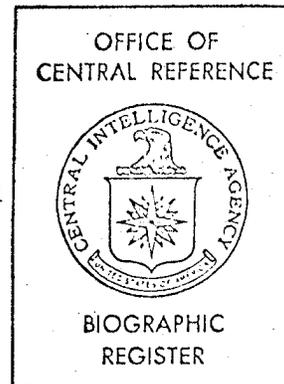


BELGIUM

Pierre HARMEL

Minister of Foreign Affairs

One of Belgium's most respected and influential politicians who is almost universally regarded as a "master thinker" above party politics, former Premier Pierre Harmel was named Minister of Foreign Affairs in the cabinet of Paul van den Boeynants which was announced on 19 March 1966, thus ending the second longest postwar political crisis. In the previous month Harmel had resigned his post of Prime Minister of the Social Christian-Socialist Coalition Government which had been constituted in July 1965, due to the inability of his government, as was the fate of previous Belgian Governments, to cope with the basic problems of medicare, mine closings, linguistics, etc. With regard to the issue of linguistics, at least, Harmel, who is Vice President of the Social Christian Party (PSC) and President of its Walloon wing, believes that Federalism and the Flemish-Walloon dispute are not so serious as to finally divide the country. Convinced that bilingualism will eventually solve the problem, he is known to have created a favorable reaction in Belgium by appealing for this solution on Flemish TV, speaking in impeccable Flemish.



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DATE: AUG 2007

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Born in Uccle, on 6 March 1911, Pierre Harmel received his primary education in Jesuit schools, studied law at the University of Liège and has been a member of its faculty as a professor of law and taxation for many years. As a reserve lieutenant he was called to active duty in the spring of 1940 and was awarded the Croix de Guerre with palms for his conduct during the eighteen-day campaign. He was fortunate enough to escape imprisonment during the occupation. After the war he joined in the founding of the PSC. A Member of Parliament since 1946, he was elected Vice President of the Chamber in November 1948, resigning to become president of the PSC group in the Chamber in January 1950. Minister of Education in the PSC cabinets from 1950 to 1954, he also served as Minister of Justice (June - November 1958), Minister of Cultural Affairs (November 1958 - September 1960), and as Minister of Public Function (September 1960 - April 1961) in the various Eyskens Governments.



[REDACTED]

Pierre HARMEL
(Cont'd.)

Identified with the Conservative elements of the PSC, but respected by
all shades of opinion [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] He
has been married since 1946 to the former Marie-Claire van Gehuchten. He
speaks English competently, but haltingly.

JS:gop

March 1966