

## ***The Other Dutchman: Joseph Luns and his Policies as Foreign Minister and NATO Secretary-General***

**(By Albert Kersten)**

Joseph Luns was a politician of the Cold War era. The Western world, i.e. Western Europe and Northern America had to defend its societal system against the aggression of the Soviet-Union and its destructive communistic ideology.

One of the means to do so was to show unity towards Moscow and its satellites and to stay firm together. Show of mutual frictions to the outside world could be an incentive to the enemy to stimulate disunity and thereby undermine the strong position of the West.

Luns was a political realist. He was aware that not all members of NATO were truly democratic regimes, but criticizing them in public was not the best approach in his opinion. He favored silent diplomacy within the alliance, because it delivered better results.

The lecture will explain this policy with some examples: Greece, Spain and Portugal as well as his handling of the Greek-Turkish controversies over Cyprus.



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His research made him visit many archives in the Netherlands and abroad. He published articles on the history of Dutch foreign policy, the history of European integration. The board of the Netherlands Organisation for Sciences commissioned him with the writing of the history of its predecessor, the Netherlands Organisation for Pure Scientific Research. In 1996 he became a member of the group at the Netherlands Institute for War Documentation which investigated the 1996 massacre of Srebrenica. After 7 years of research he published in 2010 the biography '*Joseph Luns. Een politieke biografie*' (Joseph Luns. A political biography).

1988-2018 he was honorary historical adviser to the Dutch Ministry for Foreign Affairs