

D66 International Quarterly

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE ON D66 PUBLISHED BY THE DELEGATION OF D66 IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. EDITOR: WILFRIED DERKSEN.

CORRESPONDENTS: ARJEN BOUTER, MICHEL GROOTHUIZEN, LEO KEUS, FRANK VAN KREVEL, BOB DE RUITER. © D66 1992.

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• SEPTEMBER 1992 •

Towards sustainability: a D66-approach

Sustainable development is a keyword related to economic development. Sustainable development can be defined as an economic development that takes full regard of environmental aspects.

D66 discussed in the winter of 1991 steps towards sustainable development. The theme was the central issue of the spring congress of the party. D66 aims at elaborating aspects of sustainability in the international political fora in the years to come.

Sustainable development: Key approaches.

D66 considers four approaches as necessary elements in reaching sustainable development. These four approaches are integral part of the congress resolution accepted in spring 1992.

1. Sustainability should be in the core of government policies.

Sustainable development is not just a new word for environmental policy. It aims at changing processes of production, consumption and distribution in a way which has as a result less environmental problems. With this aim sustainability should be a very important factor

in structuring and restructuring economic, fiscal and social policies.

2. Policies on sustainable development should be clear: norms and standards that have to be reached should be communicated: under these conditions working in phases towards these final results is no problem. At the moment sustainable development as a political aim leads to policies, which at best can be described as sympathetic "muddling through". D66 considers this not very efficient. Objectives should be communicated clearly: D66 accepts the necessity of phasing in growing towards the end objectives. Not

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A new magazine

The delegation of D66 in the European Parliament took the initiative to publish a magazine on the work of this party and its representation in the national and European parliaments. 'D66 International Quarterly' is the result.

The quarterly wants to give an impression of the ideas, opinions and structures of D66.

This means that in the quarterly articles will be published written by representatives of different structures in the party. It will also give an impression of the 'ideological' discussion in the party. The quarterly is made by the editor and correspondents from the national and European parliamentary delegation, the national executive, the Jonge Democraten and the foundation IVSOM. The articles are published on a personal title and do not necessarily represent the official opinion of the party.

We hope to give you a good impression on D66.

*Jan Willem Bertens, MEP
Wilfried Derksen, editor*

Introduction to this issue

At the last congress D66 adopted a resolution on sustainable development. In this first issue of D66 International Quarterly Hans Jeekel, member of the National Executive, writes about the ideas of D66 on this topic.

Pamela Kribbe, student philosophy at Leiden University, gives an outline of the ideas of the American post-modernist philosopher Rorty in relation to the pragmatism of D66. In her original article in IDEE she promotes his ideas as a possible basis for D66 pragmatic left-wing liberalism. Especially for our magazine she made an English version of her article. Doeke Eisma, member of parliament, gives his opinion on the relation between Europe and democracy. He concludes that we cannot reach one objective (a closer European union), if we forget democracy. He promotes a more active role for the national and European parliamentarians. Arjen Bouter, assistant of our member of European parliament, outlines the problems after the Danish 'nej' at Maastricht. Like Eisma he stresses the necessity of a further democratization of the Community.

The editor.



DEMOCRATEN



communicating the real objectives means waiting with environmental sound investments in the business and financial areas of society; this can not be accepted.

3. In combination with the existing 'polluter pays' principle the 'user pays' principle should be introduced. D66 considers sustainable development not only as a process that will result in less pollution. Very important is also an other approach towards relatively sparse natural resources such as -for example- ground water. In this respect over use and over exploitation should be banned. When possible with the use of instruments that are directly market oriented.

4. Policies on sustainable development will have to be coordinated on European and even on a world level. D66 makes a plea for the use of the EEC-Cohesion Fund for environmental objectives. In the West-East relationships in Europe environmental aid and expertise should be a part of economic aid. In world perspective the conclusions on UNCED are important, but far from enough. A restructuring of world trade policy (especially within GATT) seems a necessity from the sustainability viewpoint.

Working on sustainability

The D66 congress did make a strong plea to consider the resolution a starting point for a whole process of working out different aspects of sustainable development. A working group was formed, with a special focus on

-financial instruments for sustainability;

-social and institutional barriers for sustainability and how to cope with them;

-sustainable development in world perspective.

The working group will report at the autumn congress of D66. The objectives is at first to lay a basis for the election programmes and political debates for the next elections.

Internationally, D66 aims at discussing its approaches towards sustainable development with other parties. In Europe D66 sees an interesting picture. Objectives for sustainable development are more or less the same but contents and magnitude of processes to bring sustainable development nearer towards implementation do differ widely. The questions to be addressed to in Western Europe are other questions than those in Eastern and Central Europe. The same holds true for Southern Europe. D66 sees as key factors in developing, sustainable strategies the degree of pollution (high in W and E/C, lower in S) and the standard of living (high in W, lower in E/C and in S). D66 will -with in the next year- take initiatives to debate sustainable development on an European political level, with like minded parties.

Hans Jeekel, Political Secretary D66, Chairman of the working committee on sustainable development.

Lacking ideology, gaining democracy

D66 from a postmodern perspective

Ever since its foundation, some 26 years ago, D66 has repeatedly been accused of having no ideological foundation whatsoever by the three traditional political parties in the Netherlands. In this, these three parties (CDA, VVD and PvdA) have been unanimous.

Sofar, D66 has never been able to disprove this accusation conclusively.

Nevertheless, the party's refusal to commit itself to a fixed ideological framework was and still is an essential part of its identity. Furthermore, D66 has every reason to regard its neutral stance with respect to ideology as a legitimate political weapon instead of looking upon it as a token of weakness. Philosophical as well as political arguments can be put forward in defense of the 'non-principledness' characteristic of D66, which then comes out as an explicit political choice D66 should take pride in. These arguments result from a new conception of the discussion about ideological foundations as such. This new conception is inspired by recent developments in philosophy, often referred to under the heading of 'post-modernism'. The expression 'post-modernism' is becoming ever more trendy nowadays and is lightly dropped on all sorts of occasions. Postmodernism in philosophy is characterized by its critical attitude towards the modern tradition in philosophy, generally agreed to have started with Descartes (17th century). The postmodern critique is directed especially against the ideal of objectivity, which was dominant among philosophers belonging to this tradition. This ideal dictates that knowledge (meaning scientific theories as well as all-embracing world views) is only justified when it yields a true representation of objective reality. According to postmodern philosophers, this view of justified knowledge is inconsistent. They emphasize the fact that, in coping with reality, people always start



from a specific conceptual framework. This framework determines our thinking and acting to a large extent, because all information we receive is unconsciously interpreted along the lines of its categories. People with different cultural backgrounds perceive reality from different conceptual schemes. The point postmodernists make is that we shall never be able to find out which of these frameworks is 'objectively true'.

Pragmatic attitude

To judge this, we would have to transcend ourselves to compare our 'subjective interpretations of reality' with 'the objective world in itself'. We would have to presuppose a neutral point of view lying outside of all culturally and historically determined conceptual frameworks. But, as the American philosopher Rorty aptly puts it, "we cannot climb out of our own minds". The traditional ideal of objectivity is untenable.

Proponents of traditional ideologies, like socialists, christian democrats and conservative liberals, appeal to the ideal of objectivity. They derive their political programme from an *extra-political* view of life infused with religious or philosophical elements. This view of life consists of a theory about the essence of man and society. It is meant to provide political programmes with an objective foundation. Viewed in the light of postmodern philosophy, it is a mistake to think that political programmes can or need to be justified by allegedly objective and universal world views. Postmodernists take a pragmatic attitude towards the justification of knowledge. They replace the desire for objectivity by the search for solidarity. This means that the acceptability of a belief is no longer judged by its degree of correspondence to 'objective reality'. According to the pragmatists, it is judged by the extent to which proponents of the belief can convince the members of their community through reasoning. Not objectivity, but intersubjective consensus is the ultimate measure of truth. This intersubjective consensus must, however, come about by a free exchange of arguments; it should

be indicative of genuine solidarity instead of forced agreement.

The pursuit of solidarity, understood as unforced agreement, can only take place in an open, democratic, pluralistic society. Hence, the pragmatists' Utopia is a radically democratic society, in which every citizen has the opportunity to participate in free and open communication. Postmodern pragmatism is thus essentially linked to democratic politics. Indeed, it considers the political principle of democracy to be autonomous, i.e. not in need of an objective and universal ideological foundation. Political parties based on this sort of foundation not only presuppose a philosophically indefensible notion of objectivity. They also violate the pluralism of world views inherent in democratic societies. Ideologies, theories about the meaning of life, metaphysical images of mankind, religious or secular dogmas; they all belong to the private sphere, in which every individual can make up his/her own mind.

A truly democratic party only considers the democratic attitude to be inviolable. It does not commit itself to *extra-political* principles. It takes *extra-political* non-principledness as its political principle.

Vulgar and sophisticated pragmatism

Usually, the three traditional parties, despite their differences, agree in their rejection of the pragmatic outlook of D66. They identify 'pragmatism' with an intolerable lack of principles, or even with straightforward opportunism. From the postmodern perspective however, the expression 'pragmatism' can be interpreted in two substantially different ways. When understood as opportunism or as ad-hoc strategy, pragmatism is often displayed by the executive branch. This phenomenon might be called 'vulgar pragmatism'. Pragmatism as defended by postmodernists, on the contrary, is a political principle. This kind of pragmatism claims that political considerations should not be

guided by any preconceived ideology, but by the actual and variable consensus within society, and is normative for the legislative branch. What we have here is sophisticated, instead of vulgar, pragmatism.

Sophisticated pragmatism is inextricably intertwined with the rigorous democratic attitude, that is typical of D66. Furthermore, sophisticated pragmatism accounts for the combination of liberalism and social conscience, which has always been a distinguishing mark of D66. The liberal aspect becomes evident in the relegation of ideological matters to the private sphere, where individualism and pluralism are thought appropriate. The social element also springs from prioritizing democracy. Radical democratization presupposes all citizens to be capable, as to income and education, to participate in open and free public discussions. Social inequality threatens open and free communication and therefore justifies the adjustment of market forces.

Basic principles

Ascribing to D66 a lack of principles appears to be justified only in a narrow sense. Whereas vulgar pragmatists indeed lack principles, a sophisticated pragmatist à la D66 does embrace some basic principles. However, these principles differ from traditional ones in that they are political in nature. A politician adhering to sophisticated pragmatism adopts an attitude of indifference towards metaphysical pictures of man and society. He does not appeal to *extra-political* principles and he lacks principles in that sense. But where it comes to the 'democratic virtues' of openness, respect, tolerance and free exchange of opinions he takes an uncompromising position. Indeed, so uncompromising, that he considers the appeal to preconceived ideologies to be a violation of the democratic values. From this point of view, D66 is more democratic than any other democratic party in the Netherlands.

Pamela Kribbe.

Europe and democracy: no separate ways

The Danish rejection of the Maastricht treaty was a deception, but not a completely unexpected one. The high tide of European integration had already started to ebb.

Journalists and politicians, of the right wing as well as the left, display a feeling of uneasiness, irritation and sometimes even fear about the growing influence of Europe. Is there a European superstate being drawn up? Is a bureaucratic moloch, supervised by an anonymous European Commission, sizing power at the expense of the national parliaments? Is Europe's democratic deficit becoming larger and larger? Is -in short- the Danish blow against the Maastricht treaty a blow for peoples power, as the Thatcherite slogan goes? Well, we don't think so.

It is true that 'Europe after Maastricht' still has striking undemocratic features. The European Parliament has not acquired equality of law making rights with the Council of Ministers, the only legislature which passes law behind closed doors. Furthermore, the procedures which the European Parliament does have at its disposal to exert influence (like the cooperation and co-decision-procedures) are complicated and can be used only in a limited number of cases.

But it is also true that criticism about the presumed undemocratic character of the European Union is not always justified and, when it is, it is often accompanied by other unjustified charges. To quote John Palmer of the Guardian: much of the debate on European political union is suffused with hypocrisy, disinformation and ignorance.

For example; the size of the 'democratic deficit' is often exaggerated. This expression refers to those decisions the Council can take by



Doeke Eisma, D66 MP

majority voting, and without the European Parliament having any substantive influence. In this way decisions and laws are passed, which can not be vetoed or altered by any democratic assembly. It cannot be denied that this is a real problem. But it is not a major problem, as long as issues are not dealt with this way. Even the people who complain about the deficit, are usually not able to illustrate their point with striking examples.

The basic rule is: if the Council takes decisions with majority voting, the European Parliament can block them. Either by exerting its own competencies or in close collaboration with the national parliaments. The new procedure of co-decision is a complicated one, but finally the European Parliament has the right to say no. That's what turns the scale! Collaboration with the national parliament is necessary if the cooperation procedure must be applied. Indeed this is a complicated procedure too, but finally it boils down on this. Amendments of the European Parliament which are supported by the European Commission, can be rejected by the Council only with unanimity. So, if the members of the European Parliament would warn in due time their comrades of the national par-

liaments, this can be prevented. If only one of the twelve parliaments urges his minister not to cooperate in attempts to reject amendments of the European Parliament, the attempts would fail. We have to admit that until recently the Council could go its own way and has even developed a kind of routine in rejecting amendments of the European Parliament. But parliamentarians may blame themselves; they have to communicate better and must become more assertive and more consciousness of what is going on.

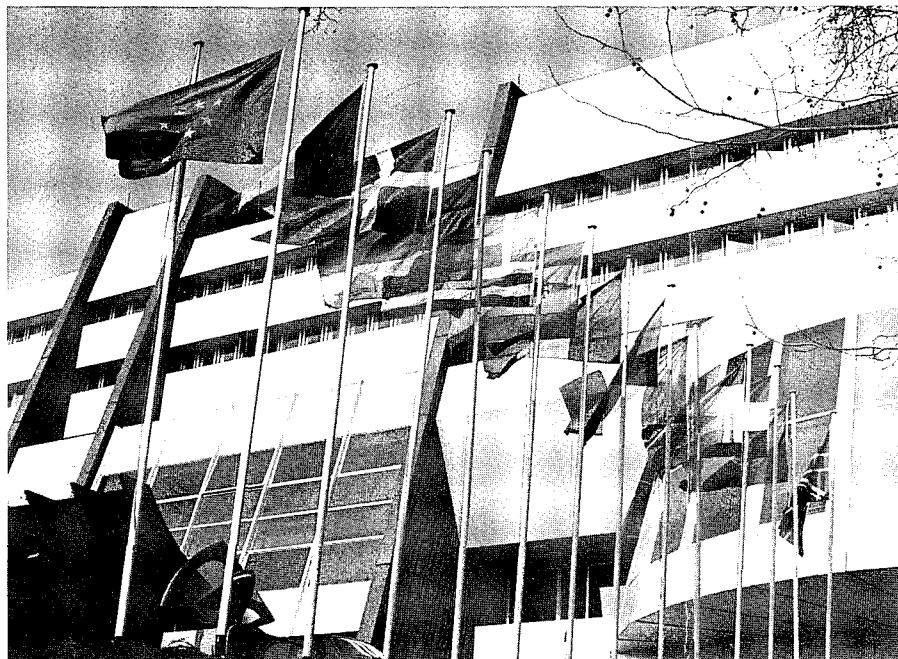
Meanwhile, the Council will continue to decide with unanimity in most cases (on the fields of social security, environment, judicial and internal affairs, foreign policy). In these cases the national parliaments can exert influence, but only if they demand openness. What's on the agenda? How do the drafts look like? So, if a meeting of the council is scheduled, the parliament can indicate the room of manoeuvre of the minister in advance.

Instead of looking only to the deficiencies in the 'architecture' of the European Union, Euro and national parliamentarians must pay attention to the way they work too. Obviously, more communication is needed (among themselves and with the voter), more debates on fundamental issues and less attention to details. In short: a debate on Europe and how we have to proceed. That is the real challenge. We know that there is no way back to the national state; if we are to develop serious and effective policies on various fields like social security, environment, foreign policy, it will be European policies. If we succeed, the European integration process and the strife for democracy will possibly go along with each other. We believe strongly that the have to go hand in hand. We cannot reach one objective (an ever closer European union), if we forget the other (democracy).

Doeke Eisma, member of the parliamentary group of D66 in the Second Chamber, spokesman on European and Foreign Affairs.

Maastricht and after...

The lessons from the Danish 'NEJ'



This first issue of D66 International Quarterly comes at an uncertain time in the process of European integration. We have just made a major step forward in concluding the Treaty of Maastricht. But -as is not unusual with major steps- "Maastricht" has provoked a reaction. First and foremost of course the negative outcome of the referendum in Denmark, but this in turn has set off reflections in other member-states. It is almost as if Europe is taken aback by its own audacity, and is having second thoughts. Did we do the right thing? Perhaps we went too far...perhaps not far enough...?

In the Netherlands, too, the European Community and the Maastricht Treaty have become "free game", at which a lot of cheap shots are being launched. Much of the criticism is directed against the allegedly all-powerful, centralist Brussels bureaucracy, which is constantly attempting to rob the peoples of the member-states of their entire national identity and to force them to subject to a uniform European super-state. Even though much of this criticism is ill-founded in fact, it would not be wise to discard it lightheartedly. Because if anything, it shows that the consensus which was assumed until now in the Netherlands on the subject of European integration appears to

have been founded on sand.

A lot of the misgivings which people have about Europe are caused by misunderstanding of the facts or the policies, or by a distorted view of present-day Community reality. This may be true. But politicians and political parties have a choice here: we can blame the people for misunderstanding or we can blame ourselves for not having explained things properly, for having lost touch with the perceptions of society. So, now that Maastricht and the Danish referendum have put the European Community and the prospect of European Union at the centre of attention, we must make use of this opportunity to

have a serious discussion, a public debate about it. We must answer the questions, dispel the myths and admit the weaknesses. We must provide information without glorifying Europe, draw the outline of our vision of a future Europe without presenting a blueprint.

There is a need for debate, but there is no need for panic. We must, in short, address the issues. We can do without "scape-goating". And the image of the all-powerful, centralist Brussels bureaucracy is just such a scapegoat. (The size of the European Commission's bureaucracy, by the way, is about the same as that of the Dutch city of The Hague.) The real issue is that Community policies are seen to be devised and then executed by a bunch of civil servants (bureaucrats, if you will), without adequate control by the elected representatives of the people. This is in fact partly true, and that is why there should be more accountability of the (members of the) European Commission to the European Parliament, as foreseen in "Maastricht".

But much more importantly, the real power in Brussels -that of legislative decision-making- lies with the Council of Ministers, made up of national ministers from the member-states. This fact tends to be much less stressed in the topical discussions about the anonymity of Community decision-making. Nevertheless, in the vast majority of cases it is the Council which has the power of ultimate decision on Community legislation. The Council decides behind closed doors. This process largely escapes public or parliamentary scrutiny, both on the national and on the European level. The only sensible answer to this situation is to increase the European Parliament's powers of co-legislation. The Treaty of Maastricht introduces this so-called "co-decision" for the first time on a limited number of policy-areas, but more is needed.

Therefore, in stead of having second thoughts about "Maastricht", we need to keep the

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process of European integration moving forward. In doing so, we need to ensure that the Europe we are building will be a democratic Europe. Not a centralized super-state, but a united Europe which maintains its diversity of national and regional cultures and identities. Diversity is an asset, not a weakness. Fear of losing identity is a strong force in the present criticism of Europe. The response of "Maastricht" to this fear is the principle of subsidiarity, the principle that decisions should be taken at the lowest level of government where this can still be done effectively and efficiently. But stating the principle on paper is not enough. We shall have to define and implement it in the day to day practice of government, not only in Europe, but on the national level as well. Only then will it be possible to re-establish contact between politics and citizens.

Democracy comes first for Democrats 66 and its representative in the Liberal, Democratic and Reform (LDR-)group in the European Parliament, Jan-Willem Bertens. It is a condition, also for European integration. Therefore, it is the position of D66 in the European

Parliament, widely supported in the LDR-group, that there must be a substantial increase in the democratic legitimacy of Community decision-making before any further extension of the membership of the Community can be considered. The European Parliament must stand firm in its demand for democratization, for a strengthening of the Parliament's co-legislative powers, before the accession of new member-states.

This is by no means to say that D66 does not support extension of the Community, first with the member-states of EFTA and subsequently also with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. But we must have fully democratic decision-making first, or else we will undermine in Europe what we are advocating the world over: democratic government.

Arjen Bouter, EP-correspondent.

Jonge Democraten, an identity

When the youth organization recognized by D66, Jonge Democraten, was founded in 1984, it started almost immediately a debate on its political identity. It decided to call itself a freethinking-democratic youth organization (vrijzinnig - democratische jongerenorganisatie). Because of two main reasons it gave an impetus to the internal debate on the political identity of D66.

Since the founding of D66 in 1966, the party refuses to give itself a political identity label. Like social-liberal, radical-liberal or freethinking-democratic. So in this respect Jonge Democraten made a different choice.

With the name freethinking-democratic Jonge Democraten were more or less pointing out their search for historical roots in the political history of our country. Even

more, with the name freethinking-democracy they claimed to have found these roots. With this point of view there came a more serious case of disagreement with D66 into existence, for D66 is denying any link with traditional political forces in the Netherlands.

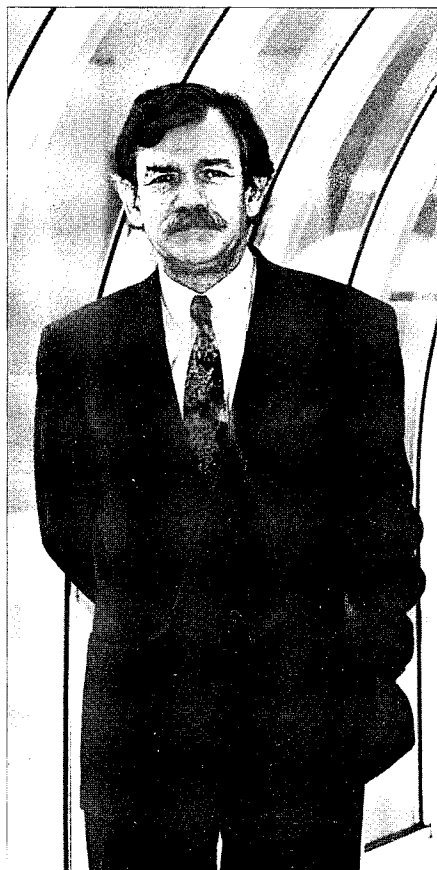
With this contribution I would like to explain the historical meaning of freethinking-democracy and its position in Dutch political history. Subsequently I will point out the interpretation of freethinking-democracy made by the Jonge Democraten. Freethinking-democracy is a term which has been introduced by the left wing of the Liberal Union (Liberale Unie). In 1901 parts of this left wing joined with the Radical League (Radicale Bond, a former split of the Liberal Union) to form the Freethinking-Democratic League (Vrijzinnig-Democratische Bond). The VDB ceased to exist in 1946 when the majority of the party merged with other parties into the 'personal socialist' Labour Party (Partij van de Arbeid).

The main issues of the VDB dealt with democracy and social policy. In its political philosophy the VDB refused to choose between capitalism and socialism. It developed the so-called systemless model, which offered the possibility to deny the big ideological concepts.

Jonge Democraten define freethinking-democracy as a political attitude, that rejects ideological concepts, that claim to be able to solve the problems of society. Therefore it is a principally pragmatist approach. In the ideological sense it denies traditional liberalism and socialism as appropriate models to solve the main problems of modern society. In a way, liberalism and socialism do not exclude each other any more, because both are extremes of the same concept of the Enlightenment. Here we see a parallel, a link with the freethinking-democracy of the former VDB.

Individual freedom, variety, solidarity and democracy are the basic values of freethinking-democracy. In this, of course there is total agreement between D66 and Jonge Democraten.

However, Jonge Democra-



Jan-Willem Bertens

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ten apply the political goal of D66, the radical democratization of society, not only to the level of organization of government structures, the several relations of power in society, but it also especially -with emphasis- seeks to translate radical democratization, democracy, into the quality of life.

Therefor, freethinking democracy is merely an attitude of openness, tolerance and pragmatism,

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tism, including the basic values of freethinking-democracy: individual freedom, variety, solidarity and democracy.

Frank van Krevel, JD-correspondent.

IVSOM-D66: contributing to the democracy process in Central and Eastern Europe

According to the party constitution Democrats 66 aims at "the radical democratization of society and the political system". Among others this means increased participation of the citizens in the political and social decision-making processes. With this background D66 welcomed the democratization process in the former communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe. In 1990 D66 founded an institute for cooperation with like-minded political organisations (IVSOM-D66) to contribute to the democracy process. Backed by a modest state subsidy, several projects were organized.

In June 1990 IVSOM organized an East-West conference on security and cooperation in the fields of environment and agriculture for 15 parties from Eastern and Western Europe. The conference adopted a resolution on "debt for nature swaps". A considerable part of the debt of several Central and Eastern European countries should be written off. And in return these countries should use 50% of the debt in local currency for environmental projects.

After this conference projects were organized in the field of local democracy. Several working-conferences for mayors, local councillors and civil-servants took place in Hungary, Czecho-Slovakia and Poland.

In the first conference most participants were mainly interested in facts and figures to get a general idea of the public services in Western countries. The follow up conferences focused on political structures and issues of local interest.

How should the central, regional and local governments divide political power? What should be the role of the mayor - with the Netherlands as an odd example of a democratic system with an appointed mayor? How to arrange public-

private partnerships? The basic method of IVSOM is to let the individual participants formulate these sort of questions themselves. During the conference the group of participants tries to answer the questions, occasionally assisted by IVSOM staff members.

Especially during the first conference there are no lectures in which the -non-existent- objective truth about local democracy is told; the participants determine the programme themselves.

These method was in particular successful in collaboration with the Civic Forum/Civic Movement and the Public Against Violence in Czecho-Slovakia. In the meantime some staff members of the Civic Forum have set up a foundation for local democracy, inspired by -among others- the cooperation with IVSOM. Until this year local democracy activities took place in Hungary with Alliance of Free Democrats and the Polish Social-Liberal Group of the Democratic Union.

Since the end of 1991 IVSOM-D66 organizes theme-conferences. In December 1991 there was a East-West Women's conference to contribute to a cross border network of political and social active women.

International Quarterly: another D66/Creative Communications publication

D66 international Quarterly is another D66-publication in cooperation with Creative Communications, the 'full service publishing partner' from Amsterdam.

Creative Communications (house-styles, advertising, text, magazines) already provides services to the SWB-D66 -Foundation Scientific Institute- (Idee magazine, brochures), to the PSVI D66 -Foundation Political Schooling & Training Institute- (new housestyle), to the regional D66-party-organisation in the province of Noord-Holland (magazine) and to the D66 Party Office (different publications and advertisements). Creative Communications also provides services to i.a.: the Royal Dutch Association of Entrepreneurs and the City of Amsterdam.

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Agenda

• 7 & 8 november 1992:
Congress Jonge Democraten in Elst

• 28 november 1992:
Congress D66 in Nijmegen

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With the Hungarian FIDESZ a working conference is organized on Minorities and Migration. And in October a conference is held on Energy and Nuclear Safety.

Leo Keus, IVSOM correspondent.

Introduction to D66

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Allied Organizations: Stichting Wetenschappelijk Bureau D66 (SWB: Foundation Scientific Institute); Stichting Politiek Scholings- & Vormingsinstituut D66 (PSVI: Foundation Political Schooling & Training Institute); Jonge Democraten (JD: Young Democrats); Politiek Emancipatie en Activeringscentrum (PEAC: Political Emancipation and Activating Centre); Stichting Instituut Vorming en Samenwerking Oost- en Midden-Europa (IVSOM: Foundation Institute Training and Co-operation East and Central Europe).

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Democrats 66 (Democraten 66) is a Dutch political party which was founded in 1966. D66 did not come into being as a result of a breakup in one of the existing parties; it developed out of movement which advocated radical democratization of society in general and the political system in particular. D66 wants to increase the influence of citizens on the political system e.g by introducing direct election of the prime minister and a referendum. The views D66 holds on this subject are diametrically opposed to those of the other political parties in the Netherlands.

Nevertheless, D66 is also a party amidst other Dutch political parties. For the last decades, it has developed views on all kinds of important political issues. D66 wants to pay special attention to the following issues: European political and economic integration, care for the environment, individual self determination and the preservation of a social safety net for the weaker members of society.

The political actions of D66 are inspired by a number of ideas and sources. As far as the constitution is concerned, D66 draws heavily upon the principle of the separation of powers, which was first introduced by Locke and Montesquieu. D66 strives for an open society, which offers full scope to each citizen to develop his or her talents. That is why both liberalism and social democracy have been major sources of inspiration for D66. D66 believes that liberty, equality and fraternity are interrelated, and does not regard these values as separate entities. They serve as guidelines for the party's political actions.

Within the Dutch political system, D66 takes up a

position left of centre with the social democrats (Labour Party, PvdA) and the Green Left (Groen Links) on its left and the christian democrats (CDA) and the conservative liberals (VVD) on its right. At the 1989 general elections, D66 secured 7,9% of the popular vote. In the Dutch system of proportional representation this corresponds to 12 of the 150 seats in the Dutch parliament's Second Chamber (House of Representatives).

The D66 parliamentary group in the Second Chamber is led by Hans van Mierlo, one of the founding fathers of the party and a former Minister of Defence. At the provincial elections of 1991 D66 increased to 15,6% of the popular vote. This resulted at the indirect elections of the First Chamber (Senate) in 12 of the 75 seats. The D66 delegate in the European Parliament, Jan Willem Bertens, is affiliated with the Liberal, Democratic and Reformist parliamentary group. D66 is observer member at the Liberal International.

Companion to D66 (extract and adjustment).

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Arthie Schimmel observed the elections in Angola

'No excuse for doing noting'

On 29 and 30 September 1992 the first free elections in the history of Angola took place. These elections were organized under supervision of the United Nations. Around 400 UN-officials were present as observers. Additional observers were sent by organizations in North-America and Europe. A joint team of 38 observers was recruited by AWEPA (Association of West-European Parliamentarians against Apartheid) and Program Angola-Canada. Arthie Schimmel, D66 MP, was one of them.



Arthie Schimmel, D66 MP

Back in the Netherlands she says: "If we do respect the election process, we have to support the government of Angola and try to isolate Savimbi's Unita."

The international observers looked upon the election in Angola as "a free and secret ballot which expresses the will of the Angolan people". According to their preliminary report, the observers of AWEPA were impressed by the desire of the people to participate and by the ability of Angolans -both voters and officials- to overcome considerable difficulties. Although they saw a number of infractions of election regula-

tions, they consider them to be "generally minor and not affecting the outcome of the election." Finally, they congratulated the people of Angola for exercising their right to vote in such huge numbers. And they wished to give "special praise" to the two main parties for their willingness to resolve their differences in "this peaceful way". "There were no losers in this election; democracy and the people of Angola were all winners."

Reality

Congratulations? Special praise? No losers? A few days later these words sound like sarcastic remarks, although they were not at all meant that way. This is the reality of Angola: Jonas Savimbi's Unita lost the elections but returned to war. More than thousand people were killed in new and severe fightings in and around the capital Luanda. Apparently, Savimbi considers politics as the continuation of war by other means. Now that the political means have failed (from his point of view), he took up his arms again.

Arthie Schimmel: "I did not expect this turn of events. The election campaigns were rather aggressive, but the people of Angola voted with a huge majority for democracy."

Women and man had to walk for hours or days to be able to cast their

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Introduction to this issue

In this issue Bob de Ruiter writes about the work of an election observer in Angola and the feedback in the Dutch parliament (p. 1).

Katrien Penders-van Kimmenade, working for Bertens, summarizes the problems of protection and security of journalists (p. 2).

Bilateral contacts are covered by Frank van Krevel and Wilfried Derksen in their articles about the Surinam youth (p. 4) and the British Liberal Democrats (p. 5). Jan-Dirk Sprokkereef and Monique Terwiel report about two successful meetings, an IDI-seminar in Ljubljana (p. 4) and an IVSOM conference on energy and environment (p. 7).

The Liberal International congress in Mainz gave Wilfried Derksen reason for an article about democracy in danger, nationalism in Central and Eastern Europe (p. 8). At the last congress D66 discussed social security. Michel Groothuizen, International Secretary, writes about the ideas of D66 on this topic (p. 6).



The editor.

DEMOCRATEN

Angola

(article starts
on page 1)

votes. They were sick and tired of the war, but they cherished their hopes and thought they were on the threshold of a new era. But Savimbi doesn't show any respect for his 'own' people, because he doesn't show any respect for the voting process.

Savimbi claims that the elections were not free and fair and that MPLA committed fraud. But this opinion is not shared by the international observers. "

Second round

Angola's ruling party, the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) won most seats in the elections for Angola's legislature. But the presidential race between president Dos Santos and Savimbi is formally not finished yet. According to first estimations, Dos Santos got 51,4 percent of the votes. But finally he got no more than 49 percent. Therefore, a second round is necessary to elect the president.

But Schimmel doesn't think a second round is a real possibility in the current circumstances.

"In this climate of violence and intimidation a second round is not very likely. The Peace Agreements must be fully complied with, including the disarmament and demobilization of those troops of Unita now operating in many parts of the country. This seems to be a precondition for holding a second round of the presidential election, now due by law."

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The future

On the eve of the elections, observers and analysts reflected on the almost insurmountable economic and social problems a new government would face. They pointed at the heavy task of rebuilding the country, where the economic contraction is expected to continue, is matched by the pressure to find work for the 150.000 rebels and government troops being demobilized from the Unita and MPLA armies.

Unfortunately, the rebels and government troops are not out of work yet. It is -of course- not possible to rebuild a country where the tensions are high, where troops are not demobilized and a full-scale war can break out any moment. What can the international community do about it?

Free and fair elections

Schimmel: *"If we do respect the election process, we have to support the government of Dos Santos and try to isolate Savimbi's Unita. These elections -with shortcomings- have been declared free and fair by the United Nations. So we have no excuse for doing nothing. The international community has a responsibility to see that peace is restored."*

Bob de Ruiter,
correspondent.

of journalists in the Gulf War.

It is alarming that everywhere in the world persecution of the press and journalists is increasing.

In 1991 61 journalists were murdered while exercising their profession, 324 were imprisoned and in 100 countries 1264 cases of aggression against journalists were registered.

Freedom of expression

Freedom of expression is an essential corner-stone of democratic society. In too many countries this freedom is only respected when it is applied to information or ideas which are favourable to the authorities or which are regarded as inoffensive or as matters of minor importance. The real test of a country's democratic standard, however, is when freedom of expression is guaranteed also to those who offend, shock or disturb. Only then there is true freedom of political and public debate. This is especially important for the free press which has a legitimate interest in reporting on and drawing the public's attention to deficiencies in the operation of government and its services, which may range from inefficiency to illegality, as past experience shows. It is the responsibility of the press to gather information and ideas about such matters and to pass these on to the public, which in turn has a right to receive them. Freedom of information, after all, also includes the right to receive information.

Freedom of expression is a basic right in itself and, moreover, is an important factor in guaranteeing the protection of human rights in general. It should therefore always be upheld, even (or perhaps especially so) under difficult circumstances. Bertens' report, which is currently being prepared, will concern itself mainly with the question of the protection of journalists on dangerous missions, in particular under circumstances of armed conflict and similar situations. Journalists are vulnerable because of their very profession. In order to secure basic rights in general in countries with a totalitarian regime and in regions where conflicts are prevalent it is of great importance that specific protection is provided for journalists. Specific, because violence is used against them with the

Protection and security of journalists

In the European Parliament, each subject which comes before the plenary is prepared by one particular Member. This MEP (who is called the 'rapporteur') draws up a report on the subject which is then discussed in the competent committee and subsequently in the plenary of the Parliament in Strasbourg. On the 19 February '92 the Committee on Foreign Affairs and Security commissioned D66 Member of the European Parliament Jan-Willem Bertens to draw up a report concerning the protection and security of journalists.

Persecution of the Press

The European Parliament had already expressed its concern about these issues on a number of occasions

through the adoption of resolutions on e.g. the death of journalists in Turkey, judicial convictions of journalists, the lack of protection of journalists in Yugoslavia and freedom

express purpose of hiding war crimes and violations of human rights from the public in the country itself, as well as from the international community.

International guarantees

Several documents already exist which are applicable in this field, such as the Geneva Conventions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (especially art. 19), the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (Helsinki 1975), the UN Treaty of 1973 and several more.

But it is evident that these are not sufficient to guarantee to the journalist that he will be able to practice his profession properly and safely. Current international law on human rights protects the physical integrity of the journalist as a human being, but it says nothing about the right and the conditions to practice his profession in armed conflicts. Criteria will have to be drawn up concerning the profession of journalists. These criteria will have to be specific and well-defined in order to serve as a basis for protection.

In the case of international conflicts there seems to be an appropriate legal base for the protection and security of journalists, but this does not apply in the case of conflicts within countries. The supremacy of national sovereignty has prohibited this until now. Moreover, the protection to the extent that it does exist is limited to the period of imprisonment. (art. 4 of the third Geneva Convention).

Bertens' intention

The right of the public to be properly informed does not provide sufficient scope to enforce the right of freedom of information in the sense referred to here. It is Bertens' intention, after thorough examination of the problems which have become apparent, to suggest ways in which the European Community can contribute to better guarantee the rights, liberties and security of journalists.

Several instruments are being considered, such as an international code for the protection of journalists

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Jan-Willem Bertens,
D66 MEP

on dangerous missions, and a yearly registration of violations against the right of information and freedom of expression of the press and individual journalists, including cases of persecution. Bertens will discuss the feasibility of these possibilities with the professional organizations of journalists, and intends especially to work closely with the International Federation of Journalists in the final drafting of his report.

Presentation of the report

The report will be presented to the European Parliament's Committee on Foreign Affairs and Security in the spring of next year.

Katrien Penders-van Kimmenade

New executive committee

At its last congress D66 partially renewed its executive committee. Wim Vrijhoef, former alderman of the City of Nijmegen, was elected chairman.

The new executive committee consists now of Wim Vrijhoef (chairman, new), Marijke Augusteijn-Esser (vice-chair politics, re-elected), George Müller (vice-chair organization), Michel Groothuizen (international secretary), Hans Jeekel (political secretary), Nicky van 't Riet (organizational secretary), Marjolijn Hazebroek (publicity coordinator), Linze Schaap (1st treasurer, re-elected) and Arjen Ros (2nd treasurer, new).

Vrijhoef aims at increasing the membership to 30.000 and improving the party structure. He has a long history in the party. In 1978 he first led the Nijmegen Democrats at the local elections and became, 26 years old, alderman. He remained alderman for 8 years, followed by 2 years of group leadership in the City Council.

Agenda

Next party congress will be at 20 March 1993 in Amersfoort. Themes of the congress will be the reorganization of the administration and the D66 view on Europe.

D66
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Surinam youth visit to Jonge Democraten

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From 25 till 30 October 1992 a youth delegation of Alternative Forum (Alternatief Forum) participated in a broad bilateral seminar programme between Surinam and Dutch youngsters. Alternative Forum is part of DA'91, Democratic Alternative '91, which came into existence last year when it took part in the first free elections since the last military coup in Surinam in 1990. The party gained nine seats and became part of parliamentary opposition.

For the Jonge Democraten there are two main reasons for being one of the most enthusiastic responsible organizers. The first aim was to exchange views on the serious issue of youth unemployment, seen from both a Surinam and a Dutch perspective. The second goal to be achieved was building relations with Surinam youth.

Surinam, a former Dutch colony

Surinam is a country that holds strong ties with the Netherlands, since it was a colony for centuries just until 1975, when Surinam gained its independence. The history of bilateral relations therefor has been a long one and knew complications as colonial relations do. Normalization of

this relation could not be seen for many years in spite of the independence of Surinam, since the military ruled after the first military coup in 1980.

Rebuilding democracy in 1991 with new free elections gave an impetus to youth organizations in both Surinam and the Netherlands. A broad coalition of political and union youth organizations in both countries started talks about organizing a seminar about the role of education in solving the youth unemployment. This very up-to-date issue is not to be seen within the contents of the historical bilateral relations, but quite on the contrary in a global perspective.

The Seminar

The seminar was quite a success. Besides the information and conclusions of the discussion on the problem of youth unemployment and the role of education in solving this threatening reality, a basis was created to develop all kinds of cooperation.

The most important result is a pilot project on the field of education. A school in Surinam will be selected to apply the recommendations of the seminar. Depending on the outcome of this experiment serious policy recommendations will be given to the Ministry of Education.

In the first half of 1993 a Dutch delegation will visit Paramaribo, the capital of Surinam to participate in a same kind of event. The topic of the seminar will be "Living between Different Cultures".

It is not overdone if we say that this cooperation promises quite a lot for the future of Surinam and the Netherlands. If the young cooperate now, learn to understand each other, a future will be securer. And added to this, it also paves the road for our older "real" politicians, who are sometimes reluctant and still tied by history in developing pragmatic forms of cooperation between political parties and generally the two countries.

A Training Course

After the seminar Jonge Democraten invited the members of Alternative Forum to a training course, in which participants dealt a.o. with organizational schemes, public speaking training. And even if not more important, they made acquaintance with JD and D66 as a political force in every day politics. The Second and First Chamber, the Jonge Democraten Congress, the National Party Office and more.

This event strengthened relations between DA'91 youth and Jonge Democraten. Several information exchange programs were agreed to. This created also opportunities for new cooperation on the international field.

Frank van Krevel, JD correspondent.

Seminar in Ljubljana

In November 1991 D66 organized a seminar with ten like-minded parties from Western, Central and Eastern Europe the day after their 25th anniversary party conference in Amsterdam. During this meeting it was felt that this initiative needed a follow up and the International Democratic Initiative (IDI) was born. On 25 and 26 April 1992 a second meeting took place in Rome, hosted by the Italian Republican Party.

The meeting in Rome was followed by the Ljubljana conference in which more than 15 political parties took part, including the British Liberal Democrats, the Swedish Centerpartiet, Fidesz and SzDSz from Hungary, the Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche from Fran-

ce, the PRI and Radical Party from Italy as well as parties from Poland, Montenegro, Bosnia, Croatia, Denmark and Belgium.

The meeting was attended as well by a representant from the Friedrich Naumann Stifting which is affiliated to the FDP.

IDI

The IDI is to be understood as a kind of 'pressure group' for Europe, trying to influence the opinions in like-minded parties and their umbrella organizations. According to the IDI the need to develop ideas in close

contact with other parties in Europe is manifest in the field of European security, migrants and minorities and sustainable development. A combination of authors from Western and Central Europe have prepared papers on these issues.

Conclusions

One of the most important conclusions of the Ljubljana meeting was the following:

"As democrats, we believe in the right of each nation to manage its own internal affairs in the way its citizens prefer, but we are also aware of the limits of national sovereignty: no country can be allowed to expand its territory by military aggression, and no government can be allowed to massacre its own people. When aggression occurs and ethnic tensions develop into wars or attempts of genocide, the international community must intervene [...] to restore peace and make sure that respect for fundamental human rights prevails over military might."

Next seminars

The central theme of the next meeting in The Hague (19 and 20 December 1992) will be sustainable development in Europe. In Ljubljana it was decided to organize a conference on this issue. The specific topics that will be dealt with are sustainable development and EC-policy and how to reach sustainable development in Central and Eastern Europe.

The fifth meeting is planned for 3 and 4 April 1993 in Cambridge and will be hosted by the Liberal Democrats. The enormous strength of the IDI process is shown clearly by the fact that both Fidesz and the SzDSz from Hungary have already agreed upon being the host for the autumn meeting of 1993. It is an encouraging sign that parties from Western and Central and Eastern Europe work so closely together in developing an answer to the problems we will face in the near future and clearly exceed the national frontiers. European problems ask for European solutions.

*Jan-Dirk Sprokkereef,
D66 executive staff member*



Brinkhorst and Bertens between D66 and PRI delegates.

Liberal Democrats and Democrats 66 meet

D66 has a long tradition of good friendship with the British Liberal Democrats and their predecessors. This year showed us a lot of bilateral contacts. In this article I want to give an impression of some of these contacts.

Campaigning in England

In april this year Peter Oosterhuis, local councillor from Lelystad, met with Liberal Democrats from East Anglia to support them in the general elections. He especially joined the candidate Andrew Duff in Huntingdon. Sadly mr. Duff didn't succeed in beating John Major.

Mr. Oosterhuis joined the Cambridge Liberal Democrats a month later in their successful local elections campaign.

Councillors visit the Netherlands

The relations between the East Anglia Liberal Democrats and D66 led in october to a visit of a large delegation to the Netherlands. Councillors, parliamentary candidates etc. were hosted by D66. At this visit I had the possibility to speak with Andrew Duff. The delegation was, as Andrew Duff stated, interested in local and provincial government because the Liberal Democrats are a strong party at local level. Approximately 3.500 councillors represent the party. The councillors from East Anglia saw physical similarities between their region and the Netherlands,

summarized as flat and wet.

The delegation arrived on 15 October 1992. Their first visit was the Jellinek centre for drugs and alcohol in Amsterdam. The Liberal Democrats want to formulate an intelligent drugs policy and wanted to learn from the experiences of the Dutch approach. The second topic in Amsterdam was the decentralization of the municipality of Amsterdam and the regionalization of Greater Amsterdam. The delegation spoke with D66 councillors to see the possibilities to bring government to the lowest possible level.

After Amsterdam the delegation went to the north and visited Groningen. There they met a D66 alderman. This gave them the possibility to see differences inside of local government in the Netherlands. The delegates from Cambridge, a town similar to Groningen, compared the Groningen traffic and transport policy with the Cambridge policy.

Near Groningen the delegation visited the pollution factory in Wijster. They met D66 deputy in the province of Drenthe. Andrew Duff concluded that only in a sophisticated society a

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good pollution policy based on civil discipline can have a success. The recycling experience of the Wijster factory should be shared over frontiers.

The next visit was to Lelystad. Lelystad is a typical new town in the polders. They met the D66 alderman for education. From their point of view they considered the British policy as more advanced than the Dutch policy. They were amazed by the pillarization of Dutch schools.

A europe debate

Finally they visited the government city, Den Haag (The Hague). They spoke with senator Jacqueline Soetenhorst-de Savornin Lohman, Doeke Eisma MP and Jan-Willem Bertens MEP. Theme of this discussion was of course the treaty of Maastricht. The parties agreed that this treaty is inadequate but that it should be ratified. For the future Liberal Democrats favour a European constitutional convention of the European Parliament and the national parliaments and governments together with non-governmental organizations, local and regional governments and social partners. This convention should be observed by the aspirant and future members of the community. Andrew Duff saw this in opposition to D66 sympathy for an

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intergovernmental conference.

The conclusion of Andrew Duff about the visit was that they enjoyed it and that it was very successful and wet.

An other bilateral contact in October was the visit by staff members on 14 and 15 September 1992 to the Liberal Democrats annual conference in Harrogate. D66 wanted to learn from the Liberal Democrats how to organize a longer congress. D66 has a tradition of short congresses. Although the different party structures (D66 has the one member, one vote system, the Liberal Democrats have the system of delegates which represent local branches) makes it more difficult to compare, some aspects of the conference organization can be adopted in the D66 congress system. Especially fringe meetings and the general information desk should be mentioned.

This year was a year of fruitful contacts which strengthened the relations between these two very similar parties.

Wilfried Derksen.

Social security: the D66 approach

Since the early fifties subsequent Dutch administrations have built up a welfare state, guaranteeing every elder or disabled citizen a relatively high income. An intricate structure of social security arrangements for every thinkable group had been constructed. During the 1980s, when unemployment rates sharply increased, ever more people used the social security facilities.

Consequently the tax burden, including the social security levy, for the working population rose to a level never reached before. In the eighties the percentage of the national income, redistributed by government was over 60%. The tax-payers felt squeezed and the always assumed solidarity - the basic condition for the welfare state - started to show hair-cracks. Moreover, after the recession of the early eighties, the group of social security beneficiaries remained invariably high. In particularly the number of recipients of disablement insurance benefits increased. Emplo-

yers and trade unions may be strange bed fellows, but considered in particular this insurance profitable for their own objectives. The Disablement Insurance Act (DIA) guaranteed the recipients a permanent allowance of 70% of their last earned salary. This way painful choices in the labour organizations were transferred to the society as a whole. Workers with a relatively low labour productivity were so smoothly removed at the expense of the taxpayers. Consequently the public support for the DIA diminished. Quite often you could hear that it had become too

attractive to draw an allowance. Excess and pure abuse of benefits were discussed everywhere.

In this setting of ever growing costs and declining acceptance government had to change its attitude towards the welfare state. In order to keep the total government budget affordable the administration intervened, in particularly in the allowances of the DIA. This was contrary to the electoral promises of the Dutch Labour Party (PvdA). This party faced a growing gap with its traditional voters, who felt betrayed by the new severity of their leadership. The leader of the Labour Party, also minister of Finance, had a hard job to keep his credibility. His 'dirty hands', according to the polls will cost him probably more than 25% of his traditional electoral support.

Nevertheless this was just a first step in the changes in the social security system. More and perhaps deeper interventions will be necessary in the 1990s. For that reason the political parties in the Netherlands had to start the rethinking of their programmes on this issue, which will be pivotal in the next election campaign. At its 55th congress, 28 November 1992, D66 discussed the future social security system in the Netherlands to lay the foundation for the next election programme. Starting points for the judgment or development of social security were the following:

a. Fairness and legal security, which means adequate and permanently sure allowances for those entitled to benefits.

b. Simple and efficient legislation and execution (in stead of the wood of complicated tailor made arrangements of the present).

c. Orientation towards individual independence.

d. Solidarity where necessary and own responsibility where possible.

e. Permanent affordability of the system.

Labour participation turned out to be the core concept in the congress recommendations. The party concluded that the executing system should concentrate on promotion of labour participation in stead of providing allowances. To enable this industrial boards and other existing bureaucratic

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IVSOM Conference on Energy & Environment October 1992

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'For a variety of reasons -political, geographical and historical- the European Community considers that it has special responsibilities to its continental neighbours...one of the areas where Community technical assistance has been requested and could be of the greatest value is nuclear safety.'
Quote from Laurens Jan Brinkhorst.

'No energy no production; no production no democracy; no democracy no healthy environment.'

Quote from one of the Hungarian Mayors who participated in one of the IVSOM courses on democratic policy.

The decision to organize a two days-IVSOM conference on energy & environment was actuated by statements as above.

Policy makers from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland and from the European Parliament, the European Commission, the Netherlands and international industrial and financial world met each other in Sluis, The Netherlands.

Aims of the conference were:

- networking for future co-operation,
- transfer of expertise & knowledge,
- exploration of the opportunities for financial support,
- agenda for future co-operation.

The visit into the nuclear plant and the coal plant in Borselle, the location for the first day of the conference, proved a revelation for some of the Dutch participants who had only theoretical knowledge about production of energy. Our guests from Middle- and Eastern-Europe proved to be real experts. Topics for the first conference day were production-, distribution- and transportation systems. The environmental effect of different policies was the main issue in the lectures, discussions and round-table sessions.

Thanks to the EPZ (Energy Pro-

duction Zeeland) and Delta Nuts (a company which takes care of the distribution in the southern part of the Netherlands), the participants got the chance to get in touch with key persons and institutions. The next



An old Dutch alternative...

day started with lectures from Jan Willem Bertens, our D66 MEP, mr. Cibrian, who works with the E.C. and a delegate from the Ministry of Economic Affairs, mr. Knecht, the inspector of Public Health, and mr. Mulder, representative from the ABN /AMRO Bank. The final round-table session presided by Professor Marian Zenkiewicz, who lectures in Warsaw and is also MP for the Liberal Faction of the Democratic Union revealed the following conclusions;

- Nuclear safety in Eastern Europe is an urgent problem and it is necessary that the response, not only from the European Community, but also from the international community at large, is comprehensive and consistent. It is therefore essential to have effective means to co-ordinate this response.

- Quarrels between UK, France and diffuse guarantees for investors, result so far in little tangible progress

in upgrading the safety of nuclear plants.

- Countries with the so called B-Status in the council of Europe should get together. As in the European Coal and Steel Community which, was the foundation of Europe we know today.

- Landmark projects, with financial support from 'the west' are most promising. If they prove a success one should pass on to Local Partners Performances and to Local System Performances.

- National and international media should promote positive points of successful Landmark Projects.

- Investments in Eastern European environmental projects can be spectacular effective.

- Local projects should take place near the borders of Eastern European countries. (PHARE)

- Involve local experts from the concerning countries to work on reconstruction projects. It is time some of the salary-stream flows into other pockets.

The final evening a informal meeting with several captains of industry, universities and politicians completed the networking character of this conference. Whether and in what way, this meeting was fruitfully, will become evident on a follow-up conference to be organized in Budapest!

Monique Terwiel, PSVI staff member

Some facts and figures on Nuclear Safety Programming:

- PHARE concerns Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania and Lithuania. 1990 - 1992 ECU 41.5 million.
- TACIS technical assistance to the former Soviet Union, ECU 54.5 million, combined with bilateral efforts of community Member States, approximately ECU 11 million.
- ENERGY CHARTER 'to improve security of energy supply, maximising the efficiency of production, conversion, transport, distribution and the use of energy, to enhance safety and to minimize environmental problems on an acceptable economic basis.
- EPIS (European) Energy Private Support Program, aims a political risk-protection for private investors (incl. Lenders) in energy projects in Eastern Europe.

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Democracy in danger The Congress of the Liberal International

D66 is an observer member of the Liberal International. Since D66 has this status the party participates in all congresses of this international. Last september Leo Keus, Jos Nienland en Wilfried Derksen were present at the congress in Mainz.

Theme of the congress was Free Trade and (indirectly) Human Rights. D66 was extremely interested in like minded parties from Central Europe which were present: IDI-partners like the Slovenian Liberal Democrats, Hungarian Young and Free Democrats and the Czech Citizens' Movement.

Quite interesting was the debate on the 'liberal perspectives in Central and Eastern Europe'. Participants in this debate were the Bulgarian president Zheljko Zhelev, Jiri Dienstbier (Citizens' Movement), Dimitrij Rupel (Slovenia), Viktor Orban (Fidesz) and Martin Bangemann (European Commission).

In the paper 'wat te doen' a study committee of D66 concluded in May 1991 that nationalism can be a positive power as far as it stimulates the destruction of the old centralist system. Striving after a sufficient political and economic development possibility and cultural autonomy of the own group is not necessarily negative. If these rights are awarded equally to all member of all groups in the sta-

te, this lays the foundation of a multicultural tolerant society. It must be considered as a negative power in its tolerant shape, striving after internal homogeneity and oppression of non-national ways of manifestation. It is negative if it favours the state frontiers exactly coincide with the ethnic boundaries without respect of and rights for minorities in the (new) state. This form of nationalism, the dominant form, endangers democracy, as we have seen in former Yugoslavia.

So we share the opinion of the debaters that nationalism and the war at the Balkan contains a serious threat of liberal democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. We should be (and are) the antipode of nationalism and xenophobia. In some of the countries past and fear for the future sends citizens towards a course of confrontation and polarization. We should realize that the Balkan war together with economic crises and conservative governments could enable a tragedy in countries like Hungary.

We welcome the formation of a new government in Slovenia, lead by the centre left Liberal Democratic Party. This means a clear no to nationalism and conservatism. This no should be more present at the Balkan. A national reconciliation as remedy could be an alternative for extreme anti-communism and polarization, as president Zhelev told his audience.

Wilfried Derksen, Editor IQ.

Social security (starts on p. 6.)

organizations, responsible for the provision of benefits, must be changed into flexible, independent bodies working on a contract basis with government. They must be responsible for their own budget, accountable and democratically verifiable. Up to now there is an automatic link between wages and benefits, which means that as wages rise by 4%, benefits also do. First of all this automatism should be done away with. Moreover, looking at the legitimacy of the welfare state as a whole and the effects on employment, for D66 benefits no longer should be prosperity-proof, but only inflation-proof. This means that as the general level of prosperity inclines, beneficiaries of al-

lowances will only be compensated for inflation, but will no longer profit from the growing prosperity as such. An exception was made for old age pensioners. Their income should be prosperity-proof. By creating a (bigger) gap between labour income earners and recipients of benefits an incentive should be given to try harder to get a paid job, even for (partly) disabled. During the discussions you could see a typical division in the party between the individualistic 'liberal' wing, stressing own responsibilities and the more social sensitive wing. In the end of the day the differences of opinion appeared to be bridgeable and were overcome. The congress sent the drafting group for the election programme a clear message.