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Summaries

Public opinion on nuclear weapons in the Netherlands

by Ph. P. Everts

In the last few years we see much evidence of increased public interest and concern around questions of nuclear armaments and related problems. The question which should be discussed is: is there evidence in public opinion data for the thesis that we are in the process of a rather fundamental reorientation of attitudes on foreign and defense policies? And is this due to the activities of pressure groups, such as the peace movement? In this article an inventory and analysis is presented of available data from public opinion surveys, the majority of which have been held in the last three years (1979-1981).

The few available data which allow comparison, suggest that there has been less change in the content than in the intensity of the attitudes. While there is a permanent quasi-unanimity on questions of NATO membership and the necessity of a military balance, the actual use of nuclear weapons is almost totally rejected. Despite difficulties of interpretation due to contradictory data the conclusion seems justified that there is now a majority supporting refusal to admit new nuclear weapons to the Netherlands, to repeal the nuclear tasks of the Dutch armed forces and to remove nuclear weapons from Dutch territory. Election surveys have brought to light that parties opting for these goals, especially the Dutch Labour Party, would profit considerably in the forthcoming parliamentary elections from this course of action.

It is plausible to argue that the activities of the peace movements have played a considerable role in the changes which can be noted in the development of public opinion. It is concluded that more detailed research is necessary to explain the divergencies in the various data.

Towards a political logic of underdevelopment

by R. Hoppe

How are strategies of economic development translated into economic policy in countries belonging to the underdeveloped, dependent, peripheral parts of a capitalist world-economy? Is the centre of political power in those countries strong enough to implement a policy that breaks or gradually severs the ties of economic dependency and poverty? Although much knowledge has been gained about the economic logic of the processes that keep national economies poor and dependent,

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knowledge of its political aspects lags behind. In this theoretical treatise the author tries to put some steps towards a political logic of underdevelopment, using the conceptual tools of the so called 'new political economy'.

Firstly, a model is constructed representing the situational logic governing the acts and choices of political actors in an average Periphery-country when making and implementing an economic development strategy. The model takes this kind of policymaking to be a situation in which Centre-politicians, Periphery-politicians, bureaucrats, planners, representatives of the indigenous labour movement(s) and representatives of foreign and indigenous entrepreneurs all try to influence policy-making in order to advance their group interests. Secondly, given the assumptions of the model, a thought-experiment is conducted to estimate how each interacts with all in this struggle over a development strategy.

Finally, the results are judged in terms of the likelihood of the policy's bursting the vicious economic circles of underdevelopment, poverty and dependency. Unfortunately the conclusion cannot be evaded that the political logic of underdevelopment is much more likely to reinforce the vicious economic circles than to break them.