 1951, church and world sent out a press release announcing far too confidently that after three years of discussion, finally socialists and liberal Dutch Reformed would be invited as speakers. The outrage among the CNV, CBTB, and the Antirevolutionary press was intense. This had been an attempt by the advocates of the breakthrough, it was said, “to annex” the congress to its cause.⁵³ According to the leftist press, with this reaction, the orthodox Protestants were taking “a brave stand on the rubble of the antithesis and denying in the face of the facts that such a thing as a breakthrough even existed.”⁵⁴ In this atmosphere, it could no longer succeed. “Ichabod”—the glory has departed—was one of the comments.⁵⁵ Something that deeply affected Van den Heuvel was that the congress had been scrapped, for he was interested only if it could provide a testimony on the basis of a foundation, just as had happened in 1891 and 1919. This meant that the hope had also been scrapped that the Protestants in the Netherlands would speak with one voice concerning the social-economic problems. The congress simply lacked a shared basis. The committee was agreed that people must continue dialoguing, and for that reason a conference would be organized.⁵⁶ Rather than a testimony, conversation and reflection would be the primary agenda.

The Christian Social Conference of 1952

The Christian Social Conference occurred in Utrecht on November 4–7, 1952. Despite, or perhaps due to, the painful process leading up to the conference, the interest was widespread. Approximately six hundred men and women had

registered. Many prominent people from the Dutch Protestant world were present, including Van den Heuvel and Zijlstra, though they remained in the background.

Naturally, the Kuyperian principles of antithesis and sphere sovereignty came up for discussion. These debates were penetrating and a “sharp tone” was not absent.⁵⁷ For some participants, these principles remained “essential for life” so that we “not fall victim to state absolutism by completely blurring the boundaries,” while according to other participants, such thinking in terms of “creation ordinances” led to “a reactionary posture.” Still others struck a conciliatory tone. The practical question that continued to echo throughout the conference was whether Christian organizations were necessary and commanded. People continued to reach different conclusions about that.

Naturally, people looked forward with great interest to Van Rhijn’s address entitled, “The Task of the Government with Respect to Corporate Entities.” He latched onto Abraham Kuyper’s famous “architectonic critique” of society given at the Social Congress of 1891.⁵⁸ That critique remained relevant because change was needed now as well.⁵⁹ Christians had the calling these days “to lead the fight for a more just social order.” A government guiding this order and a “planned economy” were part of this development. “The government is not a referee but a captain, because it not only has to see how economic life develops, but also has to supply leadership along general lines in that development.”⁶⁰

Van Rhijn was even more forceful during the discussion. He declared, “The world of the free market is about to collapse, the process of demolition is already well underway.” According to him, the whole matter turned on the principles of freedom and justice. He argued that freedom was a great good, but it was biblical to put justice above freedom.⁶¹

Van Rhijn was bombarded with questions. He garnered appreciation for his social compassion but received criticism as well. Was Van Rhijn not elevating the planned economy into a new principle, and was he not leading the workers from the “house of slavery” of liberalism to the “house of slavery” known as collectivism? In the discussion, Van Rhijn defended his analysis and ideal. He was firmly convinced, he argued, that going through the motions would not get the job done “but an entirely different arrangement of the social building [was] needed.” He wanted to contribute to that as a Christian. With that, he garnered applause.⁶²

Van den Heuvel had remained silent until the final day, when he found it necessary to express his disappointment.⁶³ He recognized that many issues had not yet been resolved. He called it “deeply disturbing” that the question of whether Christian organizations were necessary and desirable had received no clearly positive answer. In this way, “an atmosphere of doubt” remained hovering over

the conference. The fact that he was speaking on behalf of a large segment of the public became evident from the loud applause he received.

In his speech given during the concluding session, de Gaay Fortman could not ignore the differences. “We have enjoyed a good time,” he observed. However, “there was also some pain, because we have parted ways on important points.”⁶⁴ The reactions, including those in the public press, were moderately positive. At least people had continued talking together and intended to continue doing so. Beneath the surface, dissatisfaction was smoldering. One conference participant claimed that “the most awful things” were said. The conversations were highly theological, and that caused more “accidents.”⁶⁵ Van den Heuvel, by contrast, continued to spew his bile that the conference had not come out against the breakthrough and for the Christian social movement. He and his supporters were accused of “rigidity”; Van den Heuvel was dismissed as a “rigid Reformed elder in full uniform.”⁶⁶ Thus, the Christian Social Congress neither succeeded to bring rapprochement between the two Christian social traditions nor did it become the start of a fruitful dialogue.

Conclusion

During the second half of the nineteenth century, the modernizing and industrializing country of the Netherlands was confronted with the social question, the core of which involved the social and political integration of the working class and the middle class. A great deal of ink and debate has been devoted to the contribution of Protestantism to solving the social problem. An ongoing important question was how the over-weaned, conservative, Christian social thought that had always rejected a large government role in social life had so quickly after the Second World War conceded to and participated fully in expanding the welfare state in which the government acquired a leading role.⁶⁷

New investigation shows that an answer to this question is to be found by supplementing the existing portrait at two points.⁶⁸ Until now, investigators have frequently focused on the Christian social movement inspired by Abraham Kuyper, when discussing the solution to the social question. Alongside this movement, however, there had already existed for a long time a social tradition far less visible and identifiable, which found its starting point and anchor in the Dutch Reformed Church. This far less defined and organized tradition is identified here as Dutch Reformed social action. Although much less visible in the social debate, it nonetheless exerted significant influence on the settlement of the social question. The second point is that before the Second World War, a

decisive reversal had occurred in accepting a welfare state by younger people from both traditions so that the tipping point occurred before 1940.

In light of the foregoing, the course of development of Protestant social thought concerning the state and social policy could be sketched as follows. First, Protestants in the Netherlands saw the solution to the social problem in maintaining a society with various classes but with the moral and material elevation of the populace through the diaconate, Christian philanthropy, and patronage. The Dutch Reformed Church, as the national public church, played a pivotal and crucial role in that. This Dutch Reformed social action faced competition from the Christian social movement. This movement employed organizations that were inspired by Christian principles as tools for emancipating the little people. After the Reformed Church in the Netherlands came into existence, this denomination became the primary recruiting pool for the Christian social movement. The Christian social movement viewed the social question from the perspective of Kuyperean principles. The antithesis supplied the Christian social movement the right to exist as a *Christian* movement, while sphere sovereignty ensured the safety of its autonomy; the government had merely a limited task in the social-economic sphere.

Because the Christian social movement, and to a lesser extent, the Dutch Reformed social action, viewed society from a conservative and antisocialist perspective, implementing a coherent system of social policies was unsuccessful. The sore point was and remained the position of the state in the social system. The “old guard” of the Christian social movement remained resolutely opposed to government influence and could oppose it with apocalyptic language.

When the government administrations dominated by the Antirevolutionary politicians did not know what to do in the face of the economic crisis, young intellectuals from the Dutch Reformed side, like Aart Van Rhijn, came to be inspired by a moderate Christian-humanistic socialism that in those years conquered the field, so that they got behind the breakthrough. Even Antirevolutionary young people like W. F. de Gaay Fortman and Jelle Zijlstra distanced themselves at that point from Kuyperean principles. Although in their social-economic ideas they appeared very close to the breakthrough, they were still too much shaped by their Reformed world to follow Van Rhijn and others in moving over to the Labor Party.

After the war, an earlier generation of the Christian social movement made an attempt to prevent the breakthrough and to secure its status as a movement proceeding from Kuyperean principles. A new Christian Social Congress was supposed to become the platform for that objective. This scheme was unsuccessful. Many Antirevolutionary young people did not recognize themselves in

the rhetoric of the preceding generation concerning principles and demonizing the government by sidelining it. It was more than symbolic when, immediately before the Christian Social Conference began, Jelle Zijlstra entered the Cabinet under Roman Catholic leadership as the Minister of Economic Affairs, with Van Rhijn as the government secretary of Social Affairs.

With that, the ban was lifted. A new generation believed that the beast of the state, caged for so long, had now been tamed. At the end of the 1950s, Van den Heuvel's generation retreated, the Netherlands entered a period of economic boom, and a generous welfare state was rapidly erected from the ground up wherein welfare was no longer a matter of charity but a matter of justice guaranteed by the government. The beast of the state had become an ally.

Notes

- * Translated from Dutch by Nelson D. Kloosterman. The author thanks Dr. Gerard van Krieken who provided valuable comments on an earlier version of this article.
1. On Van den Heuvel, see A. M. J. Leemhuis, "De christelijke voorman Chris van den Heuvel (1887–1959)," in *Een loopbaan in de landbouw: Twaalf portretten van markante figuren in agrarisch Nederland*, ed. P. C. M. Hoppenbrouwers (Groningen: Nederlands Agronomisch-Historisch Instituut, 1991), 57–77; and R. van der Woude, *Op goede gronden: Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), passim.
 2. On Zijlstra, see J. Zijlstra, *Per slot van rekening: Memoires* (Amsterdam/Antwerp: Contact, 1992); and G. Puchinger, ed., *Dr. Jelle Zijlstra: Gesprekken en geschriften* (Naarden: Strenght, 1978). For the quotations, see Zijlstra, *Per slot van rekening*, 11.
 3. Zijlstra, *Geleide economie*, 2nd ed. (Den Haag: n.p., 1948), 16. To Zijlstra's surprise, his plea for government intervention in the economy had made such an impression that this was published as a pamphlet and appeared in a second edition.
 4. Zijlstra, *Per slot van rekening*, 14; J. Zijlstra, "Antirevolutionairen en economische politiek," in *Een land nog niet in kaart gebracht: Aspecten van het protestants-christelijk leven in Nederland in de jaren 1880–1940*, ed. J. de Bruin (Amsterdam: Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor het Nederlands Protestantisme, 1987), 153–63, esp. 158; and Puchinger, *Dr. Jelle Zijlstra*, 34.
 5. For a general overview, see R. H. Cox, *Development of the Dutch Welfare State: From Workers' Insurance to Universal Entitlement* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1993).

6. For a general overview, see G. Harinck, "Neo-Calvinism and the Welfare State," in *The Kuyper Center Review*, vol. 1, ed. G. Graham (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 93–105.
7. A good introduction to the Dutch social-economic history is J. L. van Zanden, *The Economic History of the Netherlands 1914–1995: A Small Open Economy in the "Long" Twentieth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1998).
8. In Dutch historiography, this is called "the school conflict." See M. de Kwaasteniet, *Denomination and Primary Education in the Netherlands 1870–1940: A Spatial Diffusion Perspective* (Dissertation: Amsterdam/Florence: Koninklijk Nederlands Aardrijkskundig Genootschap; Universiteit van Amsterdam; European University Institute, 1989).
9. A. Houkes, *Christelijke vaderlanders. Godsdienst, burgerschap en de Nederlandse natie (1850–1900)* (Dissertation: University of Groningen, 2009), 271.
10. C. A. Davids, "Overheid, sociale partners en representative in een veranderende wereld," *Beleid en Maatschappij* 34 (2007): 69–77; and J. L. van Zanden and A. van Riel, *Nederland 1780–1914: Staat, instituties en economisch ontwikkeling* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2000), 311.
11. On Kuyper, see P. van Rooden, "Secularization, Dechristianization, and Rechristianization in the Netherlands," in *Säkularisierung, Dechristianisierung, Rechristianisierung im neuzeitlichen Europa*, ed. H. Lehman (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997), 131–54.
12. Cf. Van Rooden, "Secularization," 149.
13. For these concepts, see B. Goudzwaard, "Christian Social Thought in the Dutch Neo-Calvinist Tradition," in *Religion, Economics, and Social Thought*, ed. W. Block and I. Hexham (Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 1986), 251–79; and K. van Kersbergen, "Religion and the Welfare State in the Netherlands," in *Religion, Class Coalitions, and Welfare States*, ed. K. van Kersbergen and Ph. Manow (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 119–46.
14. See Abraham Kuyper, "Sphere Sovereignty," in *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 461–90; and Goudzwaard, "Christian Social Thought," 254.
15. A. Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943), 80: "Every State-formation, every assertion of the power of the magistrate, every mechanical means of compelling order and of guaranteeing a safe course of life is therefore always something unnatural; something against which the deeper aspirations of our nature rebel."

16. A. Kuyper, *Het sociale vraagstuk en de christelijke religie* (Amsterdam: J. A. Wormser, 1891). See A. Kuyper, *The Problem of Poverty*, ed. and introduction by James W. Skillen (Washington, DC: Center for Public Justice; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991).
17. R. Kuiper, "Uit het dal omhoog 1894–1905," in *De Antirevolutionaire Partij 1829–1980*, ed. G. Harinck, R. Kuiper, and P. Bak (Hilversum: Verloren, 2001), 95.
18. See Van Zanden, *The Economic History*, 10.
19. These unions were not exclusively Reformed, but the ethos often was.
20. See P. Pasture, "Building the Social Security State: A Comparative History of Belgium, the Netherlands, and Germany, from the Nineteenth Century to the 1960s," in *Between Cross and Class: Comparative Histories of Christian Labour in 1840–2000*, ed. L. Heerma van Voss, P. Pasture, and J. de Maeyer (Bern: Peter Lang, 2005), 251–85, esp. 280.
21. See Harinck, "Neo-Calvinism," 97.
22. *De Nederlander: Christelijk-historisch dagblad voor Nederland* (October 10 and 20, 1934). Cf. G. C. van Niftrik, *De boodschap van Karl Barth* (Den Haag: Blommendaal, 1940), 3.
23. G. E. van Walsum, *Het isolement van "het Christelijk Volksdeel"* (Den Haag: Blommendaal, 1938), 6.
24. A. A. van Rhijn, *Het christelijk geloof en de nieuwe economische orde* (Den Haag: Blommendaal, 1939), 16.
25. On Banning, see R. Hartog, H. Noordergraaf, R. E. van der Woude, "Willem Banning (1888–1971). Volksopvoeder," in *Bevlogen theologen. Sociaal geëngageerde theologen in de negentiende en twintigste eeuw* (forthcoming), ed. P. E. Werkman and R. E. van der Woude.
26. T. Kappelhof, "'Omdat het historisch gegroeid is': De Londense Commissie-Van Rhijn en de ontwikkeling van de sociale verzekeringen in Nederland (1937–1952)" *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 1 (2004): 71–91. Cf. Pasture, "Building the Social Security State," 274.
27. Quoted in F. M. Noordam, *Rechtsgrond en sociale zekerheid* (Deventer: Kluwer, 2007), 10.
28. See Kappelhof, "Omdat het historisch gegroeid is," 91.
29. A. A. van Rhijn, *Sociale Zekerheid. Rapport van de Commissie, ingesteld bij Beschikking van den Minister van Sociale Zaken van 26 maart 1941, met de opdracht algemeene richtlijnen vast te stellen voor de toekomstige ontwikkeling der sociale verzekeringen in Nederland* (Den Haag: Algemeene Landsdrukkerij, 1945), I, 70.

30. Van Kersbergen, "Religion and the Welfare State in the Netherlands," 130ff.
31. S. Rozemond, "Doorbraak opent het gedachtenleven," *Het Parool* (May 25, 1956). Dr. S. Rozemond was the director of Social Affairs for the city of Leiden, and member of the Church and Society commission of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was a speaker at the Christian Social Congress in 1952.
32. *The Hamilton Spectator* (January 29, 1953) saw the background of the conference to be "united by threat."
33. *Jaarverslag 1946 van het Verbond van Protestants-Christelijke Werkgevers*. Quoted in P. E. Werkman, R. E. van der Woude, "'In broederlijke geest': Het Convent van Christelijk-Sociale Organisaties in de wederopbouwtijd" in *Crisis, what crisis? Cahier over de geschiedenis van de christelijk-sociale beweging* 5, ed. G. J. Schutte et al. (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2004), 76–96.
34. P. Hazenbosch, *Voor het volk om Christus' wil. Een geschiedenis van het CNV* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2009), 181.
35. *De Werkgever, officieel orgaan van het Verbond van Protestants-Christelijke Werkgevers in Nederland*, no. 101 (1945). Cf. *Trouw* (December 13 and 17, 1945).
36. Van der Woude, *Op goede gronden*, 272ff.
37. Zijlstra, *Per slot van rekening*, 12.
38. *De Werkgever*, May 13, 1951.
39. *De Werkgever*, May 31, 1951.
40. J. Zijlstra, "Christian Economic Policy," *The Free University Quarterly* (1951): 112–33.
41. Zijlstra, "Christian Economic Policy," 118.
42. *Ibid.*, 124. Thereby, Zijlstra was opposing the distinction made in those days between the love command that applied to personal relationships and justice that applied in the arena of the social order. Zijlstra referred in that connection to Frank H. Knight, *Economic Order and Religion* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1945) and Emil Brunner, *Justice and the Social Order* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1945).
43. See G. J. M. van Wissen, *De christen-democratische visie op de rol van de staat in het social-economische leven* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1982), 268.
44. See J. C. H. Blom, "Jaren van tucht en ascese. Enige beschouwingen over de stemming in Herrijzend Nederland (1945–1950)," in *Herrijzend Nederland. Opstellen over Nederland in de periode 1945–1950*, ed. P. W. Klein and G. N. van der Plaats (Den Haag: Nijhoff, 1981), 125–59.

45. Van Rooden, "Secularization," 131.
46. Werkman and Van der Woude, "In broederlijke geest," 83.
47. Historisch Documentatiecentrum voor het Nederlandse Protestantisme (1800-heden), VU University Amsterdam (HDC), Archief W. F. de Gaay Fortman (Arch. Fortman), inv. nr. 180 M. Ruppert to W. F. de Gaay Fortman 6 March 1948, inv. nr. 181 M. Ruppert to W. F. de Gaay Fortman, February 6, 1953.
48. HDC, Archief of the Dutch Christian Agricultural and Growers Union (Arch. CBTB, minutes of the board of directors, October 31, 1950).
49. When the committee for the third Christian Social Congress was instituted, and thereafter, it is not clear when it met. In the archive of the Gathering of Christian-Social Organizations, a number of reports have been preserved, which begin with December 29, 1948. See Archief Convent van Christelijk-Sociaal Congres inv.nr. 22 report of the discussion concerning the third Christian Social Congress, December 29, 1948.
50. HDC, Arch. Convent, discussion on September 6, 1950.
51. HDC, Arch. CBTB, minutes of the board of directors, October 31, 1950.
52. Quoted in P. Bak, "W. F. de Gaay Fortman: Christelijk-sociaal denker op het snijvlak van politieke partij en vakbond," in *Belangenpolitiek. Cahier over de geschiedenis van de christelijk-sociale beweging* 4, ed. G. J. Schutte et al. (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2002): 42–54, esp. 43 and 45.
53. *Gereformeerd Weekblad* (March 21, 1952).
54. *Het Vrije Volk* (March 20, 1952).
55. HDC, Arch. Convent, discussion on January 29, 1952, and supplements for the discussions. In the connection people referred to 1 Samuel 4:21.
56. HDC, Arch. Convent, discussion on February 19, 1952. In 1905 and 1910, Christian Social Conferences had also been held.
57. IJ. K. Tamminga, *Christelijk-sociale conferentie* (Nederlandse Christelijke Boeren- en Tuindersbond, 1953), 28.
58. *Proces Verbaal Christelijk-social conferentie* (Utrecht: Drukkerij Libertas, 1953), 345.
59. *Proces Verbaal*, 359.
60. *Ibid.*, 376 and 382.
61. *Ibid.*, 494.

62. Ibid., 519. Van Rhijn received a total of seventy-two questions to answer.
63. Tamminga, *Christelijk-sociale conferentie*, 31.
64. *Proces Verbaal*, 561–62, 596.
65. Quoted in Bak, *Een soeverein leven*, 138.
66. Quoted in Tamminga, *Christelijk-sociale conferentie*, 12. This description appeared in an article in *Tijd en Taak*, ed. Willem Banning.
67. Cox, *Development*, 96, 133.
68. Important in this context are Houkes, *Christelijke Vaderlanders*, who describes, among other things, the rise of the Dutch Reformed social action, and M. Hoogenboom, *Standenstrijd en zekerheid. Een geschiedenis van oude orde en sociale zorg in Nederland (1880–1940)* (Dissertation: University of Amsterdam, 2003), who portrays, among other things, the opposition against social security on the part of the Dutch Reformed social action.