

D66 International Quarterly

INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE CONCERNING D66 PUBLISHED BY THE DELEGATION OF D66 IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. EDITOR: WILFRIED DERKSEN. CORRESPONDENTS: LEON PEIJNENBURG, MARJANNE DE KWAASTENIET, TANJA BROK AND MAARTJE TE HENNEPE. © D66.

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On 8 March regional (i.e. provincial) elections were held in the Netherlands. Early in the evening, before the polling stations closed, it became clear that something had gone wrong. We had, based on the polls and knowing that a governing party seldom wins, expected a small loss. However, the loss appeared to be much higher: compared to the results of the regional elections in 1991 D66 lost in all twelve provinces between 25 and 50% of its seats.

The negotiations on the formation of the regional executives turned out to be equally disappointing. Only in two of the twelve regions D66 remained in the executive. The reason for this outcome was not so much due to the quality of the D66 negotiators but rather to the fact that our power base had been weakened and that the bigger parties did not need the D66 deputies to form a coalition. The immediate result of the elections is that the influence of D66 in the next four years on regional policies, such as environmental planning, conservation of nature, public health etc., will be much smaller. Given their valuable experience it will be important for the party to keep the former regional D66 politicians actively involved in the work of the party.

Opinions about the reasons for the bad results differ. On a few points they converge, however. The first of these is the low turn-out in general and the low-turn out of people who voted in favour of D66

at the national elections in particular. The problem of low voters loyalty is a problem common to all non-ideological parties, but it hit D66

Regional elections: warning for D66 ?



this time very hard. Research showed that over 50% of the D66 voters of last years national elections had stayed home this time. Apparently the urge to vote is less strong among potential D66 voters than among the voters of the 'ideological' parties. We need to convince our potential voters with a clear presentation of our points of view that their vote is important, since we cannot expect them to show up just because it is election time.

The second reason lies in the level of campaigning: whether this is considered a positive or a negative development, it seems inevitable

that from now on all campaigns are national campaigns. What was not yet clear at the local and European elections of 1994 now seems to be a definite trend. D66 (and the Dutch social democrats) believed that the campaign for the regional elections should first and foremost focus on regional politicians, and that national politicians should play only a modest role in such elections. The VVD took a different approach, however, putting its national political leader Frits Bolkestein, and national political issues in the forefront. So in the run up to the regional elections the national media were dominated by mr Bolkestein's comments on nationalism & foreign policy, the high costs of the European Union and the influx of asylum seekers.

The other parties, including D66, did not react adequately to the aggressive turn the campaign took. They are to blame for this not only because their silence brought them electoral damage but also because they had the political responsibility to refute the populist views presented by Bolkestein.

In relation to this it is mentioned as a third reason that the D66 faction in the national parliament is relatively inexperienced. Over two-



thirds of the D66 MP's are newcomers in the national political arena. This implies that the first year has been used to build up a strong team and to create a new face after the departure of Hans van Mierlo, who had been leading the D66 faction for a long time, to the cabinet.

The final analysis of these elections will probably be never made but there are enough lessons to be learned. Different campaigns, a clearer presentation of D66 views, a

less defensive attitude, greater attempts at agenda setting with issues which are important to D66. From a learning perspective the regional elections came just in time: we have only two years left before the campaign for the next national elections, in which we have to capitalize on the 'purple coalition', starts.

Marjanne de Kwaasteniet

make the market more rigid instead of more flexible.

Moreover, in this era of increasing individualism, globalization and liberalization of world trade and the introduction of the information society, more flexibility in the labour market is needed. This has to be understood as: tailor-made solutions rather than collective measures in matters like working time, pension schemes, work organization, etc.; social security systems that function as an incentive rather than an impediment to employers on the one hand to hire persons and for the unemployed on the other to find a job, while at the same time providing a sufficient level of protection. Fiscal reforms may also form an effective instrument in the creation of new jobs. Examples could include applying a lower VAT-rate for labour-intensive services, a shift in taxation from labour to other sources (energy, eco-tax, capital), or even a taxation on production instead of taxation on labour, making certain services (domestic, gardening, child-care) tax-deductible, etc.

A special effort should be made in the field of education and training. As the information society is expanding, the demand for highly skilled workers is increasing rapidly. When it comes to skilled labour, the European work force is already lagging behind the US and Japan, a situation that is set to become worse, as ever more young people no longer attain an adequate level of education and training. So if we don't want to lose the race, we must give this matter special attention.

Mrs Boogerd's message is clear: the problem is an international one and should therefore be tackled at an international level. The combined forces in the European Union form a perfect instrument in the fight against unemployment. In its resolution for the Essen Summit the Temporary Committee on Employment of the European Parliament has already outlined very clearly what measures should be taken. In its resolution for the Cannes summit of the Council and in its final report it will once more stress the urgency of the matter and the need for joint action.

In her opinions on industrial competitiveness and on the Green Paper

Growth, Competitiveness and Employment in the European Union



One of the major problems the European Union has to deal with these days is the steadily increasing unemployment. At this moment an average of 11% of the European labour force is out of a job. The unemployment figures are especially high among women (12,7%) and young people (20%). In some regions of the EU the rates of youth unemployment are as high as 50-70%.

A very worrying aspect of the current unemployment is the increase in long term unemployment. It is getting ever more difficult for newcomers (mostly young people) to enter the labour market, whereas those who already have a job are not very likely to lose it.

Johanna Boogerd-Quaak, former president of a regional employment service in the Netherlands, currently the Liberal spokeswoman in the Social Affairs Committee and the Temporary Committee on Employment as well as a substitute member of

the Economic Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, may be considered an expert on labour market-issues. She has been rapporteur on a vocational training programme (Leonardo da Vinci) and she is currently rapporteur on the social aspects of industrial competitiveness and the Green Paper on Energy.

Johanna Boogerd believes that the fight against unemployment calls for a completely new approach and new solutions. In this rapidly changing world, the old solutions are no longer fully valid and tend to

on energy policy, Johanna Boogerd shows how the Commission, despite its good intentions, hardly takes into account the social aspects and the impact on the labour market.

In order to achieve the goals set out in the Delors White Paper, the guideline for European employment policy, the Member States will have to realize the need for cooperation and action at a European level.

Sophie in 't Veld

D DEMOCRATEN

Latest news...

...on the Central and Eastern Europe Foundation of D66

IVSOM, the Central and Eastern Europe Foundation of D66, develops several projects to support the democratisation process and economic transition in Central and Eastern Europe. Eleven projects have been planned for this year; two projects have already taken place, three projects are about to happen and the preparations for the other projects are getting well under way.

Democracy and Drugs

A group of twelve young people from Lithuania (LLJ) and Poland (UMD) visited D66 and the Young Democrats last March. In cooperation with IVSOM the Young Democrats had prepared a seminar on Democracy and Drugs that took place in Amsterdam. The aim was to look into the functioning of the democratic system of the participants' countries and to discuss ideas to improve decision-making processes. Since the Dutch drug policy has been under discussion recently, not only abroad but also within the country, it was thought to be interesting to focus on a more practical level of dealing with decision-making. The group visited the Dutch Parliament and local authorities and was able to see part of the needle exchange project in Amsterdam. Also a debate took place with politicians, health care workers, police officers and even a reverend about drug policy in the Netherlands and

the underlying philosophy. It was hardly possible to end the discussions, as for all parties involved there were a lot of unfamiliar considerations and ideas. The follow-up will be done during a visit of the Young Democrats to Poland and Lithuania in the end of April.

IVSOM in Bulgaria

In the Bulgarian capital Sofia IVSOM together with the Centre for Liberal Strategies (CLS) organized two seminars on coalition building and negotiation strategies. Political leaders of all democratic parties in Bulgaria, journalists and ambassadors discussed these issues together. At first this was in the beginning somewhat unusual to them, but soon developed into a very interesting discussion. Especially the special interest and the input of the main political leaders gave the discussion an extra dimension.

The participants were very enthusiastic and sincerely hope to conti-

nue this cooperation in the not too distant future.

Scheduled projects

The projects scheduled for this year will take place in nearly all the countries that qualify for support of the IVSOM-foundation. A short summary:

In the beginning of May IVSOM will develop a training course, with the Dutch Social-Democrats, Christian-Democrats and Greens, in Serbia. This training course on party-organisation and campaigning will be held in Belgrade and several local politicians of the Civic Alliance of Serbia will participate. It is the first time a project in Serbia is included in the programme.

The contacts with the Baltic States remain very good. In July a training-seminar on Party-Organisation and Communication will be organised in the Latvian capital Riga. Participants from Estonia, Lithuania and our Danish friends from Det Radikale Venstre are invited to join this seminar.

One of the highlights in 1995 is the high-level Meeting that will be organised in December by Michel Groothuizen, former International Secretary of D66. At this conference the common culture of Europe will be discussed. Hans van Mierlo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, will participate with some other leading politicians. Besides the politicians also some prominent writers and artists from Central and Southern Europe will be invited.

For the rest IVSOM will organise projects in Rumania, Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic. International Quarterly will keep you informed on the projects for 1995. For more information you can call Tanja Brok, who coordinates the IVSOM-projects, at the National Office of D66 (phone: +31.70.362 1515).

Tanja Brok

Q. *Jan Willem Bertens, you are a member of the European Parliament since 1989. What will be your priorities in the parliamentary period?*

JWB: In the last legislature I was the sole representative of D66. Now, as you stated, in this legislature I'm joined by three fellow D66 parliamentarians. In the last legislature I had to involve myself in the whole of Europe, now I'm able to concentrate on foreign affairs. In this I will give attention to all facets of foreign policy.

As coordinator and spokesperson for foreign affairs of the ELDR group I involve myself in the common foreign and security policy. Furthermore I'm active as chairman of the subcommittee security and disarmament, spokesperson for human rights and active in development cooperation. The strengthening of the possibilities of the Union to be a reliable partner in the world will be the central issue. In the ELDR group we will fight violations of human rights and we will urge the necessity of an effective spending of development money.

As a "European missionary" I will be working for better relations between the party and the voters. At present we see tendencies in the Netherlands away from European idealism. I will fight against the renationalization virus and the decline of solidarity.

Q: *Doeke Eisma, I have the same question for you. Could you compare it with the period 1981-1984 in which you were also a MEP for D66?*

DE: In that last period I wasn't a member of a group. Our priorities were expressing our ideas about democratization and environment. Now I'm able to give environment more weight in being a coordinator of the ELDR group. One has to realize that the power of parliament has grown, so being the coordinator of the group is quite important.

Q: *Laurens-Jan Brinkhorst and*

At the last European elections four representatives of D66 were elected in the European Parliament. These four MEP's joined the group of the European Liberal, Democratic and Reform Party. Consequently, the D66 party joined the ELDR Party.

Reason enough to ask some questions of Jan Willem Bertens (JWB), ex-diplomat and MEP since 1989, Laurens-Jan Brinkhorst (LJB), former party leader and experienced European, Doeke Eisma (DE), former member of the national parliament and also member of the European Parliament in 1981-1984, and Johanna Boogerd-Quaak (JBQ), former provincial councillor and chairman of a regional employment service.

D66's new members of the European Parliament

An Interview

Johanna Boogerd-Quaak, what will be your priorities?

LJB: I'm the coordinator for budget affairs in the group and one of the core members of the Institutional Committee, which prepares the Inter Governmental Conference of 1996. This means I'm working as a generalist. I consider it my task to ask more understanding for the European dimension of national politics. Priorities of the party, like sustainable development, open government and democratic participation, have my special attention. Besides that, I give attention to problems like asylum, drugs addiction and judicial cooperation in the fight against crime.

JBQ: As one can expect with my background my priority shall be employment and connecting issues like social security, education, professional qualifications, industry, energy policy, small companies, agriculture and the social dimension on European level. It is a socio-economic priority.

Q: *What can D66 achieve with 4 European parliamentarians?*

JWB: Four MEP's out of 626 members is a small group. Even the complete Dutch share of 31 MEP's is a small minority. We can assert ourselves by being actively involved in the parliamentary activities in groups, committees and delegations. The membership of a group is the way to express our ideas. In this way all D66 MEP's are coordinator and spokesperson in their parliamentary committees: Environment, health and consumers' affairs, budget, social affairs and foreign affairs.

JBQ: We can find partners in the parliament in trying to find majorities for D66 issues. Issues like shifting from taxes on labour to taxes on energy, applying the low VAT on the provision of hour-intensive rendering of services and the flexibilization of working-hours and the organization of

labour.

LJB: Four MEP's are as drops in the ocean. But the quality of our work enables us to inspire the ELDR Group and even bringing the group to adopt our priorities. Finally I hope that we can enlarge the group with political movements that share the same values as D66, for example the French Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche.

Next to that we have to strengthen the cooperation with MEP's from the larger countries. I consider it a weakness of the ELDR group that it is de facto a rally of parliamentarians from the smaller countries.

DE: In my priority, the environment, I can see that we influence the opinion of the whole group. This group is the third group in parliament, being often decisive. This gives us influence.

Q: *You joined the ELDR group. Does this have consequences for the possibilities to express the D66 opinions?*

JWB: With the 6 VVD MEP's we

form the largest national contingent in the ELDR. The activism that is typical for D66 enables us to express our opinions in the ELDR Group. In the previous legislature I could change the ELDR election manifesto with 20 amendments. By forming coalitions we had quite good results in the forming of the new group.

LJB: As Jan Willem said, we all are coordinator and spokesperson for our sector of politics. These are important sectors, which enables us to influence ELDR policy.

DE: I have experience in being a non attached member of parliament. I had optimal space in expressing the D66 views. Now I have to share with 52 members of the group. On balance the effective influence is now bigger than if we would be outside a group.

JBQ: In the group one can distinguish more or less two currents, a conservative liberal and a progressive liberal. This last current is big enough to give the ELDR a progressive position in Europe, in which D66 can recognize itself

Q: *Jan Willem Bertens, before you became a member of the European parliament you were a diplomat. In which way you can serve the D66 idea in the best way: as a diplomat or in parliament?*

JWB: As a diplomat one is a civil servant. One has to express 'his master's voice'. Although I was a member of D66 in that time, my own political opinion was less important than the official opinions. I worked as a ministerial spokesperson from 1977 until 1982. In that time I served ministers from the Labour Party, the VVD and the Christian-democrats. Journalists considered me a credible spokesperson.

Now I'm able to speak with my own voice. I can represent D66 and speak in favour of European democratization and the fight against injustice in the world.

My answer must be that in par-

liament I can serve D66 better.

Q: *Doeke Eisma, you were a member of the national parliament. I have the same question for you.*



Jan Willem Bertens (l) en Laurens-Jan Brinkhorst, two of the four D66 MEP's

DE: In the national parliament I had the same topics in my portfolio. The environmental problems on the European agenda are on a larger scale and on a longer term. Knowing the national environmental policy, I'm able to judge the proposed European measures in the context of the feasibility and suitability of these measures on a national, regional and local level. In this way I can serve the party.

Q: *Laurens-Jan Brinkhorst, you have a big experience in Europe in various functions. Now you are in parliament. What enables you more to serve the party?*

LJB: As you say, I had a lot of functions in Europe. These functions enlarged my insight and knowledge of European politics. If one looks at today's crisis in Europe I believe that parliament is the place to be and to voice the D66 ideas. There is a need for generalists at this time of ten-

dencies towards renationalization of European politics.

Q: *Do you have contacts with other Dutch MEP's outside your party?*

JWB: Parliament is organized in political groups, not in national delegations. This has as a consequence that I have more contact with members of the group, especially the VVD members, than with other Dutch MEP's. We have satisfactory contacts with other Dutch MEP's. The Dutch approach of a common problem brings us together. One can see this in my committee foreign affairs.

LJB: I share this opinion.

DE: On environmental affairs I have a good cooperation with green and social-democratic parliamentarians with whom we share more opinions in this field than with Christian-democratic and conservative liberal parliamentarians.

Q: *Laurens-Jan Brinkhorst, you are known as an expert of European law. Does the reality fit in with the theory?*

LJB: Without firmly rooting in legal structures, European politics would sink in the quicksands of the everyday problems. Characteristics of European law are precedence of European law over national law, even if national law is younger than the European law; European citizens making appeals to European law; competence of the European Court of Justice and increasingly effective implementation of European law. This makes the European Union different from other international organizations. One can see that on national level people have problems recognizing these realities. This gives tension between theory and practice.

Wilfried Derksen



Basic values for international cooperation

Is solidarity old-fashioned? Should all aid to developing countries be given because there are international agreements? In the current discussion about the role of development cooperation in our foreign policy politicians do not succeed in defining basic values that should determine international cooperation.

Agreements on a certain percentage of the G.N.P. to be reserved for development cooperation may be useful tools to come to some continuity in our foreign policy. But they can't ever be the underlying reasons to decide the ways in which we try to create a better environment for people who are born in developing countries. And we, without any doubt, need some of these reasons to explain why we spend money on development cooperation. It isn't strange that people start to ask questions about development aid. It is strange that hardly any politician succeeds in giving answers.

First of all, we should agree upon the basic right of people to decide how to live their own lives, without severe political, social and economic restrictions: A right that should be the same for all people, no matter where they live. But it is much more important to raise awareness about the fact that people on the other side of the globe aren't faceless persons. They are, like all people, individuals. They are boys and girls, women and men, with their own problems, their own ideas, their own ideals.

People aren't careless about people they know. People can't stand to see other people suffer, as long as they can't hide behind the shield of 'not-knowing-them'. We should teach people to respect people, to get interested in people, where-ever they live, however different they may be. These feelings should form the basis for interna-



tional cooperation. And they can only be achieved by contacting people with other cultures, by not only showing them the problems of other people, but by showing them other ways of thinking, other ways of expression. Specially young people can, as a part of their education, learn how interesting other cultures and nationalities can be, and they can learn to care about peoples with different backgrounds, living in different places of the world. This intercultural learning should be an important part of educational programmes.

The Jonge Democraten (JD, Young Democrats) try to contact young people of all parts of the world by participating in international youth organizations like YDC (Youth for Development and Cooperation) and IFLRY (International Federation of Liberal and Radical Youth). Speaking for myself: by talking to people with totally different backgrounds I did not only learn to appreciate and respect them, but I also learnt some limitations of my own ways of thinking.

International cooperation should be based on this respect for and appreciation of people in developing countries. We should regard them as people like us, with their own human feelings, and not as players in a CNN scenario. The simple fact that people in developing countries are individuals like us, should make us aware of the responsibilities we have in international cooperation. And if politicians, with their influence on media and educational programmes, are not able to proclaim these basic values, then they aren't worth being politicians.

Bart Hoogenboom

(member of the International Committee and the working group on development cooperation of the Jonge Democraten)

What is Schengen really about?

None of the citizens of the Schengen member states can have ignored that from 26 March onwards free movement of persons between their borders has become a reality. From this day onwards it has struck me that with Schengen a lot of misunderstandings did occur. This is especially the case in the Netherlands where nowadays the ordinary man on the street identifies Schengen with magnetic cards at Schiphol airport. The tremendous political debate arising from these disreputable magnetic cards undermined, in my view, the real shortcomings of the current Schengen system. Particularly if one gives notice to the fact that last December the Executive Committee of Schengen acknowledged publicly that both the airports of Schiphol and Marseille would not be technically ready for the implementation of Schengen this March.

The cornerstone of the Schengen agreements is the abolition of internal border controls to achieve the free movement of persons within the Schengen countries. To safeguard security, provisions were drafted with respect to policies on visas and migration and police cooperation in the field of the fight against drugs, smuggling, terrorism and illegal immigration.

Schengen was and still is some kind of forerunner and even possible model for EU-cooperation in the fields of justice and home affairs. At the time disagreement between the member states of the Community gave due rise to the Schengen initiative.

Possibly dazzled by its temporary status member states of Schengen failed to build up a structure that is sufficiently democratic and guided by judicial principles. To put it differently, Schengen is purely intergovernmental. Implementation decisions are taken unanimously by the Executive Committee. Once a decision has been taken by this Commit-

tee it will be binding upon the member states. No national parliament is then in the position to alter the decisions taken.

Efforts of the Benelux countries, to declare the European Court of Justice competent to interpret Schengen law were opposed by, for



amongst a limited number of member states is not abandoned before the EU as a whole has removed all internal border control and on the



Passports are no longer necessary within the Schengen-states

instance, France. Schengen therefore does not provide any international binding dispute settlement procedure.

Particularly when personal information is at stake, as is the case with the Schengen Information System, citizens and politicians of the Schengen member states should concentrate far more on this lack of decent judicial control.

Neither the current Community implementation of the free movement of persons nor progress within the third pillar, the justice and home affairs pillar within the Maastricht structure, can be described as satisfactory. Whilst therefore not offering a reasonable alternative, the view could be defended to build upon the Schengen Agreement by adding new member states. As indicated above and bearing in mind that this would imply a total separation from the EU, this cannot be considered as a potentially definitive solution.

In view of the above Laurens Jan Brinkhorst, MEP for D66, proposes to gradually insert Schengen into the third pillar of the Treaty of Maastricht. This seems for the time being the most reasonable approach. It would guarantee on the one hand that progress achieved

other hand it would keep pressure on the non-participating member states to move forward. 'Insertion of Schengen cannot be unconditional', as he puts it, 'an essential element of the gradual insertion approach would be an engagement that the institutional framework of the EU would operate the Schengen Agreements.'

Petra van den Boomgaard

The failure of current drugs policy

Often, the Netherlands is considered as a Mecca for drugs. People from around Europe come to the Netherlands to enjoy the effects of the liberal policy on cannabis. Since the arrival of the new cabinet in the summer of 1994, the two ministers responsible primari-

ly for this policy (the minister of justice and the minister of health) are both from D66. This party favours liberalization of cannabis policy.

This policy is based on the following assumptions. First of all, a soft drug (e.a. cannabis) is not a dangerous drug and can be used without considerable danger. Compared to alcohol for instance, it is rather harmless. Because of this, we must make a distinction our drug policy between soft and hard drugs. Secondly, the war against drugs is an unwinnable war. The only way to deal with it is to decriminalize the use of drugs. Since this is still unacceptable in most of Europe, we should aim at decriminalizing the use and the dealing of soft drugs.

In the Netherlands the use of soft drugs is not a crime. Dealing however is. Minister Sorgdrager is currently preparing a document to tackle this problem. The underlying philosophy is that the soft and hard drug markets must be kept apart to prevent soft drug users from drifting into the criminal circuit and ending up using hard drugs as well.

The European Union is currently preparing two directives related to drugs. One is dealing with the health issue. In the European Parliament D66 has pleaded in favour of a distinction between soft and hard drugs. Furthermore D66 wishes to handle the addiction to hard drugs more openly and to experiment carefully in the whole European Union with the supply of substitutes, like Methadon. In Amsterdam, thanks to this policy, 80% of the addicts are known and controlled by the authorities. The flow of new and young addicts is very low. Although experts all around the world are very interested in this successful approach, most of the international politicians still do not wish to support it.

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Minister Sorgdrager and her fellow cabinet members Nuis, Kohnstamm and Weijers

The most controversial, however, are the pleas to decriminalize the use and dealing of soft drugs. Unfortunately, it is still impossible to get a majority for this point of view.

The second European directive concentrates on the trade in drugs. The current policy is failing, but nevertheless is continued. Billions of guilders are spent on the war against drugs, without real effect. In the view of D66 prohibition keeps the drug trade extremely lucrative. Legalizing drugs would keep drugs out of the hands of criminal organizations and make medical surveillance

as possible. Obviously this is the only possible at global level.

Both nationally and at the European level D66 is trying to influence the policies concerning drugs. At the national level this is very effective thanks to the general liberal view in the Netherlands and the position of D66 in the cabinet. In Europe it is more difficult. The ideas of D66 are considered quite controversial by the majority, more encouraging is the fact that the support is growing.

Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy

Result of the elections

At the provincial elections on 8 March the conservative liberal VVD got 27.2 % of the popular vote. The Christian-democratic CDA got 22.9 %, the social-democratic PvdA 17.1 %, D66 9.2 %, the combined Calvinist lists 6.7 %, the Green Left 5.4 %, the pensioners parties 5.2 %, the socialist SP 2.1 % and the racist CD 1.0 %.

In June the provincial councillors elected the First Chamber of parliament, the Senate. The VVD got 23 of 75 seats, the CDA 19 seats, the PvdA 14, D66 7, the Green Left 4, the pensioners party 2, the Calvinist SGP 2, GPV 1 and RPF 1, the SP 1 seat and an independent Green 1 seat.

For D66 Jan Glastra van Loon, Boele Staal, Eddie Schuyer, Ruud Helsing, Adrienne Vriskoop, Hanneke Gelderblom-Lankhout and Elida Wessel were elected in the Senate. *Eddy Schuyer* was appointed floor leader.

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'96 Conference: State of the debate

From the beginning of June onwards a so called reflection group has started its preparatory work for the upcoming European Intergovernmental Conference in 1996. The idea to create a reflection group was initiated at the Corfu-summit in June 1994. The member states of the European Union considered it useful to appoint a group of wise men, who could think more in dept about the content and working of the current Maastricht Treaty. By taking it to an abstract level, the discussion would stay clear of a more nationally based political dimension.

The reflection group

At the end of the day only state secretaries represented their countries in the reflection group. A novelty was however that both a Commissioner and two Members of the European Parliament were entitled to join the club.

Six months later and after examining the interim report written by the chairman of the reflection group, Carlos Westendorp, it has become quite obvious that representatives of member states are tied hand and foot by national mandates. And although Elmar Brok and Elizabeth Guigou, both representing the European Parliament, has been given more elbow-room, their influence can be considered marginal.

State of the debate

In general there is some kind of consensus in the reflection group to simplify the decision-making procedures of the European institution

procedures should be reduced. When it comes to specific policy areas, opinions tend to differ.

According to the group, the institutional balance between the institutions and the legal order of the community may not be any point of discussion during the Conference. The member states tend, however to differ with respect to the number of Commissioners in the European

Commission and the voting-procedure in the Council. Qualified majority-voting will have to replace unanimity voting in the Council but only on an ad hoc basis.

Except for certain areas there is no demand to extend the Union's commitment towards new policy areas. With respect to this commitment the Dutch representative, state secretary Patijn, suggested to adopt some kind of subsidiarity-check. Must certain policy areas be dealt with on a European level or should they be left with a more national approach? Some of the participants feared that this could endanger all achievements of the Union.

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DEREGULATION NOW ?

The ELDR Group in the European Parliament organized a seminar on Deregulation on 19 October 1995 in Brussels. Participants were: Bernhard Molitor, Chairman of the Group of independent experts which drew up a report for the European Commission on this issue, Commissioner Mario Monti, responsible for the Internal Market, Francis Maude, Chairman of the Anglo German Deregulation Group, Agustí Contijoch, President of the Catalan SME organization, and representatives of environmental and consumer organizations.

There was wide agreement that the brunt of (over)-regulation is caused by national, regional and local government authorities within the member states. However, the EU should do its part

to minimize the regulatory and administrative burden on enterprise and to contribute to a change in legislative culture at all levels of government.

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The idea to simplify the Treaty of the Union was supported by all members of the reflection group.

A rather sensitive area is the co-operation in the fields of justice and home affairs. Do we need a common policy in this respect, or would we rather deal with areas directly touching on the interest of European citizens on a more ad hoc basis. This would mean that member states will determine on every single topic whether they would like to cooperate or not? And even if they do want to co-operate, any decision will be taken by unanimity.

Consensus was reached on the adoption of an explicit anti-racism definition in the Treaty. The contrary is true for the inclusion of civil

rights into the Treaty. All participants except one (UK) would rather like to join the European Convention on Human Rights. When it comes to one of the major issues of the Conference, like the European Citizenship, no agreement has been reached so far. Participants do not understand that a European Citizenship mainly leads to an added value instead of a replacement of a national citizenship.

The discussion on a common foreign and defence policy concentrated on the foundation of planning and analyses unit. Its implementation remained, however, disputable.

Contrary to the justice and home

affairs chapter of the Treaty, the group considers majority voting in the Council and legal personality for the Union with respect to a common foreign and defence policy as an objective.

What the ultimate purpose of the Intergovernmental Conference will be, has been no point of discussion so far. The reflection group did only discuss the toys of the Treaty. If, however, the Union really would like to enlarge, the discussion should concentrate on the question how efficiently the Union would like to be. This means that the group should answer the fundamental question, under which conditions the Union can and will enlarge in the near future.

Petra van den Boomgaard.

Deregulation (article starts on page 1)

This is easier said than done. After all, we are dealing with legislatures here, and there is a natural tendency among legislators, whenever they are faced with a certain problem, to do what they do best, i.e. legislate. To get them to do the opposite, i.e. to refrain from making new rules or even to abolish existing rules, is little less than a culture shock.

On the other hand, it was widely felt at the seminar that deregulation must not lead to the breakdown of existing EU environmental, consumer protection, health and safety standards. The very term "deregulation" has very different connotations from one member state to another, ranging from very positive to extremely negative. It is, therefore, not a fortunate term to get a wide European consensus on. The terminology "legislative and administrative simplification" is probably to be preferred and more accurate. In fact, at the seminar Dr Molitor stressed that the primary aim of his group had been simplification; the actual scrapping of rules was to be seen as the most far-reaching form of simplification.

During the debate, a large measure of consensus emerged on a

number of main points. Harmonization with a view to the creation of the Internal Market has proved to be a force for deregulation. Where harmonization has not (yet) taken place, mutual recognition should be the rule, and it should be more effectively monitored and enforced. Also, monitoring by the Commission of incorrect or non-implementation of EU directives by member states, but also of over-implementation (which should equally be regarded as incorrect) must be strengthened, and sanctions must be imposed.

Perhaps surprisingly, speakers from industry even argued for a new piece of regulation, stressing the urgent need for a statute for a European company. It is of course not really surprising at all, since the Internal Market is as yet far from perfect. There is nothing wrong with new rules, as long as they are sensible ones.

There is not much point in having an ideological debate about whether rules are a blessing or a curse. There are good rules and bad rules. Good rules are straightforward, to the point and transparent; good rules solve problems. And in order to achieve this, they must be enforceable in practice. Bad rules, on the other hand, do not solve problems; they merely complicate them even more.

Citizens and businesses will gene-

rally accept rules, when they are seen to make sense. Bad rules, however, exasperate them, and undermine their confidence in the legislative process and in politics as such. That is therefore the challenge for European legislators, European and national. Both also face the challenge of swift and accurate implementation of the rules originating from Brussels in the form of directives.

In his opening address to the seminar, the President of the ELDR Group in the European Parliament, Mr Gijs de Vries drew attention to the problems concerning the growing disregard of the member states of the rules they themselves agreed on and called for more swift and decisive procedures in response to complaints about improper implementation of European law.

The regulatory environment must be transparent, predictable and equitable. All legislative levels (European, national, regional and local) must be keen to avoid an accumulation of rules dealing with the same issue. When these principles are taken into account, the remaining rules will be more readily accepted by European citizens and businesses alike. And it is for them, after all, that they are intended.

*Arjen Bouter
ELDR Group, Brussels.*

Latest news on the Central and Eastern Europe Foundation of D66

IVSOM, the Central and Eastern Europe Foundation of D66, has developed eleven projects in 1995. At the end of 1995 another four projects have taken place.

A brief summary.....

Hungary

This conference on Education and Democracy took place in October in Pécs, Hungary. The participants were members of the working group on education of the SzDSz in Hungary and experts on education from both the SzDSz and D66. Main goal of the conference was the exchange of views on the effect of cultural and social changes in society, democracy in education, democratic techniques in schools and tolerance and multicultural education. The Dutch State-Secretary for Education, Mr. Aad Nuis, as well as his (former) Hungarian colleague Mr. Gabor Fodor participated in the discussions.

Czech Republic

In co-operation with the Free Democrats, a multilateral conference on European Integration was organized in the Czech Republic. With participants from Slovakia, Hungary and Slovenia the various problems concerning the integration process were discussed. All participants agreed that it has been a very fruitful discussion, though the results of the discussion were a little disappointing. Main conclusion was that the integration process for Eastern European countries will probably take longer than expected.

Russia

For the first time a project in Russia was included in the programme. This project on party-organization and democracy was organized with the Dutch Christian Democrats, Social Democrats and Greens. Two seminars took place; the first seminar was held in the region St Petersburg, the second seminar was organized in the region Nizhny Novgorod. The participants in both seminars were a mixture of representatives of several democratic parties and unions. The participants were very interested to learn from the Dutch situation, which raised a lot of questions. Main result of the seminars was that the participants got to know each other and learned how to appreciate each others points of view.

D66 congress

In November the D66 national congress took place. In parallel to this congress IVSOM organized a seminar with the SzDSz from Hungary and the LDS from Slovenia. Main topics of the seminar were European integration, environment and the political aspects of campaigning. The participants also had the opportunity to visit the congress and talk to several MP's, MEP's and party members.



1996

The IVSOM programme for 1996 has been developed. Several projects in Central and Eastern Europe will again be organized. International Quarterly will keep you informed on all these projects in 1996.

For more information you can contact Tanja Brok, who coordinates the IVSOM projects, at the D66 National Office (phone: + 31.70.356 60 66).

Q Thom, you were a lector on public law at the University of Nijmegen. So, you can probably explain what a Parliamentary Inquiry is.

The Parliamentary Inquiry is an old right of Parliament. It is an independent research method in which witnesses can be heard under oath. It gives Parliament the possibility to investigate what happened in the past and to the consequences from it. So Parliament is better equipped for new legislation and policy. Inquiries started in the nineteenth century. These inquiries led to new social security legislation, e.g. the prohibition of child labour. Although these inquiries were quite successful, during fifty years there were no inquiries. After the German occupation inquiries were held on the Dutch government policy during this occupation. This inquiry can be explained out of the fact that during the occupation there was no Parliament.

After a second break of thirty years, inquiries became popular again in the eighties. This is the fifth inquiry in this new row. The instrument is becoming more important.

Q Can you compare it with the Hearings of the Congress of the United States?

The big difference is that the Hearings of the U.S. Senate and the House of Representative have a permanent character and might be the most important instrument of Parliament. If we compare this to the Netherlands, we still see that the inquiries are exceptional. Parliament

is very active in checking the day-to-day politics of the government. One can often hear people say that Parliament should be more reticent and check the government policy in a retrospective way. In this view Parliament should use its investigative methods more. Personally, I would

method. The results of the inquiries were important. They brought changes in policy. The inquiry about the bankruptcy of a big shipyard led to a change in policy of state aid for private companies. The inquiry about the subsidies for housing societies brought discussions about tasks and possibilities for the state in this area. The passport inquiry was less important. This could have been settled with an other method, but

the former Minister of Foreign Affairs refused co-operation. So this committee had to summon up the witnesses. So holding an inquiry was the only possibility.

The last inquiry was on social security and had a big impact in bringing a consensus on the need for fundamental changes in the social security system.

No, there is no inflation of the method, the method became grown-up.

Q You are participating in the inquiry on police investigation methods. Why is this inquiry necessary?

At the end of 1993 there was much fuss about the dismantling of an important police investigation team. Many mistakes were made, especially in the administrative relations between the police, the prosecutors and the mayors. This led to a government investigation. For the first time Parliament was confronted with special investigation methods. Parliament does not know what is happening. But when citizens' rights are at stake, Parliament should be alert.

This was the reason Parliament wanted to have an independent investigation. So this inquiry was the

A Parliamentary Inquiry

An Interview with Thom de Graaf

Thom de Graaf, who was elected to Parliament in 1994 and is the Secretary of the D66 group in Parliament, became vice-president of the Parliamentary Inquiry Committee on police investigation methods in 1995. This Committee will conclude its report in January 1996, so we are still too early to hear the results of the Inquiry.

Thom de Graaf was willing to give some background information.

favour a more frequent use of the investigative methods. And than I do not only mean the inquiries but also other investigative methods without the powers of the inquiries method. These other investigations can give Parliament more information about what failed. For instance, the Parliamentary investigation committees on the bankruptcy of an insurance company and the financial problems of a housing society.

Q Do you think there is an inflation of the inquiries method?

No, one must say that Parliament rediscovered this very useful

logical consequence.

Now, at the end of 1995, I can say the decision to hold an inquiry was a right choice. We have heard a lot during the hearings, facts that Parliament did not know.

Q Before you became a member of Parliament, you were active in police policy at the department of the interior. Do you have the impression that most things were already known outside the Parliament?

As senior civil servant I myself did not have a global view on what was happening. One can only have this global view if one has the possibility to research it. I do not reproach the government or the police for not having this global view because it is very complicated. In this way I think this inquiry is a necessity. We have to know what kind of legislation is necessary to give the limits and the adequate powers to the police.

Q Consequence of the inquiry is the paralysing effect on the police. Can one reproach the Inquiry committee for this?

A No, one can notice it, but can not make any reproaches on it. It is the price of this inquiry. The inquiry has a burdening effect on the police and the internal relations in the police. This price might be high, but the results of the inquiry are more important. This inquiry will bring clarity in who are the competent authorities and in what regulations we should have. Finally it can result in a more effective police, which will be scrutinized in a better and more effective way.

Q The inquiry affects the party because Minister Sorgdrager of Justice is a member of D66. Does this have any consequences for your membership in the committee?

First I must say we have a very good minister of justice. We can be satisfied with her. Of course it is awkward if party members are subject in the hearings. But an inquiry forms preeminently a method in a dualist system. In this system the



Thom de Graaf

committee investigates a respective of the political opinions of the members and the witnesses. One has to separate these roles. The fact that we have a minister who is a party member does not detract anything of my obligation to investigate what happened.

So it was no problem in the committee. In practice, I was not the first person to ask questions to this minister.

One has to realize that the committee makes the questions in its preparatory meetings. There is a collective responsibility. So it is not important who asks the question, it is a matter of allocation of questions.

Q The members of the committee are from different political parties. Does this cause many political discussions in the committee?

The members of the committee got used to each other and really formed a team. In the hearings we operated as a unit. We'll have to see

if this leads to a consensus in making the conclusions.

There were some remarks on the relative inexperience of the members of the committee. The fact that most of the members are new members of Parliament does not make them inexperienced. Most of the D66-Parliamentarians are new, so obviously a new member of Parliament should represent the party. The party had the choice between

Boris Dittrich, a former judge, and me, as an experienced civil servant. The representative of the CDA is a professor of law. This background brings a special knowledge to the committee. The VVD chose a new member of Parliament who was an lawyer before. So, the committee had enough experience in the area of this inquiry.

Q How should the police be?

There is a consensus that the police should have enough powers to fight crime, should be democratically scrutinized and should be a reflection of our multi-cultural society. It should not be an autonomous system on which politics does not have any grip.

The report of the Inquiry Committee can contribute to improving the Dutch police.

Thank you for this interview.

Wilfried Derksen.

D

DEMOCRATEN

Review of the Dutch Foreign Policy

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The "re-assessment document" is yet more proof of the vitality of the "purple" government. The ministers, each from a different ideological perspective, achieved a balanced compromise. The document illustrates a balance between values and interests. Especially in this respect, it links up with the tradition and thinking of D66, which can be characterized as 'a reasonable equilibrium between "stand up for yourself" and "stand up for others"'. In short, it means that in general the government should create conditions. But regarding norms and values the state should play a more active role: therefor also in foreign affairs. Continuation of the objective of the maintenance of the international legal order and respect for human rights does not have to obstruct looking after the interests of trade and industry. On the other hand, looking after economic interests that create an opportunity to have a debate about democratic principles, may never be an excuse for passiveness. Both 'Preacher' and 'Salesman' must remain the successful pillars in future Dutch foreign policy.

The central problem in the 're-assessment operation' is how far the traditional main points of Dutch foreign policy can be maintained in the changed international context.

First the Atlantic priority. Although the relationship with the United States remains important, the announced shift to a more continental direction is in my opinion correct. After the Cold War the basis

for Atlantic co-operation, in NATO, is gone. Most of the new threats and challenges - like increasing migration, environmental pollution, international crime and terrorism - demand other forms of collaboration. Therefore, the choice for a more continental orientation is right. Instead of focusing on the Franco-German axis, the document emphasizes the importance of an individual approach of Bonn and Paris and in general of variable coalitions.

Secondly, the tradition of European integration on a supranational basis: With the enlargement of the European Union, it will be more difficult to keep up the ambition for one European Community with supranational powers. A supranational union has to be the ultimate goal. Nevertheless, different speeds of integration are unavoidable. We must recognize that each policy problem has its own pace of integration.

The 'new' foreign policy chooses rightly for a clear European and international orientation. There are no marks of renationalization in the document. On the contrary, there will be more attention (concerning content and finance) on Middle and

Eastern Europe and other countries in economic and democratic development. The fairly high international ambition-level is reflected in the 'homogeneous group of expenditures for foreign affairs', which is related to the growth of gross national product. This pool is reserved for variable costs for, e.g. peacekeeping operations, support for Middle and Eastern Europe, international environmental policy and contributions to international organizations.

The position of the Netherlands in the new international context seems more difficult than in the 'good old days' of the Cold War. To keep up 'externally', we must collect our efforts 'internally'. The proposed reorganization, in which better coordination between the departments in question is intended, ensures in my opinion the conditions for a really integrated policy under the leadership of the minister of foreign affairs.

Simone van Hell.

A CAREFREE OLD AGE IN EUROPE?

At this moment in nearly all member states of the European Union social security is subject of drastic reforms, in most cases accompanied by emotional public debates and fierce protests. For many people social security is an important element of daily life, so that any infringement of it is - understandably - felt as a threat. In the same way the domestic system of social security is a part of the national consciousness: it is familiar, "safe".

This explains why the member states are somewhat reluctant to grant any competence to the European Union in matters of social security.

Yet there are a few problems that cannot be solved without the cooperation of all the member states. A good example is pensions in

Europe. Despite the regulation on the application of social security schemes (1408/71), the national systems of social security vary widely and their compatibility is insufficient. Furthermore, as far as old age pensions are concerned, the non-national components, like private and occupational pensions, are not

covered by the directive. All of this seriously hampers the mobility of workers in Europe. As a matter of fact, only the private, supplementary component, like life insurance, meets the condition of "cross-border portability".

There are as many systems as member states, and the only thing they have in common is their high cost. In every country the rising costs of social security, the high unemployment rates and the growing number of elderly people are cause for concern. Everywhere social security systems are subject to radical reforms, mainly driven by the imperative of the cost-containment. The solutions are manifold: shifting from a Pay-as-you-go system to a (partly) capital-funded system, increasing the contributions (or, in the Dutch case, making people with a high private pension contribute as well, as they are exempt from contributing), increasing the retirement age, varying the relative importance of the various components (basic national pensions, earnings related pension



schemes, private and occupational pensions, social assistance) in the total pension privatizing etcetera. The general trend is the decrease of the "solidarity" component, and at the same time leaving more responsibility (and risk!) to the individual. The World Bank recently published a report on the ageing world population and pension schemes, in which it advocates the wide spread introduction of the so-called "Chilean model", which basically means a compulsory private pension scheme for all, whereas nearly all national, collective provisions will be abolished. This system reduces the collective pension costs and the same time a considera-

ble capital will be built up in the banks and insurance companies.

All these reforms however, do not seem to lead to integration, except for some bilateral agreements between some member states. But adequate social protection and social security are a precondition for mobility of workers in Europe. Nobody would even consider working in another member state if by doing so he reduces his future pension claims.

Johanna Boogerd-Quaak, member of the social affairs committee of the European Parliament, raised this issue several times at various occasions, but in vain. There is a lot of resistance against a debate on the subject of social security in general, and particularly the socialists have successfully tried to keep it off the agenda of the European Parliament.

But sooner or later we will have to acknowledge the fact that a single market without a social dimension will not be viable.

Sophie in 't Veld.

Long awaited political reform in the Netherlands

One of the objectives of D66 from the very beginning has been reform of the political system. D66 is of the opinion that a large gap exists between citizens and politicians and that this gap could be narrowed by giving citizens a more direct influence on decision making and on the choice of decision makers.

- In 1966 we therefore demanded
- election of the prime minister
 - election (in stead of nomination) of mayors
 - a combination of national lists and at district lists in parliamentary elections
 - the introduction of referenda

D66 felt that the political system as it had existed in the Netherlands since the second half of the last century badly needed to be adapted to the demands of a modern, emancipated society. The wish for political

reform has remained part of the D66 political programme until today.

In the course of the last twenty years various committees have formulated proposals for political reform but none of these were implemented. During the formation of the present government D66 therefore insisted that political reform was included in the programme of the government. A government with D66 and without political reform on its agenda was a 'no go'. Since the social-democrats (PvdA) and the conservative liberals (VVD) together did not have a majority they had to accept the D66 demands.

Last October the cabinet presented its proposals on changes in the electoral system and the introduction of referenda. The other two

items on the D66 agenda - election of the prime minister and mayors - still seem to scare our coalition partners.

With regard to the electoral system the proposal is to elect in future 75 of the 150 members of parliament on the basis of national lists, and the other 75 by means of five district lists. The idea is that the MP's



Marjanne de Kwaasteniet

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elected in the districts will have a closer relation to their voters than most MP's have at present.

The referendum will take the form of a correction of parliamentary decisions. When parliament decides on an issue which is highly controversial the citizens are given the possibility to express themselves through a referendum: the parliamentary decision is accepted or rejected.

Despite the fact that these two proposals were included in the programme of the coalition, the two coalition partners of D66 have tried to undermine them in various ways since their presentation. On the one hand our coalition partners have tried to reduce the range of issues which can be put to a direct vote by the citizens. Moreover they have insisted on a quite high barrier (600.000 signatures) for organizing a referendum. These issues will

again be addressed in the parliamentary debate on the government proposals.

On the other hand VVD and PvdA have criticised the mixed electoral system for being outdated in this era of communication by TV and e-mail. D66 does not agree with this view. Despite faster means of communication the majority of the MP's still enter parliament in the slipstream of the political leader of a party, without themselves being known to the voters. Direct competition for votes at the district level forces these candidates to seek contact with the electorate. Modern means of communication can be an instrument for that, but these are insufficient in themselves. For this reason D66 thinks that it is still worthwhile to review a system which was designed for an era in which politics was still a matter for the elite.

Marjanne de Kwaasteniet.

INTERNATIONAL DEBATE AT JD CONFERENCE

The international debate of the Jonge Democraten (Young Democrats) is alive and kicking. During the General Assembly, 11-12 November in Elst, the JD adopted a resolution about international security policy and dealt with motions about the French nuclear tests, the murder on Rabin and national interests in development cooperation. Furthermore a new international officer was elected.

The resolution 'An organized common peace' concerns the structure of the United Nations and ways to prevent and solve armed conflicts. We voted for a more important role of regional organizations in monitoring and solving conflicts. In the UN security council the permanent members should be replaced by a group of ten semi-permanent members (elected for a period of ten years), in which each region should be represented. Non-governmental organizations should have access to the security council by a right of petition, and apart from peace kee-

ping operations we plead for military intervention under certain severe conditions.

Inspired by our working group on development cooperation the Jonge Democraten concluded that Dutch interests should not play any role in development cooperation. After a vivid discussion about boycotting French products we called upon the Dutch government to influence the French government concerning its decisions about nuclear tests by ways of diplomacy. An other international motion was about the murder on Rabin, in which we stated we want the Dutch government to give diplomatic and financial support to the peace process and are therefore glad with minister Pronk's efforts to back the Palestinians in building their society.

Maartje te Hennepe left the national board of the JD, and I was elected as the new international officer.

Bart Hoogenboom
JD International Officer.