

TRANSLATIONS

Christian and Secular Politics

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Neocalviniana

Introduction

The text below is my translation of an address delivered by Herman Bavinck at the fifteenth convention of deputies of the Anti-Revolutionary Party meeting in Utrecht in the Netherlands on April 13, 1905, shortly before the general election that summer. The original text, titled "Christelijke en Neutrale Staatskunde," is found in the volume annotated by M. C. Smit (Smit 1951, 105–38). I have added explanatory footnotes and have omitted some details that are of local or dated interest only. Unsurprisingly, Bavinck's (sole) footnote reads: "This address was significantly abridged when delivered."

The word "*neutrale*" in the title is here translated not as "neutral" but as "secular," in keeping with its import in Dutch society at the time and as Bavinck explains in his address. A rough equivalent in English-speaking countries is "pragmatic" or even "non-ideological."

Herman Bavinck (1854–1921), a professor of theology, had acquiesced, after much hesitation, to serve as interim chairman of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, replacing Abraham Kuyper (1837–1920), a former pastor and journalist and since 1901 the prime minister of the Netherlands. Kuyper had organized the Anti-Revolutionary Party as a means to advance the anti-revolutionary movement in his country. As the election of 1905 approached, Kuyper preferred to campaign that summer as government leader rather than as party leader, and had therefore resigned his chairmanship (cf. Eglinton 2020, 232). But Kuyper had a hard time letting go; even after he became head of government he stayed on as editor of his daily *De Standdaard*. For an entertaining narrative of the skill with which Kuyper multi-tasked, see Johan Snel's *The Seven Lives of Abraham Kuyper* (chapter 7, et passim).

Back in 1901, following the general election, the queen appointed Kuyper to form a government from the parties of the Right, i.e., from the coalition of Calvinists and Catholics. The Kuyper Cabinet was sworn in on August 1, 1901, and remained in office until August 27, 1905. It was in preparation for the election campaign of 1905 that Bavinck was here trying to inspire the assembled deputies with the customary motivational address: work hard for another victory at the polls, so that Kuyper can finish the job!

It was not to be. Despite winning the popular vote, Kuyper's coalition was defeated in the 1905 election in most of the country's electoral districts by an informal coalition of Leftist parties (a makeshift coalition that Bavinck

mercilessly unmasks in his address). Some gerrymandering of the districts was at play, but what also contributed to the defeat of Kuyper's coalition were the government's rigorous handling of the railway strikes, the controversial nature of Kuyper's persona and his "courting with Rome," plus the very unpopular Liquor Act. Voter turnout in 1905 was 79 percent, of which 55 percent voted for the Kuyper government.

For the unusual nomenclature "Right" and "Left," see note 9 below.

"Christian and Secular Politics" by Herman Bavink

Esteemed men and brothers,

Our convention of deputies meets for the first time today without Dr. Kuyper as its chairman. That you have come to our Anti-Revolutionary gathering in the same number as usual,¹ even though the powerful attraction of his person and his word is absent, attests to the fact that not just the personality of the leader but also the loftiness of our cause makes your hearts glow with warm enthusiasm. Even if your level of interest would have to be reduced by an important percentage on account of the understandable curiosity to see if and how an Anti-Revolutionary convention of deputies can run well without the strong guidance of its former chairman, I would still venture to say in these moments, as I look over your assembly, that not persons, however much appreciated, but principles account for our unity and our strength.

Still, there is no doubt that the resignation of our chairman has brought us into unusual and difficult circumstances. Dating from our first convention of deputies since the founding of the Central Committee, in fact from the moment he entered politics, Dr. Kuyper was *jure suo* the leader of our party, the bearer of our principles, the mouthpiece of our thoughts, the inspirer of our energies. If he resigned as chairman of the Central Committee on account of his having entered the government, in keeping with the principle of our party which distinguishes carefully between government and people, Crown and Parliament,² we must, despite the loss of his presence, acquiesce in his absence. But we will not do so in this hour as we gather as deputies of the entire Anti-Revolutionary Party except by adding our heartfelt thanks and glowing tribute to the firm conviction, the uncommon talent, the tireless effort, and the heroic courage with which Dr. Kuyper for more than thirty

1 The convention hall seated 2,500 people, while 300 more had to be accommodated in an adjacent hall.

2 Parliamentary government in the Netherlands deviates from the Westminster system by a convention of strict "dualism" between government and parliament, according to which cabinet ministers, for the duration of their time in office, suspend their membership of the caucus that supports the cabinet. Cf. an interview on Dutch television in 1991: Reporter: "Mr. Kok, what will you do now? Last Saturday's convention of your own party voted against the placement of cruise missiles!" Finance Minister Wim Kok: "Yes, the party. But we are the government."

years expounded and championed our principles, organized our party, chaired this convention, and inspired us all with enthusiasm. You and I will repeat with conviction what was said at the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of *De Standdaard*: when we Anti-Revolutionaries proudly and confidently raise the banner of our principles at this time, then we owe this, under God's blessing, in the first place to Dr. Kuyper. The place our party occupies in the country was gained, I say this without undervaluing any of our other leaders, thanks especially to *his* person and *his* labor.

But precisely because we owe so much to him, his resignation as chairman of the Central Committee and chair of the convention of deputies entails a big loss. The resulting change is of such fundamental importance that its consequences cannot yet be calculated. It is not felt so deeply at this moment, however, because the reason why our chairman was prompted to resign is a happy one. That reason, after all, is none other than the high office the queen charged him with after the election results of 1901. From leader of a party he then became leader of the entire nation, president of the Council of Ministers, counselor of the Crown. Our party is happy to have its interests take a back seat to the general welfare of our nation, and we suppress our personal wishes before the voice of our queen. We gladly surrender our chairman, now and for another four years, to the chairmanship of the Council of Ministers.³ We are gathered here today, moreover, to make a firm commitment that we shall do all we can to make sure, so far as it depends on us, that Dr. Kuyper continues as minister and remains ineligible to chair our convention for the next four years.

Yet that does not change the fact that we need to be fully conscious of the changes created by the new situation. We have not been promised that after Groen⁴ and Kuyper we shall again be granted a leader of their talent and energy. Our party does not stand or fall with a person, because it lives from principles that have stood the test of time. God can deliver through few or many, through great or little strength. They never lose heart who truly believe in the Lord's providential order. But given that from now on, and even more in the future, we have to learn to stand on our own feet, the main thing is to have strength through unity, to maintain and improve our organization, to compensate for the absence of an all-dominating personality. Such will be even more necessary in the future, but now it is of the utmost importance at the polls that will open in June. Thus it gives great joy on a day like this to see how our brothers from all corners of the land have come together to pledge

³ Up until this time, it was a convention of the Dutch "Council of Ministers" (cabinet) that members took turns chairing the meetings. As leader of his cabinet, Kuyper changed his title to "permanent chair." The title "prime minister" came in vogue only gradually.

⁴ Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801–1876), a historian and statesman, was the father of the anti-revolutionary movement in the Netherlands.

to remain loyal and true to one another.⁵ And when we hear at the same time that preparations for the coming election campaign have already been taken to hand, that no effort or time or energy is spared, that the dedication of our men is exemplary and their devotion is beyond praise, then this bodes well for the future and gives us courage for the fierce battle that awaits.

For the battle will be fierce—even more furious and ferocious than in 1901.⁶ The issue is one of “to be or not to be” for liberalism in all its nuances.⁷ Should it win, it may push back Christian action for many years. But if it loses, it will probably break up permanently into different groups. Thus it will exert all its strength and call up its last man to rise from its fall and resume its former dominance also in this century.

For many of us, this political divide has been a great disappointment. There was some reason to hope during the four-year period that soon will lie behind us that opposition would be replaced by appreciation, confrontation by collaboration. After all, when the current cabinet took over the government in 1901 it introduced, like the Mackay Cabinet in 1887, a very moderate program—“not from weakness, but for the decisive reason that in a country where two powerful groups are arrayed against each other, justice and fairness demand that both groups are assured a position of respect.”⁸ Liberalism’s mistake was that it used to act as if we did not exist. They treated believers as pariahs and wanted to be lord and master in the land. But the cabinet consisting of members of the Christian parties⁹ followed a different path and from the outset placed itself above the parties, recognizing them all as parts of the same nation.

⁵ But see note 14 below.

⁶ In the election campaign of 1901 the “neutral” parties, as they faced a Christian coalition led by Kuyper, resorted to unsparing debates and smear tactics.

⁷ There were four different parties that called themselves liberal: two progressive, one more conservative, one a large tent embracing conservatives and progressives, all avowedly “non-confessional” (i.e. “neutral” or secular).

⁸ The sentence is taken from an editorial in *De Standaard* of January 16, 1905, where Kuyper wrote: “When the second Christian cabinet took office [in 1901], it had the choice of governing heavy-handedly or moderately. Like the first under Mackay [1888–1891], it chose the latter. And it did so, not from weakness, but for the decisive reason that in a country in which two powerful groups are arrayed against each other, justice and fairness demand that both sides are assured a *position of respect*. We urged this from our side as early as 1878, when we put forward a political program that would guarantee both groups a joyful participation in the life of the nation. Our grievance against the liberals was that they did not keep this in mind; that they took no account of the Christian parties; that they imperiously imposed their superiority on the Christian portion of the nation and carried on as if the only real nation consisted of those who lived the life of liberals. The Liberal Party treated us as pariahs and helots and wanted to be lord and master of the country.”

⁹ Dutch original: “members of the parties of the Right.” The “neutral” parties, ranging from conservatives and liberals to socialists and anarchists, were lumped together as the parties of the Left. To add to the confusion for non-Dutch readers, each party had left-leaning and right-leaning wings. Kuyper, careful to use the French words for “right” and “left,” once said that the Anti-Revolutionary Party had two wings, *droit* and *gauche*, and that he belonged to the latter.

The persons who took a seat in the cabinet already offered a guarantee of that. From the side of the liberals it was feared that the Right would not be able to put together a workable cabinet for lack of manpower. But when Dr. Kuyper after a short while surrounded himself with capable men, the liberals felt a load taken off their mind as they saw that the interests of the country were certainly entrusted to worthy and competent men.¹⁰ In a period of four years, this administration lost three members: Van Asch van Wyck passed away after months of illness, Kruys, too, died in office, and Melvil van Lynden tendered his resignation a few weeks ago.¹¹ Squire Asch van Wyck was our closest kin, a living portrait of the history of our party. When he first entered politics some twenty years ago, the liberals knew nothing better to do than to pillory him day after day as a nonentity and even to investigate his academic background in the hope of proving his utter incompetence. But he kept silent and worked. He worked as mayor of the city of Amersfoort, as a member of parliament, as governor of Suriname, as minister of colonial affairs. He worked with unflinching loyalty and exemplary dedication, not eight but twelve hours a day. And when he died, he was remembered by all as a capable, impartial, and principled Anti-Revolutionary leader. And, most importantly, he died a Christian, with childlike trust in the mercy of God.

His death was a blow to the administration, to the Central Committee, to the Anti-Revolutionary Party. But in Minister Idenburg our country was granted a man who could fill the empty place with honor.¹² The knowledge he had acquired during his career in the East Indies quickly won him a large measure of influence and authority as an MP. And as a minister he gained the trust of all parties not only through his affable personality but also through his sympathetic disposition, his serious-mindedness, and his thorough knowledge. It is an honor for us to be able to count him among the champions of our anti-revolutionary principles.

Thus, there was little reason to be critical of the administration that took office in 1901. In terms of ability and energy it was in no way inferior to previous cabinets. As well, the government's legislative agenda, unfolded in the Speech from the Throne, although firm, was moderate in tone. It contained what was expected: the twenty-two bills it proposed were all focused on the spiritual and material side of the social question; and the government openly declared that by giving leadership in providing the

¹⁰ Kuyper's cabinet consisted of four members of the Anti-Revolutionary Party: Kuyper himself (permanent chairman and minister of interior affairs); Van Asch van Wyk (colonies); De Marez Oyens (commerce and industry), a civil servant in that Department; and Robert Melvil van Lynden (foreign affairs), a seasoned parliamentarian. Three other ministers were recruited from the Catholic Party: Loeff (justice), a professor of law; Harte van Tecklenburg (finance), a lawyer; and Bergansius (defense), an army colonel. Finally, Kruys (navy), was a vice admiral in the Royal Dutch Navy and of no party affiliation.

¹¹ Van Lynden was unhappy about Kuyper's frequent meddling in foreign affairs without his being informed.

¹² Alexander W. F. Idenburg returned from the East Indies in 1901 after a successful military career. He was elected to the Second Chamber or Lower House of the Dutch parliament and was at once noted for his expertise in Indonesian affairs. Thus he was the natural successor upon the death of the Minister of Colonies.

supports made necessary by the altered conditions, it wished to build on the Christian foundations of the life of the nation. On the basis of its extensive program the current cabinet was greeted with goodwill in parliament and press. The parties of the Right welcomed it warmly, and the parties of the Left adopted the standpoint of loyal opposition.

During the first year the cabinet was occupied with the unfinished business of its predecessor. A number of laws had passed during the previous administration but had not yet come into force—to wit, the Disability Act, the Militia and Defense Act, the Child Labor Act, and the Public Health Act. Among these, it was particularly the Disability Act that made it impossible for the Department of Labor at once to draft bills dealing with insurance schemes, since the introduction of that law demanded such cumbersome and time-consuming work that the first year was lost for any other activity by the department.

When not a single legislative bill was introduced in the course of that first year, and when the government in the following year mentioned nothing further about expanding freedom of education, a sense of disappointment settled over our circles, which the House¹³ frankly expressed in its Response to the Speech from the Throne. People feared that Dr. Kuyper, once in the seat of power, had discarded his “old duds.” A small squadron broke away from the main fleet and began to sail the political waters by the impracticable compass of 1894.¹⁴ Some liberal members during the budget debates of 1902 even expressed concern about the Christian character of the cabinet and wondered out aloud in what way the principles of the current cabinet differed from those honored by previous administrations. That’s how good relations were at the start and what great expectations were entertained by supporters and opponents alike with respect to the policy of the new cabinet.

Sympathy for the cabinet rose even higher in the first months of 1903. In Amsterdam, a strike that broke out in a warehouse of a storage company, owing to a powerful sense of solidarity among workers, leaped over to Amsterdam’s railway network. As a result, this transportation hub for people and freight was suddenly isolated from the rest of the country. On Saturday, January 31 and Sunday, February 1, nothing moved on what were normally the busiest railroads in the country. At every station, from Harlem, The Hague, Rotterdam, Amersfoort and Utrecht, workers lined up, ready to walk off the job at the first signal: One word only was needed to generate a general work stoppage among railway personnel everywhere. The entire

¹³ The Second Chamber or Lower House of the bicameral Dutch parliament is usually referred to in this translation as simply the House. The other chamber of parliament was the First Chamber or Upper House.

¹⁴ A. P. Staalman, member of the House since 1894, accused Dr. Kuyper of betraying his earlier slogan of a “definitive extension of the franchise” by having acquiesced in the less progressive suffrage bill of 1895, which continued to make the right to vote depend on a man’s level of education and income. Staalman then led a split-off from the ARP, to form a Christian-Democratic Party, a move that proved detrimental to the election results of 1905.

nation was perplexed. The strike was a complete surprise for the country—for the government, for the social democratic and anarchist parties, in fact, even for a large group of participating workers who fell in line, but only on command. Once the conflict was transferred to the railway network, the country's government was in the hands of Mr. Oudegeest, president of the federation of railway personnel; he gave orders, and all obeyed—engineers and stokers, conductors and ticket punchers. Company directors had no say, despite the fact that part of the workers, when hired, had pledged on oath to follow orders. An anarchistic reign of terror prevailed. The common good and the public interest were ignored. The unity of the organized workers was at that moment of the highest importance: it trumped everything. The lawful administrators, employers and directors, were silenced; all power rested with the leaders of the labor unions.

In the tents of the socialists and anarchists a great shout was heard. Both groups claimed the honor of having masterminded the strike. The daily *Het Volk* threatened: For once the capitalists can see for themselves what labor is capable of when it is united. The lion has only shown its claws, has only *hinted* at what it can do when it unleashes its might. From now on, the lords of industry would do well to take this into account. If necessary, a general strike will have to bring the conservative classes to reason. The future has even greater victories in store. Workers! Our movement is gaining. One can *hear* it grow.

Overcome with fear, all parties unanimously ranged themselves on the side of the government. In the first days of February everyone was deeply disturbed by what was happening. The public, as one man, viewed it as revolution, anarchy, a victory of might over right, an unlawful transfer of power. In the press, not only the parties of the Right but also those of the Left urged the government to make sure nothing like this could ever happen again. A few voices did fault the government for not having immediately intervened and for not, say, seizing locomotives and carriages, in order at least to secure the postal service and safeguard the link between Amsterdam and The Hague—as if the ministers, in the absence of personnel, should have personally taken on the roles of engineers and conductors—but these voices were not echoed and the government did not lose its head. The newspaper *De Amsterdammer* in those days gave voice to the heartfelt conviction of all: the government through its calm and level-headed response has saved the country from great harm and danger.

The government was calm, but also firm; it knew what it wanted. The end of the strike did not lessen any tensions. The boldness of the workers knew no bounds. Workers in Amsterdam, for example, threatened to stop working if the city council did not accede to their demands on short-term notice. They

were not satisfied with the results of the strike,¹⁵ which did not improve the hourly wage or other benefits. What use was it, to have their organization recognized? Their wives could not buy groceries with it. Every favorable opportunity had to be used to bring capitalism to its knees. Anarchism inflamed the passions, and socialism lacked the courage to warn against the “anarchistic gamble” of a general strike. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the government did not hesitate to take decisive measures. First, it called up the militia, to prevent shocking scenes as in Durgerdam,¹⁶ to impress the audacious agitators with its authority, and to restore people’s sense of security. Next, on February 26 it came to parliament with a declaration that found approval with friend and foe for its dignified tone and firm resolve. To ward off the danger of a rash assault on vital services, the government proposed: (1) to install a railroad brigade; (2) to appoint an official inquiry into the working conditions of railroad personnel; and (3) to make dereliction of duty in certain public services a criminal offense.

When these proposals became public, a form of systematic resistance arose among the workers. *Het Volk* published a cartoon showing the Minister of Interior Affairs strangling a laborer.¹⁷ The legislative bills were called coercive acts and muzzle laws—assaults on the freedom of association and organization of the working classes. In a meeting of representatives of some forty trade unions, held in Amsterdam on February 20 at the invitation of the Association of Railway and Trolley Personnel, the decision was made to establish a Committee of Resistance for organizing strong action in defense of the freedom of the workman and to call upon the entire Dutch proletariat to show its solidarity with organized labor. Should labor’s liberty be attacked again, the Committee was given broad powers to call a strike of all workers in the transportation industry, and if the strike did not lead to the desired result, to expand the strike to companies in the food sector and if necessary to proclaim a general strike effectively paralyzing the entire country. Preparations were to be made for an immediate strike if notified by the central board of the Committee of Resistance. The Social Democratic Party, only half convinced of the “anarchistic adventure,” nevertheless supported this threat to the government. *Het Volk* wrote on March 2 that workingmen should organize themselves for a “gigantic strike.” Since it is the government that

15 For details about the negotiations between labor, government and employers, see Snel (forthcoming, chapter 7). See also the well-documented narrative of the event by Jeroen Koch (2007, 467–74), an account which concludes, however, with the shallow explanation that the government authorities were motivated by “lust for power.” Today’s readers will recall a parallel with the firm measures taken by the American president in 1982 to break the strike of air traffic controllers in the interest of the common good.

16 Among the non-strikers were many men from Durgerdam, a village just north of Amsterdam. On the morning of January 29 they were awaited by some one hundred and fifty longshoremen, armed with clubs and knives, who drove them into the river. They were barely able to get back to safety.

17 This refers to the infamous cartoon by Albert Hahn that depicted Kuyper, who was both the Minister of Interior Affairs and the Prime Minister, holding down a workman in a stranglehold. Storekeepers who displayed the cartoon in their windows were prosecuted for libel, but ultimately all charges were dismissed. Kuyper generally put up with—and sometimes even enjoyed—the many cartoons lampooning him, but this time, when called to testify in court, he said to the judge: “I felt insulted by that picture in the most grievous way.” Cf. Snel (forthcoming, chapter 5).

has thrown down the gauntlet and incited the passions, the only possible response of the workers is to play hardball: this villainous trick compels the use of every lawful means of resistance. Meanwhile, the leader of the Social Democrats, Mr. Troelstra, declared in the House that in case of a general strike, British labor had pledged a steady flow of financial support.

There was no longer any doubt but that the strike was leveraged as a political means to intimidate the government—that a power was being organized in the state that would dictate the law. No longer was the issue solidarity or freedom of organization, wages or living conditions, but authority and power in the state.

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At this critical phase, as law and order were at stake, a large part of the liberal parties ceased to support the government and chose the side of those who threatened to strike. Now that the greatest danger had passed and the immediate emergency was over, they no longer cared about the question of legitimate authority. They condemned the government's proposals and urged it to give in. A score of distinguished men publicly invited the nation to send a petition to the government.¹⁸ Not a word of disapproval was mentioned about the strike of January 31 or about the threats by labor leaders; not a word about defending and supporting the government; everything was intended to persuade the authorities to yield, to forgive and forget, to act in a conciliatory spirit and withdraw the legislative proposals. A "gigantic petition" was drafted as the most legitimate means to warn the government against "taking a step that goes against the conscience of a large portion of the nation."

This action against the government respecting such a weighty matter at such a grave moment was a deed of folly and disloyalty. It demonstrated that the opposition did not understand what was at stake, and did not care about law and order once the danger was averted. In the hands of the opposition authority would not be safe. The bitter attitude that the liberal parties increasingly adopted against the cabinet dates from this time. To be sure, some rapprochement did occur during the debates about new legislative bills, thanks to the government's willingness to compromise. The editor of the *Handelsblad* acknowledged that "the Kuyper administration in its desire to work with parliament has gone as far as one could have hoped for." For that matter, the signatories of the petition discovered that a large number of those who shared their view were unwilling to give their support to it. As a result, with few exceptions the liberals in the House voted for the bills.

¹⁸ This public appeal was signed by various professionals, activists, professors, and theologians, including Kuyper's nemesis, the irenic theologian Dr. J. H. Gunning. "We are not," they assured readers, "men and women from the world of politics."

In an unhappy hour, a difference of principle had arisen which the *Handelsblad* formulated as follows: “According to the Anti-Revolutionaries the state or the government has an independent authority, not derived from the rights and freedoms of its citizens; whereas the liberal principle, to state it pointedly, holds that only people have rights, the government only duties. Its duty is to carry out the task of governing, from which it follows that it must be given the competencies needed to fulfill this task. These competencies it can receive only if citizens give up a portion of their unrestricted right in favor of the government. Every right that a government has is a derived right, not an independent right.” Hence the government should have yielded when the citizenry raised its voice, asserted its rights, and took back its rightful competence.

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This disagreement respecting the very nature of governmental authority caused an estrangement between the Kuyper administration and the Left, a rift that only increased during the debates about the bill to amend the Higher Education Act. Initially, when the bill was introduced in the House on March 11, 1903, its reception was not at all unfavorable. No one was surprised; everyone had expected a proposal of this kind from this cabinet. Moreover, in a dignified manner the bill met the wish expressed by the opposition that the cabinet would more clearly show its true colors in legislation. Conservative and liberal newspapers adopted a sympathetic attitude toward the bill. It really seemed that liberalism had quietly and tacitly abandoned its claim that it has a monopoly of science and scholarship. Opinions appeared to have undergone a reversal. It was openly admitted that the interest of the state, the community, and the world of scholarship was not opposed to official recognition of institutions of Christian higher education, including full degree-granting power.¹⁹

Soon, however, the tide turned. The well-known columnist Q. N.²⁰ of the *Handelsblad* subjected Kuyper’s bill to serious criticism. His objections pertained not just to specific details of the bill, nor did he merely oppose the *manner* in which Christian higher education was to be emancipated, but they were directed against the very principle of emancipation. By its very nature, official recognition by the state of Christian education next to public education, so averred Q. N., was fundamentally wrong, in conflict with the state and scholarship alike. After all, so reasoned the learned reviewer, scholarship covered every activity, but nothing other than that activity, that was related to the unbiased search for truth. Whoever would be a servant of

¹⁹ This meant, for example, that Free University graduates with a law degree would henceforth be eligible for appointments to the judiciary, and those with a degree in letters would be licensed to teach in secondary schools like gymnasia.

²⁰ Q. N. was the pseudonym of Willem van der Lugt, a law professor in Leiden, elected to the House in 1902 in a by-election for the express purpose of opposing Kuyper’s Higher Education bill.

science and scholarship must be entirely unconcerned about the end result of his research. The man of science sets out not knowing where he will end up. When it comes to end results, whoever binds himself in advance to a particular route does not serve science but is a traitor to it.

That is how the old-fashioned liberal flogged the dead horse of unbiased, objective scholarship. As in the case of the railway strike, when the liberals brought out the difference in principle as regards authority, so in the case of higher education they raised the fundamental difference, the *antithesis*, which indeed exists also in the concept of science, between the Christian and the modernist worldview. Public education was once more depicted as the sole source of genuine learning, and the non-public institutions were given the charming name of “sectarian schools,” producers of propaganda and polemics that undermine the sense of national unity and bear no other fruit than confusion and dissolution.

The *Handelsblad* took the lead in this principled opposition, soon followed by other liberal papers. Although it was admitted that liberalism in its “adolescence” had been a bit too one-sided and exaggerated, now it had changed. The public universities were quality institutions, useful to all. That “equity” and “fairness” might be part of the picture was ignored. The liberal parties proved increasingly less open to what they called “moral arguments.” They talked about accepted science and public universities as if people and nation, as if the well-being of the world, depended on them. The debates in the House were dominated by the anthesis²¹ of believing and unbelieving science, and they often degenerated into theological disputes. The liberals isolated themselves in the little circle of their system to such a degree that when the bill passed, they expected nothing less than the death of scholarship and the demise of public universities. Just recently a professor in Utrecht talked about the “depopulation of our precious universities” and the “stagnation and emaciation of public education.” Just as the socialists had raised a hue and cry about the muzzle laws, so the liberals lost their composure at the prospect of extending official recognition to Christian institutions of learning together with officially recognized degrees.

This explains why no attempts were made to come to a compromise and reach agreement either at the first reading of the bill in the House or at the second. Some liberals suggested replacing university examinations with state examinations,²² but the idea fell on deaf ears. From the beginning it

²¹ Bavinck here uses the word “antithesis” advisedly, as it was the key term in the election campaign that year, as determined by Kuyper, who wished to make the coming elections a choice between “for or against the antithesis” between Christian and secular politics.

²² Until this time, law students at the Free University, in order to attain an officially recognized degree, would also audit lectures at a public university and take the final exam there as well as at their own university.

was “all or nothing.” The dogma of sacred liberal scholarship brooked no concessions, and political calculations only strengthened the opposition’s resolve to maintain this dogma in full force.

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The same history was repeated during the debates about the revision of the Elementary Education Act. Here, too, the prospects for working together were at first not unfavorable. The Primary Education Act [of 1892] under the Mackay administration had granted equal funding from the national treasury for both public and separate²³ schools, thus in principle viewing both schools as equal parts of the Dutch primary school system.²⁴ This Act had also been approved by many liberals. Appreciation for the separate school system was gradually improving and the idea gained ground, also among liberals, to accommodate and support parents in their quest for equality before the law with respect to the education of their children. The Truancy Act of 1900 would surely have been voted down if the [liberal] minister in charge had not, on behalf of the government, promised that he would see to it that the law would not cause financial hardship for separate schools.²⁵ And the minister kept his word in the amended Education Act in the spring of 1901, whereby the subsidy to separate schools was raised considerably.

It goes without saying, however, that the Kuyper Cabinet, though thankful for partial funding, could not leave it at that. The Union Report of 1895, a survey sponsored jointly by associations for Christian education, expressed the wish, “insofar as the constitution allows, for a definitive resolution of the schools question.”²⁶ The Anti-Revolutionary Party had endorsed the Union Report and its members in the House had urged for an increase in subsidies for separate schools.

An increase was indeed needed. Greater equality between the two school systems could have been achieved if public school boards had not declined to follow the intention of the Mackay Act, namely, to levy tuition fees,²⁷ for that would have promoted greater equality in the means of support for public and separate schools. Some public schools did levy nominal tuition fees,

23 Dutch original: “*bijzonder*,” i.e., special. Another, frequent designation of schools established by an association was “free” schools or “parental” schools, as opposed to “government” schools and “parochial” or church-run schools. To call them “faith-based schools” never occurred to their supporters; they believed that every school was based on a faith, whether it was Christianity, or humanism, or anthroposophy, or otherwise.

24 The national government paid for one-third of the operating budget of both public and separate schools. Municipal governments paid for the remaining two-thirds in the case of public schools, but separate schools had to rely on tuition fees and voluntary donations to make up the difference.

25 Compulsory school attendance would spike enrolment in schools, necessitating expanding buildings and hiring more teachers.

26 The Union Report advocated complete financial parity of public and separate education, based on the maxim: “Separate schools the rule, government schools supplementary.”

27 Pressure from the Left had compelled Mackay to remove from the Act the clause that made tuition fees for public schools compulsory.

but even then, lower-income families were given exemptions and municipal governments made up the difference. This dashed the hope that the MacKay Education Act would spell an end to the schools struggle. A great inequality remained between public and separate education, and more and more people in the country felt that this was unfair. Whatever arguments one might want to advance, the growing proliferation of separate schools exposes the injustice of a situation in which supporters of separate schools save the governments, national and municipal, millions of guilders every year, yet receive only one-sixth of what the supporters of public education are paid. All the water in the ocean cannot wash away this fact.

Thus, when the present government took office, it was generally expected that it would speedily take measures to strengthen the free, separate schools. One liberal member even expressed his surprise in the House that the government merely mentioned that its intention was “to continue on the path toward emancipation of education that has thus far been followed.” Didn’t the Union Report go much further and propose a totally different system? Apparently, the opposition had expected more rather than less of what was proposed in the amended Education Act, tabled on June 15, 1904. There were legitimate grounds to expect that the bill would meet little opposition and pass in a spirit of collaboration for the common good.

The board of the public schoolteachers’ union, the *Nederlandsche Onderwijzersgenootschap* [NOG] was pleased with many provisions in the bill, and at the membership meeting of July 29, 1904 it put the following motion on the agenda: “The NOG warmly welcomes the proposed improvement in teacher training, the raise in salaries for schoolteachers in the separate schools and improvements in their appointment contracts, and the possibility of more ample subsidies for schools for the mentally challenged.” But evidently the board had miscalculated. A different spirit took hold of the meeting. The liberal member of Parliament Mr. Ketelaar got up and gave voice to what many sensed: “This bill is an unprecedented attack on elementary education in this country; its intention is no other than to pump the public school dry! The NOG cannot take this lying down. It must declare that in any case this bill is unacceptable.” The speech was met with thunderous applause. From this meeting dates the campaign to oppose the bill, and soon the war-cry was heard throughout the country: “Save the public school!” What the government proposed in this bill was unconstitutional and betrayed the truce achieved back in 1889 under the Mackay government. It was an attack on the public school and would destroy universal public education. It would make hundreds of public schoolteachers jobless and would empty their schools. It would create countless tiny, sectarian, inferior schools and promote division and intolerance.

Similar to the agitation around higher education did the old dogma rear its head also with respect to elementary schools: The public school was the one, holy, catholic, neutral school, available to all. The sectarian school can talk about tolerance; the public school practices tolerance. The Christian school claims the child, to make it clerical; the public school says: Give me your child, and I will make it self-reliant. No longer did people remember the words of Allard Pierson²⁸ who stated as early as 1869 that a state which teaches religion in its schools which in the eyes of many of its citizens no longer deserves the name religion cannot possibly be called a state that has organized its public education “with respect for everyone’s religious beliefs.” No longer did people remember the words of recognition and appreciation of separate education that had been expressed by a growing number of a variety of supporters of public education. To judge from what many liberals were saying and doing, it seemed that after so many decades they still hadn’t learned anything and would never come to the knowledge of the truth.

Opposition to issues like the authority of government facing a general strike, the freedom of higher education, and the legitimacy of elementary education in separate, non-government schools gradually turned into systematic opposition to everything coming from the Kuyper administration. The bill to revise the Liquor Act, although at first received with sympathy and praised for its form and content, later was vehemently opposed, called a poor example of legislative competence, and passed only by the vote of the coalition partners. The bill on tariffs, when submitted, was immediately attacked by the opposition. Even though it is utter nonsense to assert that the Netherlands is a free trade nation that owes its prosperity to free trade, an appeal was none the less made to the dogma of free trade in order to combat the proposal to increase tariffs. Despite proposals for social reforms like measures combating adulteration of foodstuffs and unfair competition, for promoting trade schools and regulating the apprenticeship system, for regulating labor contracts and protecting workers, for extending compulsory accident insurance to agriculture and the fishing industry, for compulsory insurance against illness, disability and old age, for installing agricultural councils and elevating the middle class—despite this rich social program the cabinet is called reactionary, conservative, and anti-democratic. Whatever the cabinet says and does—about laws on the processing of herring, criteria governing exemptions from vaccination, postal regulations, rules governing Sunday observance, about the acquisition of quick-firing guns, the dissolution of the Upper House,²⁹ proportionality in nominations and

²⁸ Allard Pierson was himself a modernist theologian who agreed, though from opposite sympathies, with Groen van Prinsterer and Kuyper that the public school with its religion of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man was not in line with historic Christianity but instead was itself a “sectarian” school promoting the religion of modernism.

²⁹ Kuyper had the queen dissolve the Upper House, and order new elections for it, to ensure it was more representative of relative party strength. The result was that the Right gained the majority in the Upper House, which then joined the Lower House and passed the Higher Education Act.

appointments,³⁰ about members of government giving interviews and traveling abroad,³¹ about this, that and the other thing—everything was weaponized to attack the life of the cabinet. And that is the sole purpose. This cabinet must go. It is a piece of unheard-of arrogance that it dares to govern and is able to govern. In the free Netherlands, the seats of power should be filled solely by men of unquestioned liberal background.

.....

It is this antipathy toward the Christian cabinet and this desire to recapture the seats of power that have shepherded the divided liberals back together again. The Federated Liberals and the Union Liberals understand that if they are to have any chance of success at the polls this June, they will have to put their differences aside and form one bloc. This reunification is not easy. Especially the franchise question frustrates unity. They also differ on the nature of society and the task of the state, a difference that goes back to the contest between the individualistic and the organic theory of the state, between the philosophy of Kant and that of Darwin, between the doctrine of the permanence of human nature and that of the evolutionistic process that denies all absolutes. Nonetheless, relations between the two liberal factions have begun to improve, and to the degree that the next election draws closer and the hope of regaining power grows stronger they have resumed their former collaboration, already visible during the debates on the budget of 1904. After protracted negotiations their MPs and party bosses have finally agreed on a joint program of action for running the coming election campaign. And at their separate meetings last January, each adopted the program by a large majority. A cartoon in the *Handelsblad* featured the happy marriage of Mr. Federation and Miss Union.

There are reasons why we can be truly happy about this marriage. The liberals, to judge from their response to the education laws, attach great value to unity and tolerance. And if they not only say so to each other, but also show it in their actions, albeit for the time being only, then that is a reason to be happy. Indeed, if they are really convinced that the sitting cabinet is a disaster for the country, then it is not only their right but also their duty to shake hands and in the face of the common enemy to silence all fraternal quarreling. And in that case we cannot blame them when they raise slogans like *Against the clericals! Away with the Christian cabinet! Down with Kuyper!*

30 Kuyper had appointed a committee which found that the vast majority of Crown appointees to the office of mayor were liberals, even when the municipality where they were installed was located in the Bible Belt. As Minister of Interior Affairs, he promptly reverted to nominating only candidates for mayor who were in each case in “spiritual sympathy” with the majority of the inhabitants.

31 Kuyper’s frequent travels abroad were suspected of interfering with the Department of Foreign Affairs and possibly bound the Netherlands to secret international commitments. Nor were his interviews with foreign journalists deemed in the interest of the country. Kuyper admitted that he was sometimes too generous on that score, but in his defense, he also quoted complaints in the foreign press that he was too tight-lipped.

For then these negatives strongly imply something positive. However, when we try to find this positive element in the program the liberals have adopted, we look in vain and are sadly disappointed.

Their opposition would have been powerful and their actions truthful if they had had the courage to raise as their slogan, for example: *Permeate the whole of public administration and national life with the secular spirit!* or *Universal suffrage for men and women!* For both these wishes are not in the program of the present government, nor shall they ever be fulfilled by it. Slogans like these would probably not guarantee success this time around, but a principle would have been announced that a man could work with, be inspired by, think about and embrace. But not a program that speaks in vague words and minimal terms about “maintaining the public school”—as if that is not already a constitutional obligation; about legislation “regulating insurance and poor relief”—as if such laws have not already passed under the present government; about “reforming our defense system in the sense of a national guard”—without defining this sense in any way; about “a more rational regulation of our taxation system”—while leaving any further details largely uncertain. Such a program only demonstrates that they do not know among themselves what they really want; that it is a program hammered out in a committee after much give and take. But it also gives the impression that it did not flow from a firm principle, from any deep convictions, and that it serves rather to hide their real agenda. Positive in appearance, at bottom it is negative, a random slogan of a party consisting of heterogeneous elements, a group that does not lead but follows, that does not build up but breaks down, that lets its agenda be determined by what the opposition stands for—in any case that does not dare to state openly what its own driving principle is. For it definitely does have a driving principle! It was stated recently by the liberal MP for Den Helder when he said: “Our goal is to acquire a different government that will no longer mix religion with politics!” Religion is a matter of the heart, the inner room, the home, the church, but not something that the state has to take into account in its administration, its institutions, its education system. All those areas must be permeated by a secular spirit. Politics that listens to revelation must be resisted by politics that follows reason. The shared goal is to bring down the present government because it bases itself on a Christian foundation.

The program of the liberals is dishonest and fails to state what unifies them. Current developments have made this crystal clear. Union Liberals and Liberal Democrats, despite the new accord, strongly disagree about the meaning of the program, in particular as to the franchise clause. For the immediate future, different interpretations are suppressed and following the election all are free to go their own way. All liberals therefore can safely sign on to the program, including the franchise clause. Yet some of their leading spokesmen have stated openly that the intention is to introduce universal franchise, while others explain that the right to vote should continue to be

tied to some level of property and fitness. It is clear to all: this union was not made from love but from calculation; it was not a marriage of mutual sympathy but a marriage of convenience.

The congratulations received by the newlyweds have not been particularly warm. On the Left, the radical democrats and social democrats look on this backroom horse-trading with contempt. The far-left paper *De Amsterdammer* has commented that the liberal program is a grab-bag of generalities; that a liberal win will give their conservative wing control of the agenda; that the program is a dishonest, spineless, thinly transparent manifesto—a weak dilution lacking all strength. And as for the socialists, there was a brief moment when it seemed that their leader Troelstra, with his forthright slogan *Away with the government of clericals!* might set the tone for the liberals. That would have been greatly to their advantage. After all, the socialists had lost much support owing to the abortive general strike, nor did it fare very well after that. They are under constant stress. During the first months of 1903 they exclaimed that the new bills [prohibiting strikes in the public sector] curtailed the laborer's freedom of organization and association. And when the bills passed parliament, they vowed up and down that those "strangle laws" had to be withdrawn. After a short while, however, even *Het Volk*³² deemed it necessary to point out "that there was no reason to fear that the notorious measures muzzled and killed the labor movement." And virtually nothing is heard any more of the idea of having the laws withdrawn. The Left remains internally divided. What is heard now and then from their midst, for example from the member for Leeuwarden, does not exactly inspire a high view of their harmony and is hardly suitable to inspire longing for the socialist state of the future. For all these reasons it would create clarity if the socialists and the liberals campaigned jointly under an anti-cabinet banner. The new government might then have room in a liberal cabinet for Troelstra or another social democrat; in any case it would have been dependent on the socialists and held on to power at their discretion. But when push came to shove the liberals did not dare to choose this more honest route, and decided it was better to come with a program of generalities. The socialists now say that it was all backstairs intrigue, that principles are out the door, that the only consideration was to campaign with a purely pragmatic program that knows only what it does not want—with the possibility of again collaborating with these unprincipled liberals in the run-off elections.³³

³² *Het Volk* was a daily of a more moderate tone.

³³ For the sake of brevity, the next page and a half of Bavinc's speech is not reproduced in this translation. In summary, Bavinc here recounts the discussions in the press about the debate among the liberals whether an extension of the franchise would require a revision of the constitution. The majority view was that this was either unnecessary, or else would not pass parliament anyway in view of the relative strength of those who opposed it. The question further threatened unity among the liberals when the left wing of the liberals announced it might form a separate party if no clear course of action was decided upon.

The entire history shows how dishonest their campaign slogan is. At this point it is hard to say what this attempt at collaboration will result in. What will predominate in June: the choice for “neutral” politics, or concern for the social question? If the former, then one must vote for a socialist and against a “clerical”; if the latter, then many votes will go to the “clerical” candidate. Thus, liberalism halts between two opinions; its approach is not determined by a firm principle and a well-defined program, but by circumstances. One thing is certain: we cannot expect the liberals to preserve the Christian foundations of our national life, nor to fight for social reforms. Some of them may recently have expressed the wish that the sitting cabinet would try “to restore the Christian religion in the public square, insofar as conformable to freedom of conscience and freedom of religion”—that political life should leave “more room for the Christian-historical principles”—but a fair appraisal would show that the Kuyper Cabinet has done more in that respect than all liberal cabinets of the past. For, without disparaging the merits of the liberal regime in many respects, it is forced—owing to its starting principle, which it has always applied in practice—to permeate public life more and more with the spirit of religious “neutrality.” For years it put stumbling blocks on the path of Christian schools. It totally ignored the church. The faculties of theology in the state universities were converted into “departments of religious studies.” Appointments were made from an almost exclusively liberal slate. Whoever was orthodox was backward, an obscurantist. To be liberal was synonymous with educated, progressive, virtuous. Today the activity of the Christian parties, and the Kuyper Cabinet, has put an end to this privileged treatment. Appointments in theology are no longer limited to liberal candidates. The rights of separate Christian education are better protected than before. More can be expected from a Christian cabinet than from a liberal one for providing poor relief and encouraging Sunday observance, for promoting public decency and maintaining the Christian character of the nation both at home and in the colonies. The advice to vote neither Left nor Right but to vote “strategically” in effect comes down to again enthrone liberalism and increasingly erase the Christian character of the nation by the spirit of “neutrality.”

The same is true of the social reforms that the times call for. It is a waste of time and effort to consult the annals of 1894 and follow it in designing a social program for the new century.³⁴ Those among us who fail to adjust their policies will remain stuck on sandbanks or else will be swept along by the liberal current. Their proposal may sound promising for social reform, but it is too internally contradictory to be able to estimate its long-term effects. One liberal manifesto breathes a spirit inimical to democratic reform, while another, though it recognizes private property, nevertheless aims at

³⁴ This is a reference to the proposal of Staalman and his Christian Democrats (see note 14).

ochlocracy, a rule of the masses. For if the right to vote is an innate right of the individual, then it arises from not merely the principle of popular sovereignty, but it also leads, not to a stronger influence of the people in its organic relationships, but to the dominance of the masses, to putting the decisions about all affairs of state in the hands of the numerical majority. In this respect as well, therefore, the action of a separate group of Christian Democrats with their own candidates would play into the hands of our adversary and amount to a gamble that would bring us no gains.

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And so a clear understanding of the state of the parties urges us to give the strongest possible support to the cabinet which currently administers the country's affairs. But this realization is not enough. Our conduct must be guided by principles, our vote at the polls must be ruled by higher motives than opportunistic ones. And then the choice is clear: the only government that meets the need of the times is a Christian administration that wishes to continue to govern on the Christian foundations of national life and at the same time is serious about social reform.

The times we live in are indeed different in many ways from the previous era when the state used to arrange everything. The king was regarded as the father of his people. The government not only looked after the general welfare, but it also, in its own fashion, cared for the moral and religious education of its subjects. Next to the state there was also the church, but both were closely connected and both worked—along different lines and in distinctive ways—for the same goal. But in modern times, both church and state have been pushed aside and put in the shade by the economy and society as a whole. To be sure, the activity of the state, precisely because of the astounding development of society, has increased and expanded enormously, but in spiritual things, in religion and morality, its task has shrunk considerably. A personal government with its paternal care has been replaced by the abstract concept of state or community. And the one church, embracing almost the entire population and supported by the state, is gradually making room for a growing number of free churches. Whereas the church building used to be the center of town or village, today the chapels and store-front churches are rising as ever so many manifestations of a pluriform religious life.

The nation no longer looks to the state for its religious and moral education. In this respect the people have emancipated themselves and have withdrawn from tutelage by the state. It wishes to stand on its own two feet and follow its own path. It will no longer have the state impose its religion and its morality. Hence there is no longer any coercion. Freedom of conscience and freedom of religion are in practice accepted by all, and among Protestants they are accepted both in theory and from conviction. Granted, they differ about the import of the well-known clause in Article 36 of the Belgic

Confession.³⁵ Yet even those who wish to keep this clause reject all coercion in matters of religion and maintain the expression in question only because they attach a meaning to it which others are convinced is unhistorical. The scenes that some opponents in their heated imagination are evoking of “scaffolds” and “burnings at the stake” can be attributed not only to election fever but also to profound shallowness and ignorance.³⁶ The times they are a-changing, and so are we—just as we trust our political opponents to have changed and no longer condone the persecutions they were guilty of in the previous century with regard to the Seceders.³⁷ We therefore ask the Left to acknowledge our conviction that the Gospel of Jesus Christ excludes any and all compulsion in religion. In no way do we desire that the government impose the Christian religion on the populace. By the same token, however, we demand that they not compel us, directly or indirectly, to accept their colorless neutrality. When it comes to liberty, too, we still go the liberals one better.

The new circumstances we live under are therefore accepted by Christians without complaining or grumbling. They must—they can—they should do so, precisely because they are Christians and therefore believe that God rules not only in former times but also in our time, and that He works until now. Professor Harnack, in one of his lectures held recently in our country, remarked rightly that the early church did not consist of a quiet group of ascetics but of a radical party of progress. And that’s what Christians always are, if they live up to what they believe. They grapple with the new conditions in state and society, in science and philosophy, in art and literature, in business and industry. They prove all things and hold fast to what is good. They don’t sing the praises of “the good old days,” and they don’t bewail the ills of the present. They get involved, and reform things according to what they see as ideal. Even though they know that here on earth things will never be perfect until the second coming of Christ, which guards them against a superficial optimism, still they keep on working and refuse to give up. Their slogan is not respristination—restoring what is past or retaining the status quo—but reformation. Mr. Lohman’s fresh and forceful speech in the House

35 Article 36 states, among other things, that the civil government is mandated “to protect the sacred ministry *and thus may remove and prevent all idolatry and false worship, that the kingdom of antichrist may be thus destroyed.*” The words here italicized were deleted by the 1905 synod of Bavinck’s denomination, i.e., the *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*.

36 During the election campaign, De Savorin Lohman, leader of the Free Anti-Revolutionaries, quipped: “Don’t worry, folks. It won’t come to that. We have a law on the books that prohibits stoking a fire in public spaces.”

37 The ruling elite in the 1830s agreed with the government measures against those who held worship services independently of the official Dutch Reformed Church. The leaders of these “seceders” were fined, their preachers jailed, and troops quartered in their homes. Groen van Prinsterer, spokesman of the Anti-Revolutionaries, condemned the measures as unconstitutional, but Thorbecke, the liberal leader, condoned them.

the other day in which he did justice to new conditions regarding pension schemes warmed the hearts of many. None of us likes to keep walking around in the same “old duds.”³⁸

Yet that does not alter the fact that as we prove all things we are obligated to what is good and wish to hold fast to it. Among which we count in the first place the spiritual goods: religion, morality, justice, science and art, the legacy that we have inherited from our forefathers and that we are faithfully to pass on to posterity. Man cannot live by bread alone. Our greatest treasure is the gospel of Christ, and the Kingdom of Heaven that He established on earth is a pearl that exceeds all material goods in value. Unquestionably, a holy task also rests on the civil government where it concerns all those great treasures that have their center in the Christian religion. It does not stand “neutrally” between the truth and the lie, nor is it allowed to take up position there, because it is a minister of God; it derives its origin from him and is accountable to him. Never did Groen van Prinsterer or the Anti-Revolutionary Party ever accept a separation of church and state in the sense that the state does not need to reckon with God. Our program of principles states that we believe that the “eternal principles of God’s Word also hold for the political domain” and that government in a Christian nation is “a servant of God and duty-bound to glorify his name.” And the correctness of this belief is vindicated in practice by the fact that neutrality in the sense of indifference is an impossible stance also for the state. The state and public law are constantly in touch with people and human relationships and hence are automatically stirred by the views about religion and morality that live among the people. Government at all times is called upon to act; such action should be shaped by the precepts of morality, and morality is connected to and rooted in a religious faith. In marriage law, in criminal law, in requiring the oath, in Sunday observance, and so forth, the government faces principles in which law and justice are ultimately founded. A state that violates these foundations undermines society, can maintain itself only by power, and digs its own grave. Therefore, so long as the words “by the grace of God” are retained in our laws, the Kingdom of the Netherlands adopts not a neutral but a positive, religious, Christian standpoint. Our life as a nation indeed still rests on Christian foundations.

There is no doubt, however, that these Christian foundations on which our political and social edifice has rested for centuries are gravely imperiled in our time. Much has been said in the last few weeks and months about the antithesis between the Christian and the modernist worldview.³⁹ The debate is not about persons; it is not ours to judge the hearts of people. One

³⁸ Allusion to a remark by Kuyper when the opposition told him, “That’s not what you preached twenty years ago!” Kuyper replied, “Don’t hold me to my old duds.”

³⁹ Kuyper would make the term “antithesis” the shibboleth of the June, 1905 elections.

can entertain many erroneous thoughts and yet be a sincere person with a pious heart; and purity of confession is no guarantee of genuine piety. Nor can we ever forget that in the modernist worldview the Christian traditions are still operative in many respects. But that the Christian view of life and the world has been severely threatened and attacked since the eighteenth century: can anyone who reads the signs of the times dare to deny this fact? In unbelief and revolution, in the rationalism of Hegel, in the positivism of Comte, in the evolutionism of Haeckel, in the historical materialism of Marx, in socialism, communism, and anarchism—a power has arisen which is making ever greater gains in state and society, in marriage and family, in science and art, and which has declared war on all religion, morality, and law. Whoever does not see the threat from those quarters against our entire culture must be blind. This struggle is the order of the day everywhere, in all civilized countries, among all Christian nations. There it is fought in part with different weapons and on different terrains, but everywhere it lies at the root of all religious and moral questions and political and social issues. The theme of the history of the world is the conflict between faith and unbelief. And all—I'm not saying all who love the Reformed faith, or the Catholic faith, or even the general Christian faith—but all who still value religion and morality, who still believe that man shall not live by bread alone, all such should join forces to resist this common enemy.

A government that is blind to this spiritual warfare—or acts as if it does not exist—does not understand its times and is not equal to its task. The standpoint of neutrality may for a time, for various reasons, have been understandable and excusable; but when a government sees that things are going wrong, that a policy of *laissez faire, laissez aller* is pernicious for religion and morality, then it ought to discard its cloak of indifference and show respect for religion—for its own sake, and for the sake of society and the nation. That is its duty, all the more so since in former times, under the mask of neutrality, it promoted unbelief in the name of freedom by suppressing people's freedom of conscience by means of a public school accessible to people of all faiths—"the school of the modernist sect."⁴⁰ When a portion of the nation rises up against this disregard for its rights, when it desires that the religious and moral foundations of all of life be preserved, then the government is called to accommodate them and then it will be looking after, not a private interest but an interest of equal value for the common good. It must refrain from coercion on either side of the issue. As Minister Kuyper stated in the Upper House, the government of our beloved country should make possible a life in which everyone can succeed in freely developing their own principles and convictions. Under a liberal regime such a life was made impossible; neutrality played into the hands of unbelief, which undermined

⁴⁰ For this expression, see note 28 above.

the religious and moral foundations of our national life. To uphold the spiritual goods, the Christian principles, is therefore the chief task which today rests on the shoulders of the government. Thus, at the start of the Kuyper administration, the following priceless saying came from the side of the liberals: “Over against the idolatrous materialism of our time, when the protection of material interests is often acknowledged as the only task of government, it deserves respect that an administration turns things around and wishes in the first place to be the representative of sacred and lofty principles.”

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New conditions and circumstances impose still another task on the government. With increasing intensity, fresh societal developments have come to the fore in the last century and now confront us with a whole series of complicated problems. Intellectual autonomy has been joined by an extraordinary expansion of man’s control over the forces of nature. Machinery, technical innovation, the division of labor, an entrepreneurial spirit, and changes in transportation have brought about a revolution in agriculture, in commerce and industry, and in the production, distribution, and consumption of material goods. Society is reshaping itself as we speak. The old relations are everywhere found to be too restrictive. They no longer fit the new life that is everywhere rising from the depths. Everything in the various classes and strata of society is in ferment. Everybody is out to find legal frameworks that suit the new life.

The new and weighty task of government made necessary by the new situation cannot be articulated and executed without the guidance of higher principles. Otherwise, we shall oscillate between conservatism and radicalism, between individualism and socialism, between aristocracy and democracy. There still are people who want to confine the state to the role of night-watchman and leave society to its own devices. But that school assumes an optimistic idea about human nature that is constantly contradicted by reality; neutrality by the state, also here, has led to oppression of the weak and victory for the most brazen egoist. This has been countered by the school of socialism, which wants to burden the state with the entire task of society and have society absorbed by the state. The first school sacrifices the state to society and society to the individual; the second absorbs the individual into society and identifies society with the state. These two schools cannot be reconciled unless they go back to ideal principles and apply them to determine relations in society. For if they do not let themselves be ruled and guided by such principles, they will first embody themselves in groups, next in factions and then classes, and so end up opposing one another more and more.

Against this, our Christian principles enable us to firmly resist such a class struggle, which is one of the gravest dangers that threaten the life of the nation in our time. After all, ideal principles transcend the parties involved; they constitute a world of ideas that serve as norms for state and society, for government and citizens, for parents and children, for freemen and servants, and for all human relationships. They set boundaries between them and at the same time connect them to each other; they are “spiritual powers” which govern the entire organism of a people with all its institutions and branches, and which make each member, rich and poor, great and small, conscious of the fact that all are members of a whole and depend on one another for help and support.

Only when a government proceeds from such firm Christian principles can it hope to arrive at a sound social policy for our time, one that respects the rights of all but also maintains the duties of all. Granted, when these principles are implemented in practice, differences of opinion are not absent. These differences are gleefully noted from the side of the liberals, and in the four years that are behind us they talk of nothing but national unity and tolerance yet did not let an opportunity go by without exploiting our differences for their own advantage, to sow division among their opponents. For our part, we not only acknowledge such differences but we also consider them unavoidable, given the one-sidedness that people are always prone to. But we would strongly protest if people concluded from this that principles are useless because of their abstract nature. In life, “matters of conscience” occur repeatedly, and then it is exceedingly difficult to find out what is the right thing to do, and people’s opinions about it often vary greatly. But no one would want to infer from this that the moral law is meaningless. The best pedagogue is sometimes at his wits’ end about the right treatment for a particular child, but that does not mean that there are no rules for child-rearing, or that it makes little sense to learn about them.

Christian principles prove their worth in politics in a similar way. Precisely because they are of a universal nature, they retain their value for the whole of life and for every age. They do not furnish concrete solutions for specific problems, nor do they absolve us from engaging in research and reflection. But they do indicate in what direction to look for answers, and they provide us with a roadmap for finding our way as we stumble and fumble in the maze of the most complex issues. In particular, they draw a boundary between state and society that is of the greatest importance today and which cannot be neglected or erased except at the expense of both. It is not the task of government to take over the role of society and to complete the task that has been assigned to the family and the municipality, to church and school, to science and art. Government lacks the competence, legally and functionally, by law and by its very nature, to act as parent or teacher, as preacher or deacon, and it cannot play the role of “earthly providence.” For society does not exist thanks to the state, but it received its existence prior to the state and

has its own rights and ordinances. The job of the state is not to look after private interests; it does not provide work for the unemployed, bread for the hungry, money for the poor, and clothing for the naked. But it does have to look after the common interest, the general welfare, the *salus publica*, and so create such public relations and living conditions that make it possible for the citizenry and for society, for science and art, to each fulfill their own task and so to thrive.

Care for this general welfare has today become all the more serious and extensive to the extent that the level of national life is determined not only by national but also by international conditions. The days are past when a city or a country could close itself off to the outside and manage things by itself. The spiritual, intellectual, and material ties connecting the nations today obligate a government to develop a nation's gifts and energies to their highest possible level. The competition not just between the social classes in one and the same nation but also among the nations around the world, is so powerful that governments must study what makes for the strength of a nation and cannot devote too much time to see to it that the people over which they have been placed does not lag behind other peoples in intellectual or material, ethical or educational respects. To the extent that it depends on the state, a government should take care that its people aspire to the highest and aims for the best in education and child-rearing, in science and art, industry and agriculture, commerce and shipping—in all branches of culture. And this is not just a national calling, but it is an out-and-out Christian duty. Every nation has its own place and task in world history, for which it receives gifts and energies that it may not neglect: it must be able to defend itself in body and mind, to ward off all who would attack its existence and its calling. Thus, it was childish and far-fetched to reproach this government for purchasing rapid-fire guns. For not only were expenditures for this purpose already begun by the previous government, but just as it holds for every human being, so it holds for every nation that it is duty-bound to ensure its survival, fulfill its calling, and oppose injustice. Granted, in the struggle for life, rapid-fire guns are not the sole and most powerful weapons. The strength of a people in times of war and peace lies for the greatest part in the mystical love, the holy enthusiasm, which it feels for its native soil, its fatherland, its history, and its special gift and calling. Cosmopolitanism may mock this, for it lives by the utilitarian, egotistic slogan: Where life is good, there is my country. But patriotism, love of country, remains the mysterious force that enables a people to do great deeds in peace and in war. To appreciate this truth need not make us nationalistic chauvinists, nor tempt us to join the Kaiser in exalting one's people as the salt of the earth and as a nation elect by God. But it is imperative that we grow in understanding of the particular task and calling which God has historically entrusted to our nation in distinction from other nations. And this understanding and appreciation of the gift and task entrusted to our nation can only be acquired if we learn to read our country's past in the light of God's guidance of history. Holy enthusiasm will arise in

our hearts only if we conduct ourselves according to the noble word which the queen spoke to the navy last year. Recalling men like De Ruyter, Tromp and Evertsen, Her Majesty pointed out how these admirals took God's Word as their guide for life and considered piety the prime virtue; and she called upon her audience to follow the example of these devout seamen.⁴¹ That, before all else, is what not just our navy and our army but our entire nation stands in need of. There is no higher principle and no greater power than the fear of the Lord. And happy is the nation whose government sincerely acknowledges this principle and this power!

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If we now take a moment to examine the activity of the sitting cabinet against the high ideal we entertain with respect to the task of government in the present time, then it goes without saying that reality never meets the ideal in full. Christians always abstain from exaggerated expectations, knowing the weakness and want of human nature. No one is infallible, not the most powerful kings or the most knowledgeable counselors. Even if the present administration or an affiliated one is put in charge of the country's affairs for many years to come, paradise will not arrive in our land—for no one, including our laborers. Still, we may note with thankfulness that the present cabinet perseveres in pursuing our ideal and is earnestly and faithfully steering in that direction.

The first thing to note is that the current administration is a Christian administration that seeks to build on the Christian foundations of our national life. Our adversaries do not realize how our Christian people in this respect have suffered for many years. Everywhere, in all official circles and among all officials—among mayors, lawyers, doctors, professors, and civil servants of low or high rank—everywhere our people experienced, if not disdain or ridicule, at least utter indifference to what they carry in the depths of their soul as the most noble and most tender interests. They found no ear and no heart for their most sacred aspirations, for their innermost inclinations. More than once they were discriminated against on account of these most precious sentiments and sent to the back of the line as a group of obscurantists. Decades on end, liberalism in our country deeply wronged this storehouse of godly spirit and holy attitude, albeit carried in jars of clay. And when at long last, after enormous efforts, an administration takes office which is not ashamed of faith in Christ but openly professes his name, then our people revive and take courage; they emerge from their hiding place and pledge it their support and their vote. That is the strength of this administration: it has a place in the hearts and prayers of Christians in these lands. These people feel it: the members of this cabinet understand us in

⁴¹ Cf. Jacob De Liefde (1873).

our deepest need and our highest aspirations and they are not deaf to our lament. As a result, no matter how many accusations our opponents launch at this administration, they bounce off the consciousness in the bosom of our nation: these are *our* men: they give voice to the word written in our hearts.

But that which makes for the strong support of this administration among a large portion of our people is exactly the loudest complaint about this cabinet that is raised by the opposition, namely the “error” of mixing religion with politics. If this accusation rested on truth its legitimacy would have to be acknowledged. For religion and politics are two different things and should not be mixed. But mixing the two is something else than maintaining their connection, and as much as mixing them is to be avoided, separating them is also wrong. After all, politics is a high and noble task. It can easily be misused, and the more noble, the greater the danger. When politics is abused, it encourages partisanship, self-serving calculation, lust for influence and power, pursuit of success. Then it damages character, destroys public life, undermines the law, feeds opportunism, and leads men to resort to false promises, dishonest programs, party idolatry, smear tactics, questioning people’s motives, and imputing perilous consequences. Small wonder, considering scenes recently exhibited in the parliaments of Paris, Rome, and Vienna, that sensitive and pious people no longer want to have anything to do with all the intrigue. And yet, however risky politics may be, here too, abuse does not abolish proper use. Politics, in and of itself, is a grand and holy art. The earth is the Lord’s and the fulness thereof. There is nothing unclean of itself. Every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it be received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.⁴² And then politics is the great and glorious art of governing a people according to the will of God, in harmony with the character, the history, and the calling that He gave to it. An art form like that needs moral and religious principles, lest it degenerate into pursuit of gain or subservience to the “will to power.” Even though religion and statecraft each have their own domain, religion and morality are not too high to give politics its principles and guidelines, and politics is not too low to be governed by religious and moral principles. Godliness, true and sincere godliness, *cannot* be harmful for a government as it rules a people, and a government can only rule better when it acknowledges itself to be a servant of God and lets itself be guided by his law. “By the grace of God” is not an empty phrase, nor a mask to hoodwink the people, but it is the starting principle and foundation of law and order, of right and justice.

The current administration from the start took up position on this Christian basis. And this position did not impede its political activity in the least, but instead stimulated it to be active. As opposed to the false principle

⁴² Cf. Ps. 24:1, Rom. 13:14, and 1 Tim. 4: 4.

of neutrality, it refused to divorce religion from politics, but even more resolutely to let politics be absorbed by religion. On the contrary, it worked up a level of energy that earned the respect also of the opposition. In particular, under this cabinet education has been an abiding concern of the government, in keeping with article 192 of the Constitution—education in all its branches, and not just the separate schools, but also and in the first place the government schools. This cabinet of the Right did its duty and in all kinds of ways promoted the interests of public education, and the supporters of public education have nothing to complain about. Technical education was taken in hand with a measure of serious attention as it had never experienced before. The cabinet understood that in the competition between the nations of this world the most important thing is to help one's nation hold its own by increasing its productivity in agriculture, commerce, and industry. While other countries in recent years have advanced with great strides, it is imperative to catch up and by improving vocational schools to make sure that our workers in shops and factories, our farmers, our industrialists, our merchants and our engineers should be a match in knowledge and skills with those in other countries. Convinced of this, the Kuyper administration took significant steps toward improving vocational education. It changed the Polytechnical Institute in Delft into a technological university,⁴³ proposed the institution of secondary technical schools, promoted vocational courses and nighttime classes, and had the House express the desirability of establishing an agricultural college and a school of economics—all of which testified to a broad vision and a thorough understanding of the needs of our time. Moreover, it installed a state commission to make recommendations for improving coordination of the various levels of education and the transferability of credits, in order to streamline some rather chaotic conditions and raise the quality and efficiency of the institutions involved.⁴⁴

Naturally, this administration did not forget separate education. Article 192 of the Constitution was formulated at a time when the government school was generally considered the only real official form of primary education. That is why it declared education to be an “abiding concern” of the government, while adding a short statement ensuring private citizens the freedom to organize school education for themselves (a provision that it expected few to make use of). The consensus was that separate elementary schools would remain few and far between; it was not even considered necessary to stipulate that the government ought to have “abiding concern” also for those schools as they were deemed the hobby of a few obscurantists with whom the government did not need to bother. Article 192 does not

⁴³ For his promotion of the Delft university, the school awarded Kuyper an honorary “doctorate in the technical sciences.”

⁴⁴ This commission, chaired by Prof. J. Woltjer of the Free University, would submit an extensive report in 1910.

forbid any concern for non-government schools, but neither does it prescribe it, because it occurred to no one that this might be needed. That is why the situation of today has far outgrown former expectations. No one suspected half a century ago that the separate school system would see such enormous growth and become so popular that it now makes up an important part of the country's educational system. At present it plays such a large role that the government is forced to deal with it in the interest of the common good. It can no longer be considered the peculiar hobbyhorse of a few private individuals, for it has become *the* school for a large section of the population. Thus, not just the letter of an article in the constitution makes it legitimate, but the *salus publica* makes it mandatory for government to give it abiding concern and to support it. A national interest is at stake. The same is true, on a smaller scale but in principle even more so, for secondary and tertiary education.

Given the powerful revival of Christian principles and the awakening of the Christian populace which to everyone's astonishment has taken place since the beginning of the previous century, it is an imprudent and regressive policy to interpret the constitutional freedom to organize separate education to mean that the government has virtually nothing to do with it and can close its eyes to its growth and development. Such a policy is defensible least of all when one takes into account that the Christian school aims at nothing but the restoration of the connection between the Christian religion on the one hand and pedagogy and learning on the other. It does not take anything away from the quality of instruction or the competence and dedication of the teacher; it does not seek to promote itself by degrading its opponents; but it finds its strength in this, that while respecting the views and organizations of others, it wishes to restore and develop education and pedagogy on Christian foundations. In doing so it is not doing anything criminal, but it is working for the preservation of the same foundations on which our national life was based for centuries and which in an evil hour were pushed aside by neutrality and in our time are gravely threatened by all forms of unbelief and revolution. And it is therefore a wise and timely policy to accommodate separate Christian education in all its branches, to care for it and support it.

That is the position taken by the current cabinet. Without in the least lacking in concern for public education, it has also paid attention to separate education. It assisted it through a pension scheme for employees in Christian elementary and higher education. That the opposition accuses us of materialistic and egotistic motives and throws in our face that we are lured by the money shining in the coffers of the national treasury is a cheap argument from the mouth of those who sacrifice next to nothing for the education of their children, and who receive everything they wish for from the public purse to which we too contribute. We do not disdain money, to be sure; money is "the muscle of war," and it is also the crux of the school struggle. But all that money is only a means, a means toward the loftier

goal of building, on the basis of the Christian faith, forms of education and scholarship which in every respect meet the requirements of the present age. And that is a matter that the government, too, must take to heart. Those who remain true to the Christian religion are no less citizens of the state and members of the Dutch nation. Their children too must be prepared for the struggle of life, and the future of our country depends in part on the quality also of their education. No one can predict what the outcome will be of the struggle between government and separate education. The question posed by one liberal MP as to what end goal the government has in mind cannot be answered. Christians can never give their adversaries any other response than the word of the apostle Paul: “I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am, except for these chains.”⁴⁵ But this wish is not the same as a firm hope or a reasonable expectation. The idea voiced by that professor from Utrecht—that the state universities will soon be depopulated and the government schools pumped dry—does not enter our heads. We are not dreaming about a restoration of the seventeenth century, and even less of a millennium. Yet we still are of good cheer. The intense popular support that grew up around the Christian school and last year manifested itself so splendidly at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the “School with the Bible” Federation and at the celebration of the golden jubilee of the Association of Christian Teachers⁴⁶ serves as a guarantee for the future that Christian education will take even deeper roots in our national life and bear even richer fruit. But before that happens, in part through the support of this cabinet, we say, with Mr. Lohman, that the supporters of separate schools have for many years already advocated the system now followed in the field of education, and that already now, and soon even more, many of their opponents will tell them they are right. For the day is not far off when many liberals will be grateful for the struggle we waged for Christian and separate schools. An article in a recent issue of a certain periodical openly and clearly denied the right of parents to rear their children in conformity with their religion because religious faith must remain a matter of free inquiry and children are not mature enough for that. Just one such statement shows us what we will be up against if the modernist worldview gains the upper hand. Christian school supporters will prove to have been right, long before it is acknowledged. In this sense, too, they will prove to be a party, not of conservative reaction, but of radical progress.

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⁴⁵ Acts 26:29.

⁴⁶ The prime minister’s congratulatory address to the Teachers Association concluded with the words: “With the child in your arms you have taken your stand at the foot of the cross. Don’t ever let go of that child, and don’t ever let go of that cross! And God, the God of our baptism, He will prosper you” (Kuyper 2019, 355–60).

The regulation and elevation of education is the first point on the social program of the Anti-Revolutionary Party. But the social program in a narrower sense too has been taken in hand by the current administration. The harvest has not yet been gathered in, but it is ripe enough, the outcome of the coming election permitting, to be collected in the next term.⁴⁷ In fact, what has been prepared, announced, and submitted in this field is too much to enumerate. There are bills regarding labor contracts, job protection, accident insurance for farmers and fishermen, and compulsory insurance covering illness, disability, and old age. If these bills, even after undergoing major or minor amendments, pass parliament, we will have taken an important step forward on the road to social reform. One should not expect total satisfaction from any legal framework, and a complete solution of what many understand to be “the social question” is an idle chimera. As Pope Leo XIII rightly observed in his encyclical *Rerum novarum* (words quoted by the Minister of Justice, J. A. Loeff, when introducing the bill on labor contracts in the House): “Strive as men may, no strength and no artifice will ever succeed in banishing from human life the ills and troubles which beset it. If any there are who pretend differently—who hold out to a hard-pressed people the boon of freedom from pain and trouble, an undisturbed repose, and constant enjoyment—they delude the people and impose upon them, and their lying promises will only one day bring forth evils worse than the present. Nothing is more useful than to look upon the world as it really is, and at the same time to seek elsewhere, as we have said, for the solace to its troubles” (Leo XIII 1891, section 18). At the same time, all these legal measures do have an important place in the pursuit of social justice and are able, at least in some measure, to remove the sharp edges from the economic struggle of our day.

Also significant is the attention paid by this cabinet to the interests of the middle class. In December of the year 1901 the Minister of Interior Affairs [Kuyper] stated in the House that the middle class lagged far behind the working class in terms of initiative and activity, and an attempt by the minister himself to arouse that activity was the appointment of a delegate to the international congress of the middle class in Namur. And from that date forward, new life awoke in the middle class. A national federation was established of existing or new associations of shopkeepers which, while avoiding the standpoint of class struggle and confining itself strictly to economic activity, seeks through organization and united action to strengthen the middle class in the struggle and to identify and remove abuses. Last year the government appointed a commission to consider the question whether it is the government’s business to take concrete steps in the interest of the commercial and industrial middle class and if so, to make recommendations to that effect, or else to determine whether a prior study should be

⁴⁷ The Kuyper Cabinet had tabled a raft of social legislation bills, but many remained in draft form when it lost the election that year.

undertaken and to advise the government about the best way to undertake such a study. Whatever the commission will report, at least this gain is achieved that the middle class has been shaken in its non-activity and its individualistic actions and is set to organize itself and together address the challenges it faces, to ensure the survival and flourishing of this important class of society.

All these measures show that a cabinet that has placed itself on a Christian standpoint does not close its eyes to the interests of state and society. And still to be added, apart from the Liquor Act which has already passed parliament and come into effect, are all those drafts, already tabled or announced, for abolishing the state lottery, limiting compulsory vaccination, promoting Sunday observance, defining the legal status of indigenous Christians in the East Indies, enhancing the moral tone of public life, preventing the adulteration of foodstuffs, preventing unfair competition, regulating administrative procedures, plus the appointment of committees for cutbacks in defense spending and for improving municipal finances. Complaints have been lodged against this cabinet, which, if not excusable, are nevertheless understandable. But that this administration is supposed to be reactionary, conservative, anti-democratic is clearly at variance with the facts. We would have sympathy, rather, for the complaint that this administration has been too ambitious in its legislative agenda.⁴⁸

The energy this administration has shown is a guarantee that if the coming election gives it another term it will complete what it has promised. Preserving the spiritual legacy which our forebears have bequeathed to us, it looks to the future, and it understands the task called for by the gravity of our times. It is not a administration of conservatism but of progress; not a partisan administration but a government that serves the interests of the whole people in all its ranks and stations. It is a Christian, and therefore a patriotic, a Dutch, a national cabinet. Unbelief was imported from the outside and neutrality is a foreign growth. But faith was the strength of our fathers. It was the origin of our republic, the root of our civic virtue, the safeguard of our constitutional liberties. That faith imposes on us the duty, and at the same time gives us the courage and the strength in the coming election, to take up the battle against all who wish to permeate our national life even more with the spirit of neutrality.

Therefore, bravely and boldly, hold high your Christian banner! Fly our tricolor of God, Orange, and Netherlands! Vote for men who, following in the footsteps of so many of our members of parliament who have already

⁴⁸ In addition to the measures already mentioned in the text, the legislative agenda agreed upon by the coalition partners in 1901 included, among other items, new regulations for the apprenticeship system, for public works of land reclamation, drainage and inundation, and for the telegraph and telephone service; amendments to the law of patents and trademarks, to the Mining Act, to the paternity law, to the Import Duties Act, and to the act governing military discipline and punishments; arming the mounted artillery; providing direct representation in the Lower House for agriculture; and decentralizing governance of the East Indies.

departed, following in particular the soon to retire chairman of the House, Aeneas Baron Mackay—vote for men who are not ashamed to confess Christ in the nation’s councils, and who by way of this confession are in tune with the core of our people and are a blessing for that people. Above all, remember, *noblesse oblige*. Let everyone that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity,⁴⁹ also in politics. And let the election speak to our honored queen this prayer of the Dutch people: Your Majesty, may it please you to retain this administration, because it is the desire of your people, in connection with its past and in conformity with the traditions of your house, that it be governed according to the guidance of the Word of the Lord, in order that it be great in all things in which a small country can be great!⁵⁰

Thank you.

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⁴⁹ 2 Tim. 2:19.

⁵⁰ The often quoted phrase “great in all things in which a small country can be great” was first spoken in 1898 by Queen Regent Emma (1858–1934) upon the accession to the throne of her daughter, the eighteen-year-old Wilhelmina (1880–1962).

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