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Issue-consensus in a multi-party system: voters and leaders in the Netherlands

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Citation

Irwin, G. A., & Thomassen, J. (1975). Issue-consensus in a multi-party system: voters and leaders in the Netherlands. *Acta Politica*, 10: 1975(4), 389-420. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3450965>

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

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Dit tijdschrift wordt uitgegeven onder auspiciën van de Nederlandse Kring voor Wetenschap der Politiek

Redactieraad

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Boeken ter recensie

en boekbesprekingen zende men aan de boekenredacteur, drs. B. J. S. Hoetjes, p.a. Erasmus Universiteit H 14 - 21, Burgemeester Oudlaan 50, Rotterdam; terugzending van ongevraagde recensie-exemplaren kan niet plaatsvinden

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Voor abonnementen en advertenties richt men zich tot de uitgever, Boompers boeken- en tijdschriften-uitgeverij bv (Boom Meppel), Groenmarktstraat 1 te Meppel (05220/54306); postrekening 2756509

Acta Politica verschijnt driemaandelijks; de abonnementsprijs bedraagt f 42,15, voor instellingen f 57,—; voor studenten f 29,50 (maximaal gedurende zeven achtereenvolgende jaren).

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Issue-consensus in a multi-party system: voters and leaders in the Netherlands*

by Galen A. Irwin and Jacques Thomassen

Introduction

The theoretical discussions concerning the advantages and disadvantages of a multi-party system vs. a two-party system seem endless. The same may probably be said for the relative merits of a system of proportional representation and the single member district system. Yet these theoretical approaches seem to have had at most a limited effect upon the question which type of system would emerge in a particular political system. Both the development of the party system as well as the electoral system in Europe are rooted in the beginning of this century, in which the origin of the party system can usually be seen as the channeling or hardening of the social conflict lines of that point in time, in particular those determined by religion and social class. Exactly when 'verzuiling' began in The Netherlands is uncertain. In any case, by the beginning of this century, its roots were firmly established. Catholics, protestants, socialists and to a somewhat lesser degree liberals built up their own complexes of social organization. That each of these groups would come forward with its own political party was virtually a foregone conclusion.¹ Once this 'verzuiling' process had taken root and suffrage had become universal any system other than proportional representation was hardly thinkable. This may be seen as the first application of the proportionality principle which Lijphart has called one of the most important rules of the game in the 'politics of accommodation'.² Each 'zuil' received a proportional share in the determination of legislation, at least a proportional number of seats in the Parliament.³

Because of this strict segmentation of society, Dutch elections for a long time had less the appearance of a battle for votes than a registration of the strength of the various groups in the population. This is of course one of the basic considerations of a system of proportional representation. The arguments which have been used to defend proportional representation are generally based on the assumption that this is the best means to guarantee that the political opinions of all groups of voters will be heard. In later years this system has been criticized because it is not designed to choose a government, but to divide up parliamentary seats. Only indirectly do the voters have any influence on the formation of a government.

While avoiding the question whether proportional representation is the most

*An earlier version of this paper was presented to the Workshop on Empirical Theoretical Analysis of Party Systems of the European Consortium for Political Research, London, April 7-13, 1975.

The studies on which this paper is based were financed by the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research (ZWO), the Catholic University at Tilburg and the National Science Foundation (NSF Grant 36401).

The graphs in this paper were drawn by Mr. A. v. Helfteren.

appropriate electoral system for the Netherlands, we may examine whether the system as such seems to satisfy the original expectations. Van der Burg cites the well-known proposition of Lipset and Rokkan that in Western Europe the party structures of now correspond to the 'cleavage structures' of the twenties, and adds:

If this proposition is correct, then there is every reason to be concerned about the 'reflecting ability' of the current electoral system. If the voters are forced by the hold of a historically developed party structure to divide themselves according to the cleavages of 40 to 50 years ago, then it is the question if one can say that the chosen body is an adequate reflection of the currents which are alive in the voters.⁴

One of the questions which is on the order in this paper is to what degree the opinions and attitudes of the members of the Second Chamber are a reflection of the opinions and attitudes of the voters.

The arguments which are traditionally used in the Netherlands to defend the system of proportional representation rest heavily upon the classical view of democracy. In this view the voter is seen as the starting point of the democratic process. Voters are expected to have clearly defined political views which are reflected in the choice of representatives. It is the task of representatives to act in accordance with and to execute the will of the voters. Since the famous criticism by Schumpeter, this is no longer seen as a realistic description of the democratic process. More often the definition of democracy offered by Schumpeter has been accepted which takes the elite rather than the voters as the starting point of the democratic process. Schumpeter places the emphasis upon the political elite (the political parties) who are engaged in a competitive struggle for the votes of the citizens.⁵ This view has been formalized by Downs, for example, whose basic proposition is 'parties formulate policies in order to win elections, rather than win elections in order to formulate policies'.⁶

Most Dutch political parties would probably reject quite indignantly any suggestion that this was a valid interpretation of the way in which party positions were taken. They would certainly respond that the ideological basis for the party could not be exchanged for policies which were only designed for the purpose of gaining votes. Downs has foreseen this position and states:

This conclusion is equivocal, however. No matter which end — espousing ideologies or holding office — is viewed as the final one, the other will be a subsidiary end necessary to the attainment of the first. It will even take rational precedence over the main goal in some situations where short-run setbacks lead to greater long-run progress towards the final end.⁷

Whatever the case, it is certain that however strong the ideological orientations of Dutch parties, they are not able to ignore the fact that their poli-

cies have consequences for subsequent elections. It is certainly relevant that some of the propositions of Downs be tested in the Dutch situation.

A starting point for this study may be the proposition:

Parties in a two-party system deliberately change their platforms so that they resemble one another; whereas parties in a multi-party system try to remain as ideologically distinct as possible.⁸

Critics of the American two-party system have long complained that the parties resembled one another too greatly, whereas European parties were always praised as being more ideologically identifiable and distinct. The ideological distinctness of Dutch parties is generally assumed, yet despite these ideological differences, Lijphart has emphasized the ability of the parties to compromise and reach agreement on various issues.⁹ How does this occur? Does this mean that despite differences in ideology among the voters, they are really in agreement on specific issues? Or does the 'politics of accommodation' mean that the party leaders may achieve greater consensus on issues than the more ideologically and socially heterogeneous population? In order to answer such questions we must know something about the degree of consensus among voters and party representatives both as a group and within the parties.

Of course, the amount of consensus for a party and its voters may vary according to the issue involved. Several hypotheses on how this variance may occur may be developed from the previous works on consensus. Since most of these have been tested in the two-party systems of the United States and Great Britain, it is useful to test their applicability in a multi-party system such as the Netherlands. These tests will help us to understand some of the differences between at least one multi-party system and the two-party systems.

The data

The data on which this paper is based are taken from two surveys, organized jointly by members of the Institute of Sociology of the Catholic University at Tilburg and of the Department of Political Science at the University of Leiden.

The survey of the members of parliament was conducted in 1972 and included only the members of the Second Chamber. Response was very high (141 of the 150 members were interviewed), but it should be noted at the outset that the members of the Communist Party and those of the Farmer's Party refused to cooperate. Since these are often seen as the two extreme poles in Dutch politics, this may have some influence upon our conclusions related to the Parliament.

The survey of voters constitutes the second wave of a three-wave panel study. In 1970 a random sample of 2500 was drawn of eligible Dutch voters, of whom 1838 were eventually interviewed. This first study formed the basis for a follow-up study from which we have taken the data reported herein. The 1838 completed interviews were taken as the starting point for a second interview carried out in 1971, and a third interview in 1972. Due to panel mortality the size of the sample dropped to 1266 and 972. This may have effects on the 'representativeness' of the sample, although checks with known population social characteristics yield no major deviations.

Coordination of the two projects made it possible to present identical questions to both the voters and the members of the Second Chamber. Seven questions relating to important issues were formulated and presented to each group. For each issue a statement was formulated with two polar alternatives. Each respondent was asked to place himself on a line running between these two poles. In addition, voters were asked to place the position of the seven major parties on the same line. Members of parliament were requested to place these same parties on the line (plus their own party if this was not one of the seven major parties), and to indicate where they thought the voters for their own party stood. Only the answers relating to the position of the respondent himself have been utilized in this paper.

For the voters the two poles were assigned the values of 1 and 7 and included all the integers between. It was thought necessary to give the members of parliament more possibility for differentiation, so the scale was increased to 9 points. This has caused some difficulty in the analysis where direct comparisons are desired. As far as possible we have relied upon the 9-point scale in computing means and standard deviations for the members of parliament. Where direct comparisons are necessary or useful, the values have been transformed to a seven point scale.¹⁰

The subject matter of these issues is briefly as follows:

- 1 — Abortion — whether the woman should decide or the government should forbid.
- 2 — Aid to developing countries — should the government spend more money or less.
- 3 — Law and Order — is government action in cases of civil disturbances too strong or not strong enough.
- 4 — Income Differences — should differences in income remain as they are or become smaller.
- 5 — Worker's Influence in Business and Factories — should workers participate in decisions or should the management decide.
- 6 — Taxes and Services — should taxes be raised to provide for more services or lowered so that each person could decide what to do with his money.
- 7 — Reductions of Armies — should the Dutch government urge her allies to reduce their armies or should they urge them to remain strong.

The original Dutch version of these questions may be obtained from the authors.

The findings

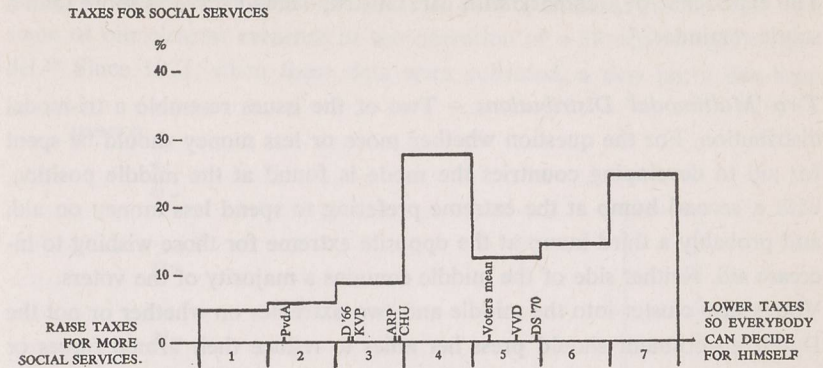
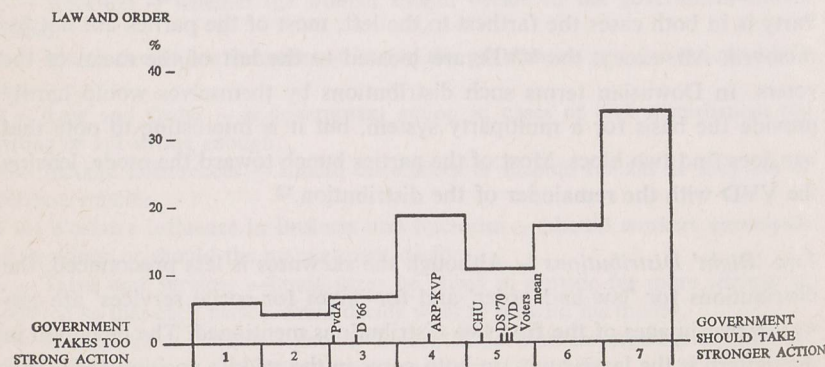
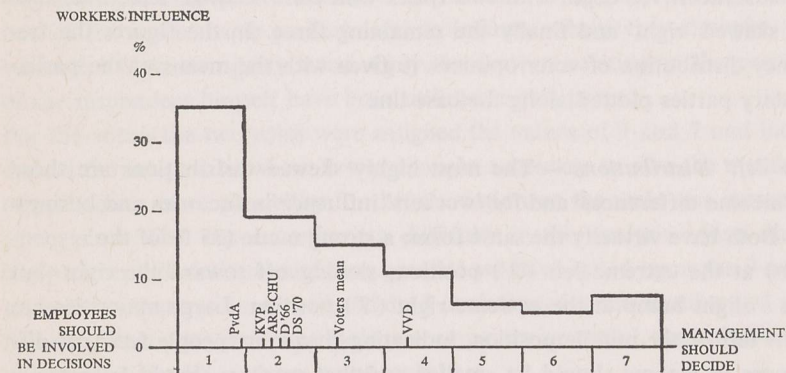
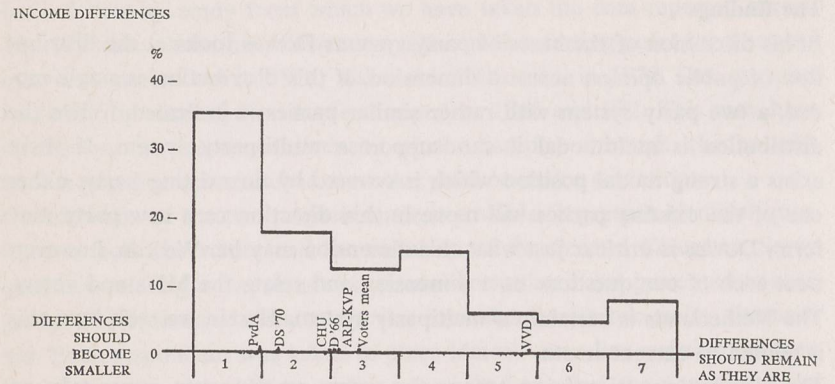
In his discussion of the bases of party systems Downs looks at the distribution of public opinion across a dimension. If this distribution is single modal, a two party system with rather similar parties is indicated. When the distribution is multimodal it can support a multi-party system. If there exists a strong modal position which is covered by no existing party, either one of the existing parties will move in this direction or a new party may form. Downs is unclear just what this dimension may be. We can, however, treat each of our questions as a dimension and relate the MP's and voters. The Netherlands is certainly a multiparty system. Herein we seek how this is related to current issues.

The distributions of opinion among the voters on the seven issues take on several different forms, and thus provide comparisons under a variety of circumstances. We begin with two issues which are skewed 'left', then take two skewed 'right' and finally the remaining three. In the figures the frequency distribution of voter opinions is given with the means of the parliamentary parties plotted along the base line

Two 'left' Distributions — The most highly skewed distributions are those for 'income differences' and for 'workers' influence in factories and businesses'. Both have virtually the same form: a strong mode (35 % of the respondents) at the extreme left ('1') position, sloping off toward the right, but with a slight hump at the extreme right ('7') position. Large majorities are to the left of the middle position, indicating that most people feel that differences in income should be smaller and that workers should be given a greater say in how the company for whom they work is run.¹¹ The parliamentary parties are also bunched toward the mode. Although the Socialist Party is in both cases the farthest to the left, most of the parties are not far removed. All, except the VVD, are located to the left of the mean of the voters. In Downsian terms such distributions by themselves would hardly provide the basis for a multiparty system, but it is interesting to note that one does find two blocs. Most of the parties bunch toward the mode, leaving the VVD with the remainder of the distribution.¹²

Two 'Right' Distributions — Although the skewness is less pronounced, the distributions for 'law and order' and for 'taxes for social services' are virtual mirror images of the first two distributions mentioned. The deviation in the pattern is the large hump in both cases in the middle position ('4'). This

Figure 1:
Frequency distribution of voters opinions. Means for parliamentary parties are plotted along the base line



is actually the modal position in the cases of taxes, probably indicative of indecision on the part of some respondents who would like both to see taxes lowered *and* social services extended. In both cases, however, the right extreme position is far more popular than the left and a majority of the voters are to the right of the middle position. Most voters think that the government should take stronger action in case of civil disturbances and that taxes should be lowered so that everybody could decide for himself what to do with his money.¹³

The positioning of the parliamentary parties within these distributions is quite different from that for the first two issues. Although the ordering of the parties from right to left is quite similar to the first two cases (Spearman rho correlations from .24 to .91), there is considerably less bunching. In fact the parties appear to be shying away from the 'popular' extremes. For 'law and order' all of the parties are to the left of the population mean and a considerable distance from the mode.¹⁴ The range for the 'taxes' issue is even greater, although partially due to the concentration of voters at the 'four' position, two parties (VVD and DS'70) do line up to the right of the voters' mean. Yet they, too, remain a good distance removed from the concentrations at the extreme.

The results for the 'taxes' issue are strikingly similar to those reported in Norway by Valen and Katz.¹⁵

Nobody likes taxes, although everybody likes services. Party leaders and representatives have always been able to emphasize the services and thereby often take positions in contradiction to their own (and most) voters. Here the parties clearly do not react in terms of the Downs model. In those terms, one would be forced to conclude that either the parties were acting 'irrationally' or that there was a possibility here for the development of an anti-tax party.¹⁶ (Although not included in the analysis here, the Peasant's Party has surely partially fulfilled this function at times during the last ten years).

The experience of Denmark with Mr. Gilstrup should serve as more than a subtle reminder.¹⁷

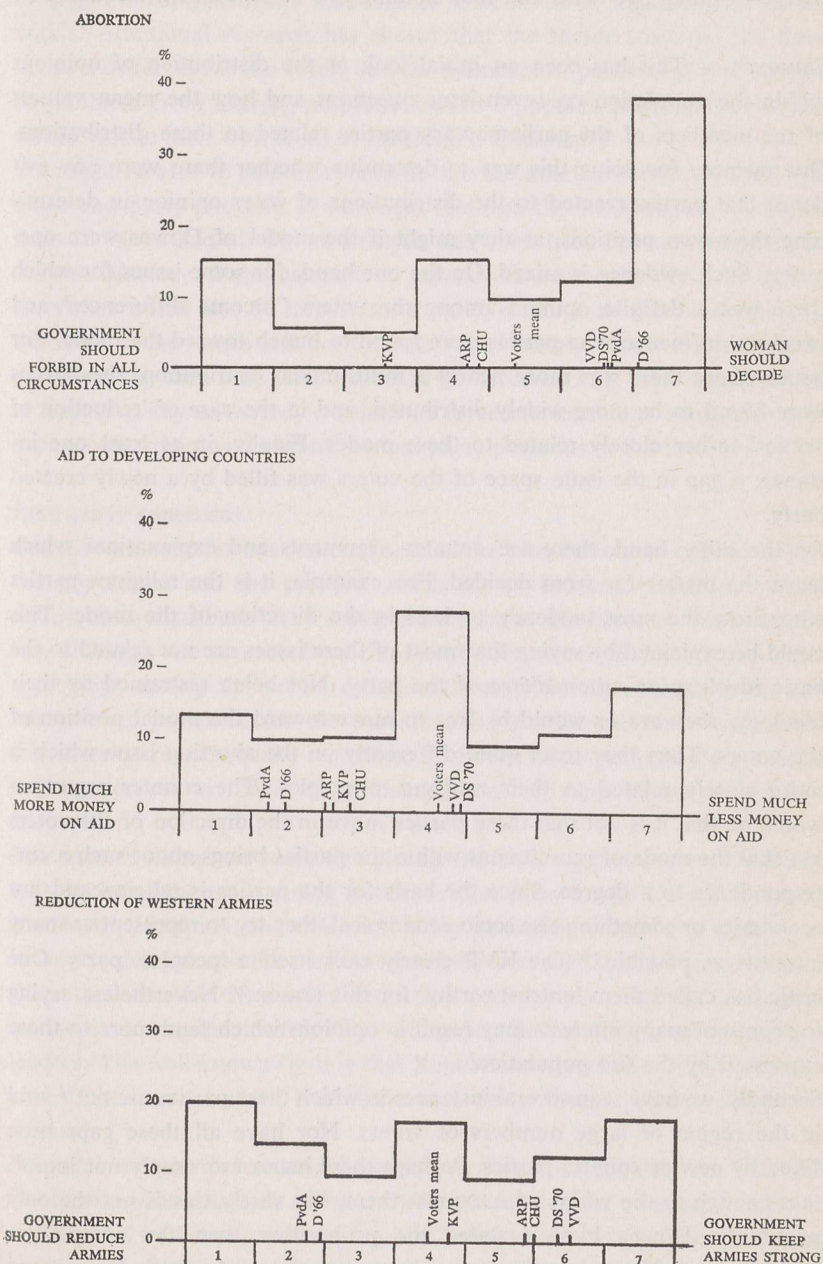
Two 'Multimodal' Distributions — Two of the issues resemble a tri-modal distribution. For the question whether more or less money should be spent for aid to developing countries the mode is found at the middle position, with a second hump at the extreme preferring to spend less money on aid, and probably a third hump at the opposite extreme for those wishing to increase aid. Neither side of the middle contains a majority of the voters.

Voters also cluster into the middle and two extremes on whether or not the Dutch government should press her allies to reduce their armed forces or urge them to keep their forces strong. These three modes are of virtually equal size with the extremes sloping off toward the middle.

This multi-modular pattern is our best approximation of the pattern which Downs felt would support a multi-party system. Indeed there does seem to be a greater spread among the parties and less clustering. If it is not clear that one position is the most popular or if it is clear that the population is divided, then there would be more reason for the parties to spread across the entire dimension. This is less pronounced for 'aid to developing countries' for which five of the parties are left of the population mean. Again only the VVD and DS'70 are to the right of this mean, and they tend more toward the middle mode than toward the extreme. Considerable room is left open at the right. The pattern for 'reduction of armies' is more like what would be expected if a Downsian model were operating. To the left are the Socialists (PvdA) and D'66. At the middle mode is the KVP and toward the right mode are the remaining four parties. In this case all but the first two are to the right of the population mean.

Another Dimension — The final item is that concerning the right of abortion — should the woman be allowed to decide in all cases or should the government forbid abortion under all circumstances. The distribution of the population is clearly skewed toward the position of letting the woman herself decide, although secondary modes exist at the middle and opposite extreme. This issue has been held till last, for as can be seen in the figure, the lineup of the parties differs considerably from the other six items. (Spearman's rho for the left-right rankings with the other issues runs from -.08 to .35). Here the ranking indicates another underlying dimension, related to the religious-secular dimension separating the political parties. Toward the middle and at a good distance from these parties are the religious parties. Of these, the Catholic People's Party holds a position the farthest to the right, but still a distance from the extreme. This empty space (i.e. a sizeable

group of voters from whom no party is directly related) provides us with some of our clearest evidence of the operation of a Downsian type of model.¹⁸ Since 1971, when these data were collected, a new party has been



formed to fill this gap. The Roman Catholic Party of the Netherlands (RKPN) places heavy emphasis on the question of abortion. That this issue was felt intensely by some voters is indicated by the success of this new party – gaining two seats and then holding one at subsequent elections.

Summary – This has been an initial look at the distribution of opinions within the population on seven issue questions and how the mean values of the members of the parliamentary parties related to these distributions. One purpose for doing this was to determine whether there were any evidence that parties reacted to the distributions of voter opinion in determining their own positions, as they might if the model of Downs were operating. Such evidence is mixed. On the one hand, for some issues for which there was a definite opinion among the voters ('income differences' and 'workers' influence') the parties were found to bunch toward the mode. For issues where there was more nearly a multi-modal distribution, the parties were found to be more widely distributed, and in the case of 'reduction of armies' rather closely related to these modes. Finally, in at least one instance, a gap in the issue space of the voters was filled by a newly created party.

On the other hand, there are counter arguments and explanations which leave the matter far from decided. For example, it is the religious parties who show the most tendency to lean in the direction of the mode. This could be explained by saying that most of these issues are not related to the basic ideology or *raison d'être* of the party. Not being restrained by their ideology, they are or would be free to move toward the modal position of the voters. Thus they react quite differently on the abortion issue which is more closely related to their religious principles. The counter argument would be that it is not that these parties move in the direction of the voters but that the mode of recruitment within the parties brings about such a correspondence to a degree. Since the basis for the parties is religion and not economics or something else socio-economical, they try to represent as many interests as possible.¹⁹ The KVP clearly calls itself a 'peoples' party. One critic has called them 'untrustworthy' for this reason.²⁰ Nevertheless, trying to represent many interests may result in opinions which tend more to those expressed by the full population.

Secondly, we have seen several instances in which these parties are not found in the region of large numbers of voters. Nor have all these gaps been filled by new or splinter parties. Perhaps these issues are simply not important enough to the voters who express them, but surely this is not the only possibility. Downs himself stated the proposition that 'the competitive struggle for office compels parties in our model to be both honest and

consistent in formulating policies and ideologies and developing them over time'.²¹ More sophisticated partisans may be concerned with what for them are consistent combinations of issue opinions based upon their underlying ideology. This consistency may not be seen or be so important to all the voters. Additional research has shown that the factor structure for these issues is different for the voters and the members of parliament. Parties may be inhibited from altering positions toward a popular voter position if this would violate their own ideas of ideological consistency.

We might be able to gain more insight into the relation between voters' opinions and party positions if we could establish the most important dimensions to be looked at. Factor analysis has been tried but not found to be fully satisfactory. Some measure of saliency and intensity of issues among the voters would also be important. Finally, if one is to show that the parties react to the voters and not that the voters merely follow the lead of the party leaders, then time series data will be needed. Until these questions are at least partially answered, we shall be forced to leave our comparisons of overall voter opinion distributions and party positions at the level presented.

Inter-party consensus

Our discussion so far has centered around the distributions of opinion within the population and the position which the parliamentary parties occupy within these distributions. We may now turn to questions of issue consensus, although one can see from the distribution above that there was more agreement among the voters on some issues than on others. Since only means were presented for the parliamentary parties and since each party was thereby treated equally regardless of the size of its parliamentary caucus, it is important to make direct comparisons of representatives and followers.²²

The most well-known study comparing the policy preferences of an elite with those of the mass voting public, is that done in the United States by McClosky, Hoffman, and O'Hara.²³ They have shown that on a number of issues the delegates to the party conventions were significantly more divided than the voters for the parties. From this one may conclude that consensus on issues is greater within the voting population than among political leaders. The well-known finding that Republican voters more nearly resembled Democratic leaders than their own party leaders derives from this research.

Subsequent research has tended to support this finding. Although they did not have a related sample of voters with which to make comparisons, Soule and Clarke, in a replication of the McClosky work, did find that the delegates to the 1968 party conventions were significantly divided on issues.²⁴

In their study of Norwegian parties, Valen and Katz came to a similar conclusion.²⁵ Budge however has criticized the conclusion that elites are always more divided than the population on important issues. Drawing upon V. O. Key, he lists four possible combinations of agreement and division:

- 1 — both leaders and electors agree on an issue;
- 2 — leaders are agreed on an issue and electors are divided;
- 3 — leaders are divided on an issue and electors are agreed;
- 4 — both leaders and electors are divided on an issue.²⁶

Budge (and Key) can envisage any of the four possibilities arising, pointing out, 'The findings of McClosky and his associates, therefore, seem to apply to one type of issue — issues on which the parties are clearly opposed — and not to all possible types'.²⁷ (Of course, one of the points which McClosky *et al.* set out to prove was that such opposition *did* exist.) Nevertheless, after hypothesizing that more agreement should be found among the politicians, Budge is forced to conclude that his findings in Britain, 'do not uphold the expectation that politicians are more agreed than electors on a substantial number of issue preferences'.²⁸

Writing in another vein (the 'end of ideology' debate) and without reference to McClosky, Hoogerwerf has produced some contrary evidence for the Netherlands.²⁹ By comparing the party programs of 1948 and 1963, he found a growing consensus on the questions of socialization, regulation of the economy, and social services, although differences remained on the questions of income distribution, distribution of wealth and property, and the influence of workers in factories. These latter issues were also found to divide voters as well. Nevertheless, he found that little attention has been paid to these issues during the most recent parliamentary elections and in the formation of the cabinet. He concluded, 'the social-economic differences are much less clearly evidenced in the policies of political leaders than in the election platforms and in the attitudes of the party supporters'.³⁰ Lijphart has used this evidence to support his statement that 'even on specific issues, communication between elite and mass reflects much more the ideological polarization at the mass level than the high degree of pragmatism and moderation at the top'.³¹ Hoogerwerf explains this increasing fuzziness in the opinions of the elite in terms of the 'technocratic character of the present political elite. There is a shift (in emphasis) among political leaders: from policy decisions to administrative judgements, that is to say from choices concerning goals to choices concerning means'.³² Lijphart sees this as an important aspect of the 'politics of accommodation'. Whatever the reasoning, we may arrive at a hypothesis contrary to that derived from McClosky that in directly comparing the opinions of voters and members of parliament in the Netherlands, we should find more consensus

among the elite than among the mass. This hypothesis receives some support in the data.

Table 1:
Means and Standard-deviations for voters and Parliament

Issue	Voters		Parliament		Intra-group consensus score	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Voters	Parl.
Abortion	4.83	2.21	4.91	1.89	66	58
Law and Order	5.15	1.83	3.82	1.44	26	54
Aid to dev. countries	4.12	1.95	2.69	1.33	51	80
Income differences	5.14	1.93	5.46	1.48	74	84
Workers Influence	5.19	1.89	5.91	1.22	75	91
Taxes for Services	4.77	1.78	3.06	1.59	36	74
Reduction of Armies	3.91	2.15	4.07	1.89	50	47

Consensus for these seven issues has been measured in two ways. First, the seven point scale on which each issue was measured has been treated as an interval scale and standard deviations are computed for voters and MP's for each issue. The smaller the standard deviation, the greater the consensus. For purposes of comparison, one may keep in mind that a variable distributed normally across a seven point scale with a mean of 4 will have a standard deviation of 1.36. A unitary distribution across a 7-point scale has a standard deviation of 2.06. Examination of the figures in Table 1 shows that in each case the standard deviation for the voters is greater than that for the members of parliament. The average SD for voters is 1.96 while that for the MP's is 1.55, and only two of the voters' standard deviations are smaller than the largest for the MP's.³³

In general voters and MP's tend toward greater consensus on the same issues. Spearman's rho coefficient for the rank order of the two sets is .4, the most important divergences being for aid to developing countries for which the MP's are relatively agreed but the voters are divided, and for 'taxes' for which the voters are relatively united and MP's are not. However as we shall see in the next set of figures, relative consensus does not necessarily mean on the same point of view.

A second measure of consensus is simply the percentage falling on either side of the center. Those in the middle ('4') position have been equally divided between the two side positions.³⁴ The percentage favoring the 'leftist' policy position is shown in Table 1. Disagreement is highest when 50% are aligned on each side of the center, and consensus increases as the figures increase or decrease. These measures also show that the members of parlia-

ment are generally more agreed than the voters, although the results are mixed. In four cases, the figure for MP's is higher, but for two the figure for voters is higher (on one neither has much consensus). Voters receive a score of 66 for the question of abortion while the members of parliament have only a score of 58, i.e. voters are slightly more agreed that the woman should have the right to decide about abortion. On the question of whether the government should react more strongly to demonstrations and disturbances, the voters are relatively agreed that it should, while the MP's are divided. The opposite is true for increasing aid to developing countries, for which the MP's are agreed and the voters are divided. On the last issue, both MP's and voters are in disagreement about reduction of military forces. Consensus is relatively high for both on the question of taxes (although a bit higher for MP's) but the consensus is on opposite points of view! Although there is evidence to support the Hoogerwerf-Lijphart hypothesis, one may also find evidence of existence of each of the four possibilities suggested by Budge. In any case the conclusion reached first by McClosky *et al.* and accepted by the others that the politicians are more divided because they are 'more articulate, informed, highly partisan, and involved' etc. must be rejected. There is no reason to suppose that Dutch MP's are any less sophisticated or voters any more so than the comparable groups in the other studies. Yet the patterns of consensus are certainly different. The effects of special Dutch circumstances which may be intervening are difficult to determine. In general it would seem safer to conclude with Budge that all combinations of consensus and dissensus are possible and to look for other factors which account for these combinations.

Intra-party consensus

Although important, the inter-party consensus for voters and MP's is not as central to our discussion of representation as the consensus within the parties. In the Figures 1 through 7 we presented the parliamentary parties as a single point represented by the mean. Clearly this did not indicate that all members were located at that particular point. On the other hand it makes little sense to rank seven parties on an issue if the range of values taken by members of a party is so great that the overlap between parties is considerable. This is tolerated because one has the feeling that the parties are differentiable and do present a united front to the public. Valen and Katz have emphasized the importance of the idea of party unity in Norwegian parties.³⁵ Here, however, we are not dealing with a party platform which each member is asked to stand behind; these are the personal opinions of the members of parliament as expressed in a confidential interview. (In later research the relation between the members personal view and his perception

of his party will be examined). Because of the greater importance attached to party unity and to the presumed greater ideological basis of the party, one would expect to find greater consensus within the parties than was found by McClosky *et al.* for the American parties.

Downs and Tullock have argued that in a multi-party system a party should attempt to keep some distance from the other parties. This may be what one means when he speaks of the greater ideological content of parties in multi-party systems. In any case, we must look at the expressions of opinions here to determine if the Dutch parties are really able to keep a distance from the other parties, i.e. present a unique program to the voters. With only a seven point scale and seven parties we would hardly expect to find each party at a unique position on the scale, but we can look at the opinions across all the issues to determine if each has something unique to offer.

Since presentation of all seven points for seven parties for seven issues (purely accidental!?) would require too much space, we have again collapsed the positions on either side of the middle. The middle position (4) is also presented. These figures are presented in Table 2. Even if we utilize a more rigid definition of consensus (namely, 75 % on one side of the middle point without dividing the middle) than that above, the parliamentary parties would appear to be in agreement internally on most issues. In 33 of the 49 cases the parties reach this 75 % figure, and a few of the remaining 16 cases fall only slightly under this requirement. The greatest problem is posed by the question of 'law and order' for which only the PvdA and D'66 reveal consensus. For the remaining parties, large numbers choose the middle position. Other difficult issues were aid to developing countries, abortion, and taxes for which three parties were unable to reach consensus. On the other hand, all parties agree among themselves concerning the question of income differences, and only one party lacks internal consensus on the influence which should be accorded to workers and on the proper size of western armies.

If the same figures are examined by party rather than issue, one finds that two of the parties are agreed internally on all of the issues (PvdA and D'66), while the remainder have from two to four issues which present problems. Even for these parties the problem does not appear too serious, as several cases would fall away if the middle position were distributed equally to both sides. This would leave only 'aid to developing countries' for DS'70 and the VVD; abortion for the ARP and CHU; the influence of workers for the VVD; and the strength of armed forces for the KVP. Detailed comparisons with the McClosky or Soule and Clark data are hardly necessary to indicate that these levels of consensus are far higher than that for parties in the United States. Although the US data was collected from a larger group, na-

mely the delegates to the national conventions, one doubts that if interviews with members of Congress would result in different findings.³⁶

Valen and Katz found:

The differences among the parties are much smaller on specific issues than on ideological orientation. In particular, the policy differences among the non-Socialist parties are not great. The most important cleavage in Norwegian politics is between the Labor Party on the one hand and the four non-Socialist parties on the other.³⁷

Table 2:
Issue preferences of members of parliament

	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD	Total
<i>Aid to Developing Countries</i>								
More money on aid	95	100	14	75	71	80	13	69
Middle	3	0	43	25	29	10	50	21
Less money on aid	3	0	43	0	0	10	37	10
<i>Abortion</i>								
Government forbid	5	0	0	15	64	30	0	25
Middle	3	0	0	46	24	20	6	14
Women decide	92	100	100	39	12	50	94	51
<i>Law and Order</i>								
Gov't action too strong	82	80	0	8	18	0	0	37
Middle	15	20	43	69	44	50	31	33
Gov't action stronger	3	0	57	23	27	50	69	30
<i>Income Differences</i>								
Should be smaller	100	78	100	77	82	90	7	79
Middle	0	11	0	15	9	10	27	10
Remain as are	0	11	0	8	9	0	67	12
<i>Workers Influence</i>								
Employees involved	100	89	100	100	100	100	40	89
Middle	0	11	0	0	0	0	33	4
Management decide	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	7
<i>Taxes v. Services</i>								
Raise taxes for services	97	78	0	62	85	60	6	68
Middle	0	11	0	23	12	30	25	12
Lower taxes, everybody decide	3	11	100	15	3	10	69	20
<i>Reduce Western armies</i>								
Gov't urge reductions	87	89	0	8	27	0	0	40
Middle	8	11	0	8	35	10	6	14
Gov't urge strong armies	5	0	100	85	38	90	94	48

The policy orientations of Dutch parties would seem to be more distinct. With one exception (and a modification) the parties do offer a unique set of policy preferences to the voters. The two extremes are occupied by the Socialists (PvdA) and the Liberals (VVD). Only in the case of abortion do these parties achieve consensus on the same side of an issue. In general, they are two united groups (the VVD somewhat less so) facing each other.

The one party which does not present a unique combination of policy preferences to the public is D'66. For each issue the party is united, but always on the same side as the Socialists. One might argue that we have not included any issues of constitutional reform which were so important in the founding of the party. Nor is the 'new' style which may have appealed to voters taken into account. But now that the newness has faded and the constitutional issues have been taken over at least in part by the PvdA, the lack of a separate face may be a factor in the increasing losses sustained at the polls. It is hardly surprising that many of the voters are turning to the larger Socialist Party.³⁸

DS'70 is a party which broke away from the Socialist Party as a protest against the influence of the New Left. Thus we find that its MP's continue to agree with the Socialists in some cases, but disagree in others. They agree internally and with the PvdA on abortion, reduction of income differences, and workers' influences in business and factories. They agree internally but disagree with the PvdA on the need for lowering taxes and for maintaining a strong army, both important issues leading to the split. It is somewhat disagreed internally on aid to developing countries and government action against disturbances.

The three religious parties ARP, CHU, and KVP do not individually present unique combinations of issue preferences. In fact the two protestant parties are distributed almost identically for each of the seven issues. The KVP differs in degree, although not in substance, on abortion and defense. Current attempts to unite the three into a Christian-Democratic party would appear possible on the basis of these opinions. (These positions may have changed subsequent to this survey with the ARP and KVP in the governmental coalition and the CHU in the opposition.) The difference between these parties has always been more the religion at the base than the policy positions taken.

Their position as a center bloc is clearly seen in the table. On the issues of aid to developing countries, reduction of income differences, workers' influence, and to a lesser extent taxes, they are internally in agreement and united with the PvdA. On government reaction to disturbances and retaining strong armies they are basically united internally, but on the side of the VVD. These are also the positions taken by DS'70, but a difference here is found

with regard to abortion. Only the members of the religious parties show any support for government forbiddance of abortion.

Summary — Examination of the opinions of members of the various parliamentary parties has shown that these parties are internally united on most issues. Moreover, with one exception the parties differ from each other according to their preferences. In a later section we shall examine some hypotheses concerning the conditions producing consensus. First, however, we turn to the internal consistency of voters for each party.

Intra-Party Consensus for Voters — In their study of issue preferences in the United States, McClosky and associates found that Democratic voters differed from Republican voters on relatively few issues, far fewer than did the party leaders. However, the amount of consensus within the groups (as measured by the standard deviations) was quite similar. 'Although the Republican leaders appear on the average to be the most united and the Democratic leaders the least united of the four groups, the difference between their homogeneity scores (.340 vs. .310) is too small to be taken as conclusive'.³⁹ We have seen in Table 2 that the Dutch members of parliament were considerably more unified and presented more of a unique combination of opinions than did the American convention delegates. It seems a bit much, however, to expect that the voters for a party share this consensus to the same degree. Voters were found to differ from MP's on the issues for which there was unified agreement, and there seems to be no reason to believe that this should be entirely different within parties. There may be many factors which attract a voter to a particular party, of which issue positions may be only one. Even if only issues are concerned, a voter may disagree with the accepted party position on a single or small number of issues, but still support it because of its stand on others. Summing across all voters, one may find that the voters represent a broader range of opinions than expressed by the leaders. To simplify a bit, we present the index measures of consensus rather than the entire distributions, but include the similar scores for the MP's for comparison.

If a score greater than 75 or less than 25 is taken as an indication of relatively high consensus, then in only 17 of 49 cases do we find such consensus among voters. This means that in the heavy majority of cases substantial numbers of voters for a party may be found on opposite sides of the issue (or balanced in the middle). The highest scores are those for the voters of the Socialist Party (PvdA) on the issues of 'income differences' and 'workers' influence', highly salient issues for this party. Voters for D'66 are only slightly less unified on these issues, and those for DS'70 and the KVP

Table 3:
Intra-party consensus-score

	Voters and MP's							Total
	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD	
<i>Aid to developing countr.</i>								
Voters	45.5	52.1	38.5	60.3	60.8	53.2	42.8	51.2
MP's	96.2	100.0	35.8	87.5	89.5	85.0	38.0	79.5
<i>Abortion</i>								
Voters	78.8	82.6	79.4	43.2	47.8	48.4	79.4	65.6
MP's	93.5	100.0	100.0	62.0	24.0	60.0	97.0	58.0
<i>Law and Order</i>								
Voters	33.0	41.7	19.4	23.1	21.3	17.5	18.5	25.9
MP's	89.5	90.0	21.5	42.5	40.0	25.0	15.5	53.5
<i>Income differences</i>								
Voters	86.0	82.9	75.5	68.5	74.5	68.5	47.4	73.9
MP's	100.0	83.5	100.0	84.5	86.5	95.5	5.0	84.0
<i>Worker's influence</i>								
Voters	90.7	84.2	75.4	71.8	68.8	73.0	49.2	74.8
MP's	100.0	94.5	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	56.5	91.0
<i>Taxes for services</i>								
Voters	33.8	40.4	27.0	38.2	31.9	48.3	41.3	36.0
MP's	97.0	83.5	0.0	73.5	91.0	75.0	18.5	74.0
<i>Reduce Western armies</i>								
Voters	69.0	70.3	38.4	31.7	44.1	38.9	34.3	50.0
MP's	93.0	94.5	0.0	12.0	44.5	5.0	3.0	47.0

also reach the cut-off point. On 'abortion' voters for the secular parties are basically in agreement that the woman should be given the right to decide. And, all but the voters for the PvdA and D'66 generally feel that the government should take stronger action in cases of civil disturbances. For the issues 'aid to developing countries', 'taxes', and 'reductions in western armies', no party's voters achieve consensus.

If the measures of consensus for the voters are compared with those of the MP's, it is immediately clear that there is far more consensus among the latter. In 40 of the 49 instances, the MP's had a value above the 75 cut-off point. In only 14 of these did the voters share this consensus. On the other hand, in only two of the remaining 9 cases do the voters agree when the MP's do not (for the ARP and KVP on 'law and order'). Although in 26

instances the MP's are in agreement when the voters are not, only on the question of 'taxes' does it seem that the direction of consensus is opposite. It is obviously not the case that the high party consensus among the representatives is the result of highly consensual issue opinions among the party's voters. Only in rare instances, of course, are the voters in agreement when the party's members in parliament are not. More often, the preferences of the voters lean toward one side, whereas virtually all of the MP's are on that side. If we are to relate the issue preferences of voters to the positions taken by the party (as expressed by the preferences of their representatives), then this can not be sought in a complete one-to-one correspondence. Vectors of preferences for each voter might be compared to each party vector to determine if he generally agrees with the position of the party for whom he votes. Comparisons of these vectors may in turn tell us for which parties the correspondence is greatest over all issues. A further refinement would be in production of measures of saliency and intensity. Some issues are more important to individual voters than others, and they may wish their opinions to be in line with those expressed by the party. The fact that they disagree with the party on issues which are less important to them personally may be of little concern in making the decision to support the party.

Variations in consensus

In the preceding sections we have examined the amount of consensus across the parties and within the parties for both the members of parliament and for the voters. In some instances consensus was found to be greater than in others, i.e. the variance varied. In this final section we make an attempt to understand this variation. From the articles on issue consensus which have been cited, one can derive several hypotheses concerning ways in which consensus may vary.

- 1 — Members of Parliament and voters of the same party tend to unite or divide on the same issues for the most part.
- 2 — Voters of different parties tend to agree disagree among themselves on the same issues.
- 3 — MP's do *not* tend to agree among themselves on the same issues, at least not to the same degree as the voters.
- 4 — Parties have greater consensus on those issues which most closely relate to their underlying ideology.
- 5 — Parties exhibit the greatest intra-party consensus on those issues on which there is the greatest inter-party conflict.
- 6 — Parties exhibit the greatest intra-party consensus on those issues on which they take the most extreme or deviating opinion.
- 7 — New parties, originating from older, existing parties, will be most united on those issues which separate them from the parent party.

The first three of these hypotheses are closely related to the immediately preceding sections and some information concerning these relationships can be obtained by looking at Table 3. We may now clarify these relationships somewhat. The reader will note that not all of these three can hold simultaneously, at least not if the relationships are strong. Yet evidence for all three may be found in previous research, so all must be tested here. The last two (numbers 6 and 7) are not taken from previous research, but may be derived from hypothesis 5. All of these hypotheses (with the exception of number 4) will be tested by computing Spearman rho coefficients for the rank order of the standard deviations.⁴⁰ (See Table 4) Each issue has been ranked per party from the smallest standard deviation to the largest. A strong positive correlation thus indicates that those from two groups tend to agree and disagree among themselves about the same things. A weak or zero correlation indicates that the two groups agree about different things, whereas strong negative indicates that one group agrees about what another group disagrees.⁴¹ Each hypothesis may be examined individually.

Hypothesis 1: Members of parliament and voters of the same party tend to unite or divide on the same issues for the most part.

This hypothesis is derived from the work of McClosky and associates, but the evidence there was mixed. They wrote, 'Democratic leaders and followers tend to unite or divide on the same issues for the most part (r equals .77), but Republican leaders and followers are not parallel in this respect . . . (r equals .30). The pattern of homogeneity and dispersion among Republican followers is, in fact, much closer to that of the Democratic leaders (r equals .75)'.⁴² It is this weak correlation with own leaders and strong correlation with the opposition followers which allowed all three hypotheses to hold simultaneously. We have already seen in the Dutch data that the members of parliament are in general far more unified than their voters, but perhaps the ordering of consensus and dissensus is roughly the same. The values for Spearman's rho are given in Table 5.

Only for the Socialist Party can it be said definitely that both members of parliament and voters are agreed about the same issues. The correlation for DS'70 is reasonably strong, but that for KVP, CHU, and VVD is quite moderate and for ARP and D'66 weak to negative. The biggest offender would seem to be the issue of the amount of influence which workers should have in the decisions of businesses and factories. For D'66 and DS'70 the voters are relatively agreed on their standpoint but the members of parliament are more disagreed than on most other issues. For the religious parties, the relation is the opposite with the MP's in agreement but the voters relatively disagreed. Another offender is the issue of 'law and order', i.e. how the go-

Table 4:

Standard deviations and rank orders of issues by party for members of parliament and for voters

	Members of Parliament Standard Deviations (9 point scale)						
	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD
Abortion	1.40	1.01	0.75	1.41	1.53	1.95	1.29
Law and Order	1.35	0.74	1.00	1.18	1.25	1.03	1.17
Aid to Developing Countries	1.21	1.06	1.80	1.22	1.39	1.03	1.15
Income Differences	0.84	1.50	0.95	1.44	1.44	0.95	1.55
Workers Influence	0.60	1.32	1.07	0.96	1.05	0.84	1.46
Taxes for Services	1.23	1.41	0.95	1.60	1.21	1.06	1.35
Reduction of Armies	1.40	1.05	1.11	1.71	1.98	0.84	1.15

	Ranks of Standard Deviations (by Party)						
	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD
Abortion	7	2	1	4	6	7	4
Law and Order	5	1	4	2	3	5	3
Aid to Developing Countries	3	4	7	3	4	4	1
Income Differences	2	7	2	5	5	3	7
Workers Influence	1	5	5	1	1	1	6
Taxes for Services	4	6	3	6	2	6	5
Reduction of Armies	6	3	6	7	7	2	2

	Voters Standard Deviations (7 point scale)						
	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD
Abortion	2.03	1.63	1.64	2.00	2.29	2.26	1.77
Law and Order	1.90	1.74	1.71	1.74	1.68	1.43	1.63
Aid to Developing Countries	2.01	2.05	1.79	1.66	1.81	1.88	1.64
Income Differences	1.66	1.70	1.65	1.78	1.81	1.87	1.97
Workers Influence	1.39	1.55	1.61	1.82	2.01	1.82	1.86
Taxes for Services	1.93	1.65	1.78	1.47	1.68	1.78	1.67
Reduction of Armies	2.07	1.99	1.93	1.88	1.98	1.77	1.99

	Rank Orders of Standard Deviations (by Party)						
	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD
Abortion	6	2	4	3	7	7	1
Law and Order	3	5	6	2	1.5	1	2
Aid to Developing Countries	5	7	2	7	3.5	6	4
Income Differences	2	4	3	4	3.5	5	6
Workers Influence	1	1	1	5	6	4	5
Taxes for Services	4	3	5	1	1.5	3	3
Reduction of Armies	7	6	7	6	5	2	7

Table 5:

Correlations of rank order of issues for parliamentary party and voters

PvdA	.82
D'66	-.21
DS'70	.57
ARP	.04
KVP	.38
CHU	.25
VVD	.36

vernment should react to civil disturbances. The parliamentary members of D'66 are agreed, but the voters are not, while the situation for the CHU is again reversed. For the VVD, the MP's are relatively agreed about the necessity for strong armies in the West, but the voters show their greatest internal disagreement. In general, there is only moderate support for the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: Voters of different parties tend to agree and disagree among themselves on the same issues.

If voters' patterns of agreement and disagreement are only moderately related to the patterns of their parliamentary representatives, perhaps this is because voters are (in general) more or less agreed about the same things. It may be that despite differences between parties, the amount of internal conflict may vary with the issue – agreeing about disagreeing – or that some issues are more or less resolved while others are divisive across party lines. McClosky *et al.*, found such a pattern in the United States, 'Among the followers the patterns of unity and division are very similar, as attested by the high correlation of .83 between the rank orders of their homogeneity scores The two sets of followers, in short, are alike not only in their opinions on issues but in the degree of unanimity they exhibit toward them'⁴³

Table 6:

Correlations (Spearman's rho) between voters of parties for rank order of issues

	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD
PvdA							
D'66	.46						
DS'70	.64	.86					
ARP	.29	-.32	-.36				
KVP	.23	-.39	-.41	.88			
CHU	.11	-.21	-.36	.25	.57		
VVD	.11	-.18	-.04	.61	.55	.07	

Dutch voters apparently differ from American voters in this regard; they do not basically agree and disagree about the same issues. Instead they fall roughly into two blocs which correspond somewhat to a left-right division. On the left are the voters of the PvdA, D'66, and DS'70 for which inter-correlations range from .46 to .86. The bloc on the right, consisting of the voters of the religious parties (ARP, KVP, and CHU) and the VVD, is somewhat looser, with correlations as low as .07 but with a high of .88. The correlations of the PvdA with those in the right bloc are positive, but weak, while those of the remaining left group are negative. This might be taken as evidence of an established-new party dimension, but certainly of secondary importance. The difference between the PvdA and the new (left) parties seems to be the relative lack of consensus concerning 'abortion' for which both D'66 and DS '70 voters are relatively in agreement. Principle among the issues separating the blocs is the degree of influence for workers. The voters of the left bloc achieve their greatest consensus on this issue, while the right bloc is relatively divided, perhaps reflecting to a degree the social background of their voters. The religious parties, on the other hand, are relatively agreed on the question of aid for developing countries, whereas the left (and this time also the VVD) is less agreed internally. Other issues which show relative consensus on the right against relative dissensus on the left are 'law and order' and 'taxes vs. services'.

These patterns may be related back to the figures presented at the beginning of this article, and to the discussion of inter-party consensus. Five of the issues were found to have a 'popular' side. Income differences should be smaller; workers should be involved in decisions; taxes should be lower; etc. When the party ideology, the positions taken by the leaders, and the 'popular' side of an issue are mutually reinforcing, party consensus should be high. But when one of these deviates, as would seem to be the case above for the 'popular' positions, party consensus may be weakened. Or seen alternatively, the voters for a particular party may be drawn away from the party position by a more 'popular' stand by the opposition. In any case, we must reject the hypothesis that voters of all parties generally agree and disagree about the same things.

Hypothesis 3: Members of Parliament from different parties do not tend to agree among themselves on the same issues, at least not to the same degree as the voters

This hypothesis is likewise derived from the work of McClosky *et al.*, and is a necessary result of the relationships already presented. They report, 'Whereas Democratic and Republican followers divide on issues in approximately the same way, the two sets of leaders differ from each other in this

respect also (the correlation between their rank orders on homogeneity is only .28)⁴⁴. Since we have not found that the voters of all Dutch parties are in agreement, we certainly do not expect that the party representatives will be. Nevertheless we may look for a similar grouping into two blocs as was found among the voters. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7:

Correlations (Spearman's rho) between members of parliamentary parties for rank order of intra-party agreement on issues

	PvdA	D'66	DS'70	ARP	KVP	CHU	VVD
PvdA							
D'66	-.71						
DS'70	-.25	-.11					
ARP	.42	.25	-.14				
KVP	.64	-.29	-.11	.61			
CHU	.61	-.32	-.57	.14	.11		
VVD	-.50	.64	-.64	-.07	-.36	-.14	

No consistent groupings are found in these figures. There is a group including the PvdA and the three religious parties for which all correlations are positive, but among the religious parties the CHU is only very weakly correlated with its partners (ARP and KVP). The PvdA is actually strongly negatively correlated with its ally D'66. Thus, although we have seen that both present virtually identical points of view to the voters across these seven issues, they differ with regard to which of the items may reflect internal agreement. In this regard D'66 is more highly correlated with the opposition VVD. The hypothesis must be supported as one is unable to find any pattern within the table.

Hypothesis 4: Parties have greater consensus on those issues which most closely relate to the underlying ideology.

This is the only hypothesis which cannot be tested by comparing the rank orders of the standard deviations. In fact, it is not possible to devise a completely objective test of such an hypothesis. How does one determine which of the issues is more dear to a party? Or how can we separate issue positions from ideology at all? However, McClosky *et al.* do report 'we see that the leaders of the Republican party are most united on the issues that stem from its connections with business — government regulation of business, taxes (especially on business), regulation of trade unions, and minimum wages. The Democratic leaders are most united on those issues which bear upon the support the party receives from the lower and middle income

groups — taxes on small and middle incomes, antimonopoly, slum clearance, social security, and minimum wages'.⁴⁵ This finding has later been reexamined and challenged by Soule and Clark, 'We have considered this generalization and although we have insufficient data to refute it, there is evidence that greater intra-party consensus exists on *other* issues'.⁴⁶ (Italics added). With only seven issues and seven parties, even a subjective test of this hypothesis is difficult and even beforehand inconclusive.

Evidence for the McClosky position comes from the Socialist Party. It is most highly agreed on the issues of 'income differences' and 'worker's influence' — two issues closely associated to its appeal to the working class. DS'70 is relatively highly unified on the question of 'taxes' which is closely related to its anti-inflation policy. But further supporting evidence is missing. D'66 is most unified on 'abortion'. The religious parties also are the most unified on 'worker's influence', and certainly not on abortion. The CHU is more highly unified on 'keeping a strong army' as is the VVD, but the latter is equally unified on 'aid to developing countries'. In short, it may be that the hypothesis has some merit, but it is in need of further refinement if it is to be accepted. Unfortunately, the direction of this refinement is not evident from these issues for Dutch parties.

Hypothesis 5: Parties exhibit the greatest intra-party consensus on those issues on which there is the greatest inter-party conflict.

Both McClosky and associates and Soule and Clark have tested and rejected this hypothesis. McClosky *et al.* set out to 'test the belief that political parties develop greatest internal solidarity on those questions which most separate them from their opponents. According to this hypothesis, external controversy has the effect of uniting the members further by confronting them with a common danger. Whether or not this hypothesis would be borne out in study of small, sectarian parties we cannot say, but it receives no support from the present study of American mass parties'.⁴⁷ Soule and Clark go even a bit further and report that 'there is a slight tendency for consensus to be greatest within both parties on those issues that generalate *less* conflict between the parties'.⁴⁸

Before giving the hypothesis a final burial, it should be checked in a different political system. However, devising a test for this hypothesis in a multi-party system is not easy. For looking at the greatest interparty conflict, we have chosen to take only the two parties which generally stand at the opposite ends of the poles — PvdA and VVD. After computing the distance between the party averages for each of the seven issues, these distances have been ranked according to the distances between them from greatest to smallest. In this case, 'income differences' was the largest difference and

'abortion' the smallest. These ranks may then be compared with the rankings of the standard deviations for each of these two parties. A high positive correlation supports the hypothesis.

The Spearman rho coefficient between the distance ranks and the ranks for the PvdA is .43 and that for the VVD is -.39. These results are contradictory. The value for the PvdA would lend moderate support for the hypothesis, but that for the VVD leans more to the Soule and Clark position. It may be that the issues are simply more important for the PvdA than for the VVD, leading to such a result. In any case, although burial of the hypothesis may still be premature, no strong support is found for its retention.

Hypothesis 6: Parties exhibit the greatest intra-party consensus on those issues on which they take the most extreme or deviating opinion.

This hypothesis has not been tested by any of the other authors, but may be derived from the above hypothesis. The more a party deviates from the accepted position or the farther it deviates from a middle position, the more it may be necessary to present a united front. This may be in a way another form of inter-party conflict. This hypothesis would probably not hold for the voters for whom we have already noted that as one deviates from the more popular opinion, internal disagreement becomes larger. But the process for the elite may be different, perhaps being more aware of the extreme or deviating opinion.

The distance of the party average from one of the extreme positions (1 and 9 for the members of parliament) have been computed and ranked from least to greatest. This ranks the party according to the 'extremeness' of its opinions. These ranks have then been correlated with the ranks of the standard deviations. The results must be interpreted with some caution, as there is some bias built into the results. By limiting the answers to a nine point scale (or any other number of points for that matter) we may be limiting the amount of differentiation allowed at the end points. Those bunched at the ends might actually differ if more nuances were allowed. However, since we are interested here in the degree of bunching at the ends, the effect of this bias should not interfere with our conclusions. The results are presented in Table 8.

With the exception of the VVD for whom the value was 0.0, all of the correlations are positive. One (.96 for the CHU) is extremely high, and three others are in the moderate to strong range. Yet three are weak, although none were found to be negative. We cannot speak with any certainty, but there is some indication that parties may be more unified when they take an extreme position.

Table 8:

Spearman rho coefficients for rank orders of extreme position of party and amount of inter-party consensus

PvdA	.68
D'66	.10
DS'70	.68
ARP	.29
KVP	.54
CHU	.96
VVD	.00

Hypothesis 7: New parties originating from older, existing parties will be most united on those issues which separate them from the parent party.

This hypothesis may also be derived from that above concerning interparty conflict. If a group within an existing party is in such disagreement with that party that it breaks away to form a new party, then we might expect that it would be highly unified on that issue (or issues) which caused the break. Other issues might be less important and more disagreement might exist. Such a hypothesis may be examined by looking at the distance between DS'70 and its parent party, the PvdA.

The correlation of these distances with the ranks of the standard deviations for DS'70 shows a value of $-.57$, so the hypothesis must be rejected. For those two issues — 'taxes' and 'defense' — which were important in separating DS'70 from the PvdA, ranks of 3 and 6 are found for DS'70. Instead DS'70 is most united on 'abortion' and 'income differences'. Apparently breaking away need not lead directly to high consensus.

Summary and conclusion

In this paper we have examined several aspects of party issue positions and consensus for voters and members of parliament in the Netherlands. To begin with we tried to shed some light on the basis of party positions by looking at the overall distributions. First, does the present Dutch party system reflect the attitudes of the population on the issues examined? Secondly does the system behave according to the Downsian model by letting in new parties when the existing parties do not represent a certain issue position.

We have found that on the issues of 'taxes' and 'law and order' the major parties hardly represent the popular positions. This is most exaggerated in the case of 'law and order' for which all parties are to the left of the population mean. The Downs model would predict in these two cases the development of at least one new party, representing the popular side of the issue. However, an important limitation of this approach is of course that we

have no information about the salience or intensity of feeling about these issues among voters. In the case of abortion we do see a typical example that could have been predicted by the Downs model. The gap that had been left at the extreme right by the major parties has been filled by the Roman Catholic party of the Netherlands since 1971.

In the second part of the paper we have found that earlier findings of more partisan differentiation among party leaders than among party supporters cannot be seen as a general law. In the Netherlands the results are mixed. For at least some issues the voters are definitely more divided than the MP's. This can possibly be explained as a result of the known politics of accommodation.

Intra-party consensus was found to be very high among the members of the parliamentary parties. Voters for the parties, however, were rather less united on issues, apparently pulled away from party positions by the pressure of 'popular' opinions. Voters divided into 'blocs' on the degree of consensus of opinions, whereas the parliamentary parties were far more unique on matters of consensus and dissensus. Hypotheses which might explain these patterns of consensus in terms of inter-party conflict have not proven very fruitful, although there was slight indication that parties are more unified on issue when an extreme position is taken.

Notes

- 1 Descriptions (in English) of the Dutch party system may be found in: H. Daalder, 'The Netherlands: Opposition in a Segmented Society', in R. Dahl (ed.), *Political Oppositions in Western Democracies* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966); P. Baehr, 'The Netherlands' in Stanley Henig and John Pinder (editors for Political and Economic Planning (PEP), *European Political Parties* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1969); and H. Daalder and J. G. Rusk, 'Perceptions of Party in the Dutch Parliament', in Samuel C. Patterson and John C. Wahlke (eds.), *Comparative Legislative Behavior* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1972).
- 2 A. Lijphart, *The Politics of Accommodation: Pluralism and Democracy in The Netherlands* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968).
- 3 F. H. van der Burg, *Overheid en Onderdaan in een Representatieve Democratie* (Haarlem: H. D. Tjeenk-Willink en Z. NV, 1970).
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 23.
- 5 Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (London: Unwin University Books, 1966).
- 6 A. Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1957).
- 7 Downs, *op cit.*, p. 112.
- 8 Downs, *op cit.*, p. 115.
- 9 Lijphart, *loc. cit.*
- 10 The transformation was of the form $y = a + bx$. To reduce a 9-point scale to

a 7-point scale, 1 must equal 1 and 9 equal 7, Thus $1 = a + 1b$ $7 = a + 9b$
Solving these simultaneous equations, one obtains
 $b = 6/8$ and $a = 2/8$

Since this transformation would lead to non-integer values whereas respondents could choose only from integers, values were rounded before the computation of means and standard deviations.

- 11 In further research one might wish to control for social class. Persons identifying with a particular class may be answering in terms of perceived personal or class interest. This may in turn lead to skewed distributions.
- 12 We must point out here that the fact that parties are bunched on one of the issue scales and thus 'agreed' on an issue position does not necessarily mean that they are agreed on the practical means of reaching this end. For example Hoogerwerf reports for the issue of reducing income differences that the Socialists would accomplish this by reducing high incomes while the religious parties would prefer to raise low ones. A. Hoogerwerf, 'Sociaal-politieke strijdpunten: Smeulend vuur', *Sociologische Gids*, Vol. 10, No. 5 (September-October 1963), pp. 251-261.
- 13 One should not conclude however that voters always prefer lowering taxes above expenditures for other governmental operations. Using a technique by which respondents were presented a number of policy alternatives for which they could divide a limited amount of money, Bijnen and Hagenaaers found that lowering taxes rated only fifth among the ten alternatives. Housing, protecting the environment, payments for widows and the elderly, and education all received higher priority among the voters. E. J. Bijnen and J. A. P. Hagenaaers, 'De Tweede Kamerverkiezingen van 1971', *Sociale wetenschappen*, 15, 1, 1972, p. 14.
- 14 Until now 'law and order' parties have been quite unsuccessful in the Netherlands. Despite the feelings uttered here, there is a contradiction with the traditional tolerance of the Dutch people. In some instances in which the government has acted strongly, the reaction has been quite negative. As far as voting is concerned, economic issues such as those mentioned for the first two distributions have been more important. Although not directly related to the issue formulated here, it may be noted that recently a new Anti-Crime Party was founded. The founder claimed he would have a million members within two years.
- 15 H. Valen and D. Katz, *Political Parties in Norway* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1967), p. 252.
- 16 Downs, *op. cit.*, pp. 127-132.
- 17 J. G. Rusk and O. Borre, 'The Changing Party Space in Danish Voter Perceptions, 1971-1973', *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 2, No. 4, December 1974.
- 18 Downs, *loc cit.*, p. 131. 'When one of the parties in a two-party system has drifted away from the extreme nearest it toward the moderate center, its extremist supporters may form a new party to pull the politics of the old one back toward them'.
- 19 For a discussion on how this recruitment works at the local level, see G. A. Irwin, 'Party, Accountability, and the Recruitment of Dutch Municipal Councilmen', forthcoming in a book on Political Recruitment edited by M. Czudnowski and H. Eulau.

- 20 J. DeKadt, *De Kiezer en Zijn Kansen* (Amsterdam: G. A. Van Oorschot, 1967), p. 9.
- 21 Downs, *op. cit.*, p. 97.
- 22 This gives us another 'technical' reason for studying the amount of consensus within parties. In this and in future research it is useful to treat the mean as *the* party position. Of course, the mean is statistically the best estimate of the opinion of each respondent for that party. However, substantively this is not satisfactory. In studying consensus we may examine to what extent the members cluster around the mean position. If this clustering is high, then the mean may be a useful measure of the party position.
The means and standard deviations which we utilize here (along with an interesting canonical discriminant analysis of the dimensionality of these issues) have been published, but virtually without substantive comment by van de Geer and de Man. J. P. van de Geer and H. de Man, *Analysis of responses to issue statements by members of the Dutch Parliament 1972*, Department of Data Theory, University of Leyden, The Netherlands.
- 23 H. McClosky, P. J. Hoffmann, and R. O'Hara, 'Issue Conflict and Consensus Among Party Leaders and Followers', *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. LIV (June, 1960), pp. 406-27, as reprinted in *Public Opinion and Public Policy*, N. Luttbeg, (ed.), (Homewood, Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1968), pp. 292-318.
- 24 J. Soule and J. Clarke, 'Issue Conflict and Consensus: A Comparative Study of Democratic and Republican Delegates to the 1968 National Conventions', *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 33 (February, 1971), pp. 72-91.
- 25 Valen and Katz, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-260.
- 26 I. Budge, *Agreement and the Stability of Democracy* (Chicago: Markham Publishing Company, 1970), p. 29.
- 27 *Ibid*, p. 30.
- 28 *Ibid*, p. 104.
- 29 Hoogerwerf, *loc cit.*
- 30 *Ibid*.
- 31 Lijphart, *op. cit.*, p. 141.
- 32 Hoogerwerf, *loc cit.*
- 33 We must be a bit careful with our conclusions here, since the MP's of the Communist Party on the left and the Farmer's (or Peasant's) Party on the right refused to be interviewed. Although only a small number of non-respondents are involved and it seems unlikely that they would greatly alter the values for the standard deviations, we obviously cannot know exactly what effect their inclusion would have had on our conclusions concerning inter-party consensus.
- 34 We have chosen to present both of these measures, standard deviations and the scalar indices, because they can tell us two different things. Standard deviations tell us the degree of clustering about any position on the 7- or 9-point scale. The index value tells us to what degree the members of the group lean toward one side of the issue or the other. For example, one set of respondents might be spread evenly over the 1-3 positions, while another might be highly clustered at the middle position. The standard deviation for the first group would be higher, yet we would know that all leaned toward the same issue position. The second group had more consensus in terms of the standard

deviation, but we would only know that they were between the two poles.

35 'From the point of view of a political party, however, it is important to avoid a real cleavage in attitudes between leaders and followers — a least this is the case in the Norwegian- system. Great discrepancies would not be consistent with the notion of party unity within the party', Valen and Katz, *op. cit.*, p. 260.

36 Although we have not tried here to discuss factors which would account for this difference, two factors loom important in this regard. Chief is the control of recruitment. In a federal system in which local divisions of the party control recruitment, a unifying force from above may be lacking. In the PR system of the Netherlands the central organization has traditionally played an important role in drawing up the lists of candidates, and thereby determining who gets elected. (See, for example, I. Lipschits, 'De organisatorische structuur der Nederlandse politieke partijen', *Acta Politica*, II, 4, 1966/67). Even though this grip may be relaxing, party discipline within the parliamentary caucus may not only lead to support for the party position, but may be a factor in bringing individual opinions toward more uniformity.

37 Valen and Katz, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

38 Senior thesis by K. L. L. M. Dittrich, Department of Political Science, University of Leyden.

39 McClosky, et al., *op. cit.*, (in Luttbeg, p. 314).

40 This follows the procedure used by McClosky, *et al.* Other procedures should yield similar results.

41 One should realize that in following this procedure, we may, in some cases be making a mountain out of a molehill. High consensus on all issues, with nevertheless some differences in variances will be treated similarly to variances running from large to small. By examining the standard deviations in Table 4, the reader may judge to what extent this may be an important factor. It seems to us worthwhile to make the comparisons.

42 McClosky, *et al.*, *op. cit.*, (in Luttbeg, p. 315).

43 *Ibid.*

44 *Ibid.*

45 *Ibid.*, (in Luttbeg, p. 314).

46 Soule and Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

47 McClosky, *et al.* *op. cit.*, (in Luttbeg, p. 316).

48 Soule and Clarke, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

Om de kleur van de burgemeester; politieke aspecten van burgemeestersbenoemingen¹

door Rudy B. Andeweg

Sprekende over de gemeenteraad stelt het laatste lid van art. 152 Grw.: 'De Voorzitter wordt door de Koning, ook buiten de leden van de raad, benoemd en door hem ontslagen'. Deze bepaling staat al sinds 1848 ongewijzigd in de Grondwet, maar de uitwerking die eraan wordt gegeven is niet ongewijzigd gebleven. Zo werd de mogelijkheid om een burgemeester van buiten de raad te benoemen van uitzondering al snel regel. Meer en meer is de Kroon er ook toe overgegaan 'politiek aangesloten' personen tot burgemeester te benoemen. In dit artikel wordt een poging ondernomen om te achterhalen wat de politieke aspecten zijn van genoemd artikel in de Grondwet. Deze beperking tot de politieke kant van de burgemeestersbenoemingen kan gemakkelijk leiden tot overbelichting van dit zeer belangrijke, maar geenszins enige, selectie criterium. Ook godsdienst, burgerlijke staat en specifieke capaciteiten spelen een rol. Omdat het politieke aspect van de benoemingsprocedure en het benoemingsbeleid de voornaamste oorzaak vormt van het op ongeregelde tijden terugkerende debat over een benoemde of (door raad of burgerij) verkozen burgemeester, lijkt het echter juist om dit 'politieke benoemingsbeleid' apart aan een onderzoek te onderwerpen.

De politieke uitkomst van dit sinds 1848 gevoerde benoemingsbeleid is niet onaangetast gebleven door de partijvorming aan het eind van de negentiende en de politieke pacificatie aan het begin van de twintigste eeuw. Was het burgemeestersambt aanvankelijk in regenten-handen van onbestemde kleur, geleidelijk aan hebben de voornaamste componenten van het Nederlandse zuilensysteem zich een deel van het burgemeesterscorps weten te veroveren. Burgemeestersbenoemingen worden grofweg verdeeld over PvdA, KVP, ARP, CHU en VVD. Het is in onze politieke verhoudingen eenvoudig ondenkbaar dat een minister van Binnenlandse Zaken alleen partijgenoten voor een burgemeestersfunctie voordraagt. Maar het is onduidelijk hoe die verdeling over verschillende partijen tot stand komt: 'Men kan slechts raden naar de wijze waarop en de criteria op basis waarvan de burgemeestersbenoemingen feitelijk tot stand komen' stelt een PvdA-rapport:² Niet dat het aan veronderstellingen hieromtrent ontbreekt. Allereerst is er de hypothese dat een minister weliswaar niet uitsluitend partijgenoten kan benoemen, maar dat hij zijn benoemingsbeleid toch wel een beetje in die richting kan sturen. Ook de Commissaris van de Koningin zou in zijn aanbevelingen zijn eigen politieke partij enigszins kunnen overbedelen. De overheersende mening is evenwel dat zo'n partijdig beleid in ons land niet thuis hoort en ook niet voorkomt. De Nederlandse verzuiling brengt met zich mee dat de overheid alles verdeelt over de verschillende subculturen naar rato van de omvang van iedere zuil. Dit zou ook voor de burgemeestersbenoemingen kunnen gelden. Tegenover, of soms ook wel naast, dit beleids criterium van de evenredigheid wordt wel gesteld dat de te benoemen burgemeester qua le-