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SUMMARIES

THE ANGRY VOTER

by Constance E. van der Maesen

The article consists of a preliminary analysis of data of a sample-survey, conducted after the elections for the municipal council of Amsterdam, June 1966.

Special emphasis is laid on social background variables, political attitudes and motives of the floating voters. The electorates of the Pacifist Socialist Party and of the Farmers' Party are studied, as well as the electorate of a new political movement: the Provos.

Furthermore, distributions are presented of voters' opinions on three issues that were hotly debated before the elections: the marriage of Princess Beatrix to Mr. Claus von Amsberg, a German; the treatment of the provos by the police, and the constitutional position of the mayor.

Data on the social background variables and political attitudes of the floating voters do not support the hypothesis that it is mainly the uninterested and apathetic voter who floats. A study of their motives reveals, furthermore, that floaters themselves see their change of party choice as a meaningful political gesture.

The voters for the Pacifist Socialist Party, as well as Farmers' Party-voters — small parties of the radical left and the extreme right respectively — feel less than other voters that their parties represent their political views adequately, and they feel a greater need for a new party that does represent their views.

Provo-voters are, on the whole, more attracted by Provo's constructive plans than by the more anarchistic aspects of their platform.

As the Farmers' Party is often designated in the press and by political commentators as a neo-fascist party, their voters' attitudes towards freedom of speech are compared. Voters of the Farmers' Party do not show themselves to be more intolerant than other voters in this respect.

With regard to the opinions on the above-mentioned issues: 28% of the Amsterdam electorate declared to have been opposed to the marriage of Princess Beatrix; 25% of the voters disapproved of the treatment of the Provos by the police; a majority of the voters, 53%, showed a preference for a system whereby citizens elect the mayor over the present system of government-appointed mayors.

THE 1966 ELECTIONS FOR THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF AMSTERDAM

by J. H. Moerkerk

The article describes the Amsterdam election campaign of June 1966, which, since it took place after the marriage of Princess Beatrix on March 10 and after the clashes between Provos and police, was rather tumultuous. The elections for the Provincial Councils in March showed a big change in Dutch politics. The Labour Party lost considerably, whereas the Farmers' Party and the Pacifist Socialist Party made the largest gains. It was against this turbulent background that the municipal elections were held on June 1; there were fifteen parties contesting the 45 seats in the Municipal Council.

The campaign showed a lot of new aspects. The Labour Party tried to stress

local issues; it used campaign methods which were new in the Netherlands, such as the establishment of town districts each with its own candidate; this party and the Liberal Party held hearings. The Labour Party directed its campaign especially to the youth of Amsterdam, for example by organizing political discussions with beatbands, the so-called 'Walk-in-Talk in'.

The Provos had their own political movement, 'Provo'. They held a campaign with an artistic flavour and put forward many original proposals for solving local problems.

Some remarkable results were:

1. Provo got its best results in the higher status areas of the town and especially in the inner city;
2. the percentages of absenteeism increased from lower status to higher status areas of the town;
3. some candidates, who held a personal campaign in their own district or neighbourhood, obtained a remarkable number of preference voters in that district;
4. in some districts the Labour Party obtained favourable results with their campaigning activities, but in other districts the results were nil or even negative.

It may be concluded that it is very difficult to discover the electoral results of an election campaign in the Netherlands.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE LEADERS OF THE DUTCH CABINET

by N. Cramer

In this article a survey is given of various background data of the leaders of Dutch cabinets since 1848. A comparative study by the Interparliamentary Union is quoted, which stresses the fact that in the Netherlands the Head of Government can be chosen by the Sovereign from outside the parliament, although he must have the confidence of the parliament.

Of the thirty-seven persons who have acted as cabinet-leaders since 1948, nine had been both members of parliament and ministers, eleven had only been members of parliament, eleven started their political careers as ministers and six had been neither ministers nor members of parliament. Most of them (18) came from the western part ('Holland') of the Netherlands. Until the First World War the Liberals dominated: all in all, thirteen cabinet-leaders were Liberals, ten were Anti-Revolutionaries, six Roman Catholic, six Conservatives or former Liberals and two were Socialists.

A comparison is made between cabinet-leaders who have been members of parliament and those who have not. Few clear differences can be discovered. Cabinet-leaders who have not been members of parliament are to be found among the representatives of all parties. 'Prime-Ministers' who do not originate from the parliament seldom have their term continued.

The author criticizes the practice of obtaining cabinet-leaders from outside the parliament. In difficult times parliamentary leaders should themselves face the responsibility of forming and leading a cabinet.