

Preface

The writing of this book was initiated by the understanding that many developments in the electronics business have remained unexplained or will be forgotten. An account of practical experience related to trade policy and trade policy rules may also be lost. Some sectors of European business have disappeared. That would not be a disaster if ignoring some facts would not cause repeated catastrophes. According to the rules of probability, such disasters do not occur twice at the same spot. This may be correct.

Almost 25 years of practice in the electronics business, with Philips Electronics, and in the boards of industry associations plus an additional period as a private trade policy counsellor rendered me experience in the use of trade policy instruments. This book is a report on my experiences in this domain. Often it describes adventures that have gone astray in the jungle of rules and politics. It describes victories and defeats in the arena of international economic relations. Defeats have truncated the industry and reduced the need for trade policy representation.

I thank many people at Philips for giving me the opportunity to be at the centre of many events of international relations. Members of the board of Philips Electronics entrusted me with some interesting, even fascinating tasks.

Extremely important were those amazingly few members of the staff of Philips' Bureau for International Economic Relations who contributed to some of the episodes sketched on the pages hereafter. I would like to mention Karine Hustinx, Diny Janssen, Casper Garos, Wicko van Haalen, Frank Smits and André Rhoen, brilliant and dedicated people, who made a formidable contribution to the advancement of the international relations of Philips and the industry.

Companion in arms, Henri Anus, former *délégué général* of the French Simavelec, offered his friendship and fine cooperation in the many years that I worked on behalf of the European electronics industry and provided me with some supplementary documents used in this book.

I am grateful to Edwin Vermulst, this worthy opponent in various anti-dumping cases, gifted with an exceptional knowledge – causing envy – of international trade law, for his encouraging remarks and particularly for the intellectually stimulating

discussions over the years, although we often found ourselves on different sides of the fence.

Frits Bolkestein earns my lasting gratitude for his friendship and encouragement during important stages of my career.

Showing her intellectual grasp of the matters described in the book and thanks to her quick mind and efficiency, Maegan McCann has made an invaluable contribution by editing and polishing texts that needed improvement. I thank her for it.

And last but not least, and in contrast to the *Windhundverfahren* in export licensing – first come, first served, as described in Sect. 3.3 of this book – I express my gratitude to my dear wife Anja, who gave a solid base to the project and has patiently waited until the completion of this book, encouraging me and requesting to be prudent in the texts, probably knowing that she asked for the impossible.

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