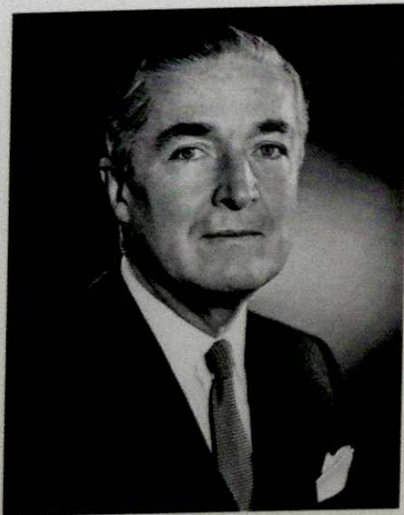


executive and Shell that the oil company gave up its one-off attitude towards the fund. Prince Bernhard was well acquainted with Shell's long-term director general, the Dutchman John Loudon, and it is most probably because of their friendship that Shell donated the services of the Dutch writer and advertising specialist Leonhard Huizinga to WWF-Netherlands when it was set up as the fourth national appeal in 1962.⁷

WWF's first corporate donor influenced the way in which the most important environmental debate of the early 1960s was led within the fund, namely the negative effects of agrochemicals on wildlife. After the Second World War Shell had invested heavily in chemical research, and by the 1950s possessed the exclusive rights to the 'drin family of chlorinated hydrocarbon pesticides. Thanks to a



John Loudon, president of Royal Dutch/Shell from 1951 to 1965 and president of WWF International from 1977 to 1981

recent, primary-source-based company history, we know that these substances were 'by far the most profitable products of [Shell's] range of chemicals'.⁸ When in 1962 pesticides such as Aldrin, Dieldrin and Endrin were among the agrochemicals criticised by Rachel Carson's environmental best-seller *Silent Spring*, Shell, together with the rest of the pesticides industry, 'reacted indignantly to the charges levelled by Carson's book'.⁹ Their 'counter-attack' consisted of questioning the scientific credentials of the author, mobilising other scientists in defence of agrochemicals, and lobbying governments.¹⁰ Based on their analysis of the Shell archives, the historians Stephen Howarth and Joost Jonker conclude that, in contrast to the progressive environmental policies adopted in other fields of activity, the company's attitude towards the toxicity of agrochemicals amounted to 'a stubborn policy of denial'.¹¹ Shell stopped selling the profitable

'drins only when the US and other governments began to ban them from the mid-1970s onwards.¹²

It was the Shell director John Loudon himself who in 1963 caused a lively debate about agrochemicals within WWF by writing a paper which Prince Bernhard distributed among board members.¹³ In view of *Silent Spring* Loudon