



Transatlantic Christian Council
Building Bridges between Europe and America

Newsletter 10, August 2018

Transatlantic Christian Council

Welcome to this Newsletter, made up of tweets, photos, short messages and an extensive report on the TCC contribution during a consultation of the 'Independent Expert for Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity' during a session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. We are happy to take you again to the fascinating work of TCC.

Project started:

However, we would like to start by introducing our new colleagues: Peter Smith and Mario Fantini. Through encouraging donations from NL and the US, we have dared to start a \$ 2 million 3-year project described below and hire people for it. The Project 2018-2020 'Sustaining Freedom, Preserving Justice', freely translated into NL: 'For the preservation of freedom and the protection of justice'.

Contribution solution of what problem:

With this project, we want to contribute to turning the tide of a secular tidal wave that is rushing into Europe and America with threatening violence. That freedom replaces the imposition of a rigid 'rights' ideology. Which divides society into group identities such as race, ethnicity, gender, with radical individual autonomy in the field of sexuality. Who breaks into life, family, schools, churches and other social connections and wants to subject them to themselves. Who, internationally, is rolling out a utopian vision of world peace, based on international law,

enforced by international organizations. Who tries to impose these destructive 'rights' ideology globally and to make it a guideline.

Approach:

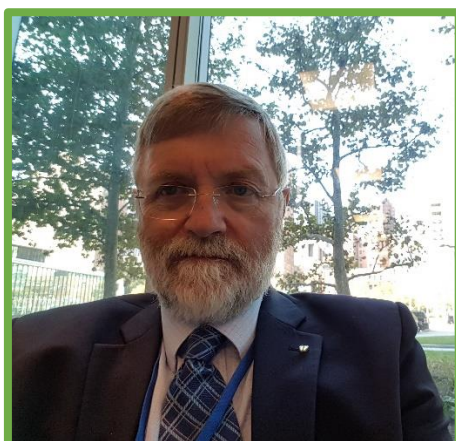
This must be prevented. With our Project 2018-2020 'For Justice and Sustainable Freedom' we want to give a Christian sound on our globe a voice. In precise coordination of all our activities we want to design this in 3 ways: 1) a monthly publication for leading European and American thinkers and writers; 2) actively use our advisory status at the UN, OSCE and EU; 3) organizing an annual Transatlantic conference for Christian leaders with a focus on the relationship between the Christian faith and the preservation of the Christian foundations of Western civilization.

Browse quickly in the Newsletter!

Support? If you would like to support TCC's work, you can donate a gift to Transatlantic Christian Council, Account no. 101015616705 Routing and transit no. 272480678. Even easier to donate via the website, [click here](#). – Tax Exempt

Korte biografie Peter Smith

Peter Smith



Chief Administrative Officer to the UN For Transatlantic Christian Council

Peter Smith was born in Hobart Tasmania, Australia. He grew up on a large farm and was the first in his family to obtain a University degree, obtaining a Bachelor of Engineering in 1973. He worked in industry and government for sixteen years, as a professional engineer, in senior and middle management.

Peter got converted the first time he heard the Gospel on 28th November 1980 at a BBQ in Melbourne, Australia. He felt a call to study Theology full time in Glasgow, Scotland in 1986 and spent two years at the Bible Training Institute. While at this college he first got involved with the pro-life group the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC).

In 1994 he began working for SPUC on a full-time basis and has attended UN meetings in New York and around the world since January 1995. This work included a leadership role with the coalition of Pro/Life, Pro/Family NGOs from around the world. They advocated for the following issues, pro-life, pro-family, parental rights, religious belief and national sovereignty. He is currently writing a book on his first ten years of work at the UN. In total he would have attended over 140 meetings and knows many diplomats from countries all around the world. He is an expert networker and gets on well with people from all areas of the globe. Since 1996 he has also represented the International Right to Life Federation at the UN.

He has written many articles on Pro-Life issues in the UK and overseas. Also he has spoken at many pro-life conferences and training sessions and preached in many churches in the UK, Netherlands, USA, Poland, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Kenya, Trinidad and Australia. He was also active in the Brexit process giving a speech at a Christian conference on why the UK should leave the EU.

His family were always active in their communities, his father, uncle and grandfather were all local counsellors on Bruny Island, Tasmania where they lived.

Since November 2017 he has been working, as a consultant for TCC representing them at the UN in New York. He has attended four meetings in 2018 and plans two more visits to New York later in the year.

He is married with three adult children and three grandchildren and resides in Prestwick, Scotland, United Kingdom.

He has a youtube channel: Peter Smith – Pro Life Ministries

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=peter+smith+pro+life+ministries

Blog: Peter Smith Pro-Life Ministries

<http://petersmithpro-lifeministries.blogspot.com>

Follow him on twitter: @PeterCamSmith

The biography of Mario Fantini has not yet reached us on the day of the newsletter.

May 31: Greengroup SGP and June 1: Meeting SGP Entrepreneurial Platform - Parliament The Hague

"The fluttering of the national flag is a welcoming emblem of the independence of the country."

Groen van Prinsterer, The Dutch Missionary Society (1848)

With the above quotation from Groen and the following stimulating question, the theme for this SGP evening was announced on 31 May, 19.30 in the House of Representatives (Dreeskamer), for continued study and memory of statesman Groen (also important for TCC): Symbol politics

"Politics lives by grace of the word and Christian politics lives by grace of the Word. At the same time, symbols seem to work at least as strongly as words on many citizens. For example, the proposal to let the national tricolor flutter in parliament gives some a deep sense of belonging, while it works on others like a red lap on a bull. How should Christians actually deal with national symbols? Can we make healthy use of it or should we keep ourselves away from any hint of nationalism? Which symbols should Christians be written for? We can not go around the cross at any rate. After all, it is the center of the Christian message and it has traces its traces deep in the history of Europe. What place should the cross take in the message of Christians in contemporary politics? For example, what light does the cross cast on debates about 'complete life'?"

This evening, Prof. A. van de Beek gave an introduction to us. He is professor emeritus of symbolism at the VU University Amsterdam and also works at the University of Stellenbosch in South Africa.

Photo 2: On 1 June Henk Jan van Schothorst was invited to take part in a fascinating meeting of the Entrepreneur platform of SGP. Minister Wiebes of Economic Affairs held a fascinating speech there, as well as Chris Stoffer, Lower House member of the SGP.



May and June: Two interns from Driestar College at TCC

TCC had the pleasure of hosting two interns from Driestar College around the May holiday. They have done very useful work for TCC, such as translating various documents into English. They also did a good job at the visit of the American Ambassador Hoekstra to Driestar College and Gouda on 7 May. On 6 June, the students reported on an entrepreneurial evening at the Driestar College at the Business2School event.

(https://nl.usembassy.gov/ambassador-hoekstra-visits-gouda-and-oudewater/?_ga=2.63648047.14711043874.1533663037-260815345.1533111349)



June 9: Interview with Todd Huizinga about Transatlantic Relations in Reformatorisch Dagblad

Intro editors: 'The love between America and Europe seems chilled. Especially now that Washington has canceled the nuclear agreement with Iran. Or is this just a modest argument in a well-functioning marriage? Todd Huizinga: "We are still the most important allies in the world". '

For the article, [click here](#). For the PDF version, [click here](#).



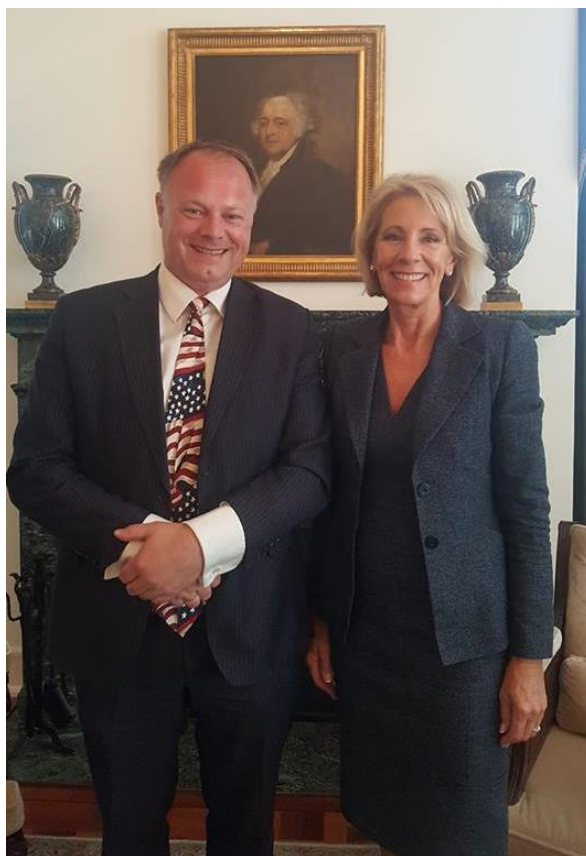
11 June: Meeting with US Minister of Education Betsy DeVos at Ambassadeur Hoekstra residence

[Henk Jan van Schothorst, 11 juni · Twitter](#)

Had a great meeting with inspiring US Secretary of Education @BetsyDeVosED on Dutch educational system, it's various school choice options, the importance of well working parent associations and freedom of education, with @DickDeVos and @usambnl at his residence.

@usembthehague <https://t.co/IzI7o5i6Ro>

(<https://nl.usembassy.gov/u-s-secretary-of-education-betsy-devos-visits-the-netherlands/#.WyLTzyq97Fw.twitter>)



11 June: Business Network drink Bodegraven with Gert Jan Segers - Head of ChristenUnie - for World Servants

In the context of a fundraising evening of five young people to help build and renovate a cocoa center in Ecuador, Gert Jan Segers talked about politics, business and volunteer work. Preferably in Bodegraven, a home game. It was, as always with Gert Jan, a beautiful and inspiring evening!



18 June - 6 July: UN Human Rights Council, 38th Session, Geneva - In-depth Contribution
[HenkJanvanSchothorst @tccouncilorg](https://www.tccouncil.org/news-events/news/2018/open-consultatie-over-wettelijke-erkenning-van-gender-identiteit-gen%C3%A8ve-26-...)

My main contribution at the 38th session of the UN Human Rights Council (Geneva, 18 June-6 July 2018): [http://www.tccouncil.org/news-events/news/2018/open-consultatie-over-wettelijke-erkenning-van-gender-identiteit-gen%C3%A8ve-26 ...](https://www.tccouncil.org/news-events/news/2018/open-consultatie-over-wettelijke-erkenning-van-gender-identiteit-gen%C3%A8ve-26-...) As input for the report of the UN Expert Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity for the UN General Assembly in New York October'18



Report and contribution:

Bodegraven, June 20, 2018

Report of meeting and presentation Transatlantic Christian Council to open Consultation of the Independent Expert on 19 June at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva

June 18

At day 1 of the 38th session of the Human Rights Council, which lasts from June 18 - July 6, right after the opening of the session with some dignitaries as UK Secretary of State Boris Johnson, the newly appointed Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Victor Madrigal-Borloz was on the agenda. (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/SexualOrientationGender/Pages/Index.aspx>).

As if this topic is number 1 priority of a 3 week all day Human Rights Council session, he got the floor in order to explain his report (<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G18/132/12/PDF/G1813212.pdf?OpenElement>) and to obtain views from member-states, multi-lateral agencies and a list of 64 ngo's (attached). Only states who were highly positive on the Sogi mandate came up with a response to him and asked questions as how they could best be of help to smoothen the implementation Sogi mandate.

The states which voted against the Sogi mandate holder were largely absent or only responded on the 'Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of associations', who was clustered with the SOGI Expert on the agenda.

As can be seen from the attached list the vast majority of the ngo's was in favor of the Sogi mandate.

June 19

Next day, June 19, I'd seen announced on the webpage of the IE SOGI (<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/SexualOrientationGender/Pages/LegalRecognition.aspx>): 'Open Consultation on Legal Recognition of Gender Identity and Destigmatization through Depathologization'. As objectives of this consultation the expert wanted to:

- exchange views on legal recognition of gender identity and destigmatization linked with depathologization (for those who did not know what that means: The process of coming to regard a formerly medical condition as a health or behaviour condition.);
- Highlight possible good practices and gaps at international, regional and national levels on the two topics of the consultation;
- Offer a platform of dialogue between participants for exchange experiences, knowledge and lessons learned.

The information obtained can be used for the IE's report to the General Assembly, to be presented in October 2018.

The IE was clear that he uphold the 6 underpinnings for the mandate as presented and explained by his predecessor Vitit Muntarbhorn (stepped down because of health reasons) at the former consultation on January 24 and 25 in 2017. The first two underpinnings (criminalization of same-sex relations and effective anti-discrimination measures) were elaborated in the mandate's 2017 report, the third and fourth (gender Identity and depathologization) will be central in the upcoming October report.

However, I was never answered on my over 20 fundamental orally and clearly presented questions on the underpinnings of the mandate at the consultation on January 25, 2017. Therefore I choose not to be ngo number 65 in the plenary session with only 2 minutes speaking time in a long row, but to attend this consultation and to re-introduce that over 20 fundamental questions, again in a 5 minute speech. Especially because the new IE elaborated on linchpin 4, where some of my questions related to.

When I arrived in the morning of June 19 at the main UN meeting building, the meeting was not announced on the meeting-screens. It was also not around main room XX, but through a long corridor in another building in Room XI. Despite of that not over-public announcement (I saw it by chance on the IE SOGI web page) the room was completely crowded with (I guess and counted the chairs) about 20 pro-sogi-states representatives and over 100 mainly LGBTIQ people or representatives of their organizations. The meeting was from 10a.m.-1p.m. Like I did to Vitit Muntarbhorn I went before the meeting to new IE SOGI Victor Madrigal-Borloz, shake hands and said him that my contribution would not represent his views, but that it was on issues and not against him or anyone else. 'That's why we are here', he responded rightly and I fully agreed.

Contribution



Transatlantic Christian Council
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Contribution Transatlantic Christian Council to

Open Consultation on Legal Recognition of Gender Identity and Destigmatization through Depathologization

Mandate: Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity

Geneva, 19 June 2018 – 10:00 to 13:00, Palais des Nations, Room XI

Dear Independent Expert on SOGI, dear Mr. V(ictor) Madrigal-Borloz,

On behalf of and as director of the Transatlantic Christian Council, an organization with special consultative status at the United Nations, I would like to thank you for providing the opportunity to exchange views and to ask some questions. We do so in a friendly way, but we are looking for clarity. The background is that we are concerned.

It is no secret that your mandate has been highly controversial from the outset. A majority of Member states of the UN did not vote in favor of your mandate. [Geneva HRC June 2016: In favor 23, Against 18, Abstentions 6; New York UNGA end 2016: In favor: 84, Against: 77, Abstentions: 16]. This

is because of conflicting worldviews and religious principles. To our Council it seems that the promoters of this mandate are creating a community of Divided Nations, rather than United Nations. [Q(uestion) 1] How do you experience this reality and how will you address the opposing views related to your mandate?

Your recommendation 81 (d) (in Report A/HRC/38/43) states: ‘Open up dialogue with opinion leaders, including religious leaders, to foster an approach that respects sexual and gender diversity, and integrate this dialogue into the educational and socialization process for empathy from a young age;’.

It seems you plan to try to reconcile vastly different worldviews. [Q 2] Do you attempt to identify and disseminate all-inclusive interpretations of religion and other beliefs with space for gender diversity?

[Q 3] Are you saying that you intend to convince or explain to religions how they should interpret their own beliefs? [Q 4] Will you respect religious, political and community leaders if their views are opposite or different from your views on LGBT issues? [Q 5] Or will you assume your views are to replace theirs?

Also, [Q 6] what is meant by ‘enable LGBTI people to associate fully in family life’ as your predecessor mentioned it? (He left this question unanswered, I raised it in the NGO-consultation meeting in

Geneva on January 25, 2017). [Q 7] Is this still a goal? [Q 8] And if so, is this referring to same-sex marriage or adoption of children by same-sex couples and the legal recognition of that? That seems to be the case since you write in a positive way in your report on ‘equal marriage’ and ‘diverse families’ (par 4, 35 and 62) and ‘adoption of children by persons of the same sex’ (par 14 in Argentina). [Q 9] Will you respect the fact that most nations maintain that marriage is between a man and a woman? [Q 10] Do you see it as your task and in the boundaries of your mandate to overturn such laws?

According to UN consensus documents, it is the natural parents who are responsible for the upbringing of their children according to their own beliefs, not UN experts. In light of the UN convention of the Rights of the Child, wherein it states that children have the right to know and cared for by their parents, [Q 11] have you considered the rights of the child in these matters? [Q 12] Are you aware of the abundant research showing that children do best when raised by both their mother and father? [Q 13] Does that make enough sense or are the desires or alleged rights of adults more important than this basic right of the child?

In your recommendations (par 97) education is mentioned several times as a tool or instrument. Such as ‘to design and conduct public campaigns, including on sexual education and to formulate education policies to address harmful social and cultural bias, misconceptions and prejudice’. Together with your first recommendation (par 89), where you state that ‘States must adopt a combination of laws, policies and other measures tailored to a specific context’, leads to a question on your view and position towards the equal status of fundamental freedoms.

There are lots of faith-based schools, hospitals and other religious associations and organizations worldwide. [Q 14] Will you respect such fundamental freedoms as the freedom of religion, association and education within these institutions?

[Q 15] Is it your intention to promote that states and schools have to allow transgenders or gender fluid people to use the toilets, locker rooms and showers of the opposite sex? Such policies are tried in some Western countries but will hopefully be soon overturned especially because of the insecurity, uncertainty and inconvenience they create. The majority of the world's people find such policies to be unacceptable as they put women and girls especially at greater risk for abuse. For our Council and for many states and many people your mandate raises more questions and concerns than it gives answers and solutions.

Some final questions.

[Q 16] Will you respect the sovereignty of states? [Q 17] How do you plan to hold states accountable on discrimination when no international agreement exists on the legal definition of SOGI or SOGI discrimination? [Q 18] Do you consider freedom of religion to be subservient to anti-discrimination? These are all questions of critical importance.

Dear Expert, we look forward to your responses.

Henk Jan van Schothorst

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Annex: Scientific Evidence blessings and support natural family life (2-pager), as you asked for in your response.



Different from the January 2017 consultation, where we had (only) the good old Ruben Navarro on our side - I quote a paragraph from his report on that meeting as Annex - I now was the only one with a strongly dissenting voice. After several states, TCC was among the first 10 speakers from the room. Like in 2017, again you could hear a pin drop when I presented my contribution. In contrast with his other proceedings, where the IE after a couple of contributions responded with a short thank you and response, he choose to directly react on my contribution, also about 5 minute long. Unfortunately the meeting was not recorded on video. Therefore I can only share some of the things which he responded from my short notes and remembrance of yesterday.

His response was quite fierce.

- * First he said that a majority of member-states have voted in favor of establishing the IE SOGI and that I should have done my research better. [But I was right: 84 states in favor, 77 against and 16 abstentions in December 2016 in New York where I was present: A majority of member-states did not vote in favor of this mandate].

- * Then he said that he was appointed as IE SOGI and that we should not look back to that kind of past discussions but forward to the implementation of the mandate.

- * Then he commented on some words he had noted from my contribution, such as abuse, push, controversial sexual lifestyles and identities, bathroom wars, pressure, coerce. He 'kindly invited' me to change these words because such harsh wording would feel intimidating for the people in the room and elsewhere. He felt my presentation as aggressive with these wordings.

* He also asked for sending him scientific evidence (at the latest this coming Friday June 22) which supports claimed facts such as:

- that marriage between a man and a woman is best and maintained by most nations;
- abundant research shows that children do best when raised by both their mother and father;
- that a majority of the world's people find such policies (as allowing transgenders and gender fluid people to use the toilets, locker rooms and showers of the opposite sex) to be unacceptable and also if it was a fact that it put especially women and girls at a greater risk for abuse.

* He also said that he only would 'continue dialogue within the boundaries of the mandate' (as he sees it), and that he therefore made the exception to directly and extensively respond to me in order to make this very clear.

After this kind of reprimand I followed the meeting and listened to the other contributions. At the end I went straight to the IE in order to clarify some things and I expressed my sincere wish to work with him, though with different views, on a mutually respectful and friendly personal basis. Which was really the case between Vitit and me. This resulted again in a quite lengthy conversation, where I showed me prepared to look at some wordings of my contribution and he asking why and what I had against the people concerned. I said: Nothing, they are all of equal value, all equally created in the image of God, and that I love all of them. What then the problem was. I said that I would not prevent people from living different lifestyles, but that also people who have different views should be able and have the right to for example (let) educate their children in freedom according to their own views. Also at schools, and that freedom of education and religion should be equally respected. I said that many people, as Christians, which I also am (or try to be), believe in the truth (from higher Hand) of the Bible. In light of that he asked my views on several types of relationships, if I really believed that they were not good or acceptable. Then I responded: 'I am not God.', meaning that I believe that what God has revealed onto us in the Bible is the indisputable and real truth, also on relationships. - Then he stepped back and he very decisively said: 'This is the limit of our conversation.' I asked why, if it was not possible for him to separate issues from persons and asked if he was prepared to have a picture with me and him. No, he said, that could give the impression that we could have common ground and that was not the case. I said: Vitit was happy to do so. He responded: I am not Vitit. A loose handshake was a last thing he could't refuse.

Some conclusions without being complete:

- The new IE SOGI seems to be more 'radical' (if I may say so) than the previous one
- You are welcome to send scientific evidence on things mentioned above at at the latest on this Friday June 22
- We might consider as organizations/persons to undersign a common letter to the new IE by Friday. Input welcome.
- I have promised him to send my contribution and some supporting docs by this Friday

Undoubtedly more can be said about this meeting, but I leave it at this (late) moment. Suggestions, ideas and response welcome.

I have on record the US response on the SOGI Expert from Monday, which could have been more powerful I think (but was better than all Europeans together), but what might have been one of the last US interventions of the US before their withdrawal from HRC, a step which I can understand very well and which I highly respect!

June 28: Faith & Freedom Summit in Brussels attended

http://www.acreurope.eu/event/faith_and_freedom_summit



July 4: Celebration Independence Day op Ambassade VS, Den Haag

<https://nl.usembassy.gov/embassy-celebrates-the-american-road-trip-on-independence-day/>



July 23, Lecture about work TCC for ECPYouth in Wroclaw, Polen

Lecture "Lobbying for Human Dignity at an International Level" by Mr Henk Jan van Schothorst, Transatlantic Christian Council. [Click here](#) for the program.



July 26:

[Todd Huizinga in "Kresta in the Afternoon", radio interview with Ave Maria Radio, based in Detroit](#)

The interview was broadcast on the program "Kresta in the Afternoon," hosted by Al Kresta, who is a broadcaster, journalist, author and President and CEO of Ave Maria Radio.

Here's some info on Kresta in the Afternoon, from Ave Maria Radio's website:

"Heard on more than 350 stations and Sirius Satellite, Kresta in the Afternoon looks at all areas of life through the lens of Scripture and the teaching of the Catholic Church and takes on all comers. Over the years, Al has engaged in vigorous discussions or debates with nationally known figures from politics, the arts, the Church, academia and business such as Mother Angelica, Jesse Jackson, John McCain, Gloria Steinem, Cuba Gooding Jr., Scott Hahn, Rick Santorum, Judge Robert Bork, Jerry Falwell, Pat Buchanan, Mrs. Anwar Sadat, Martin Luther King III, Jack Kevorkian, John Cardinal

O'Connor, Chuck Colson, Archbishop Charles Chaput, George McGovern, C. Everett Koop, Francis Cardinal George, Dennis Quaid, George Will, Tim Russert, Newt Gingrich, Mike Huckabee, Garrison Keillor, Dion DiMucci, Colin Raye and many more."

To replay the interview, klik the link below:

<https://avemariaradio.net/audio-archive/kresta-afternoon-july-26-2018-hour-2/>

August 3: Lecture (on behalf of VOE-SGP) on region Balkan leaderships meeting, Fuzine, Croatia
HenkJanvanSchothorst @tccouncilorg Twitter

Just back from lecture at Forum on Transformative Leadership in Fuzine, Croatia. Title: Political Advocacy at International Organizations from a Christian Perspective.



August 4: Radio 1 Interview about Trump: 'It's more about policy than about people.'
Henk Jan van Schothorst

Listen here: <https://www.nporadio1.nl/.../467304-de-zes-ogen-van-de-fries-...>

Herewith a 2.5 minute fragment about Pete Hoekstra:



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