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Substantial political change has taken place in the Netherlands during the period 1970–85. Political change at the mass level of the Dutch electorate has become manifest in various ways: electoral shifts involving changing support for traditional parties and declining religious and socio-economic determinants of voting behaviour; electoral volatility and the problem of party-identification; increasing policy-orientation of the electorate; and shifts in the coalition-preferences of the electorate. Political change at the élite level of Dutch party politics is seen in: increasing coalition problems and instability; growing problems in relations between top and middle élites; intensifying party competition and increasing problems of electoral mobilisation; and changes in policies pursued. The central argument of this article is that the two levels of political change are interrelated in the framework of Dutch depillarisation and the corresponding decline of Dutch consociationalism. Political change is not only an autonomous factor at the mass level, as the theory of consociationalism seems to suggest, but is also at least partially induced by political change at the élite level, as is explained by the model of élite political control.

I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to give a critical assessment of political change in the Netherlands in the period 1970–85. The description and explanation of this change is given within the conceptual framework of theories of 'consociationalism' and 'depillarisation', as originally formulated by Lijphart and Daalder, and later further developed, but also criticised and reformulated, as a consequence of developments in political theory-building and empirical research. Therefore, in this article we investigate political change at the mass level of the Dutch electorate, at the élite level of Dutch political parties and politicians, and discuss the interrelations between both political changes.

In Section II, the main characteristics of the Dutch pillarised socio-political system in the period 1915–65 are reviewed. This period can be explained by two more or less competing, theoretical models: the classical 'politics of

*The author wishes to thank Jan M. de Jong, Department of Public Administration at Erasmus University Rotterdam, for generously providing material from his unpublished paper (see the notes for the complete reference), which proved to be very useful in developing the arguments of this article.
accommodation' school of Lijphart and his successors, and the so-called 'model of political control by the élites', as developed by (among others) Van Schendelen. Political change at the mass level of the electorate in the 1970s is analysed in Section III using electoral results and election research, conducted in the Netherlands since the mid 1960s. The subject of Section IV is the analysis of political change at the élite level of political parties and politicians in relation to the investigation of electoral changes at the mass level. Finally, the argument concludes in Section V with a short retrospective view of the Dutch political system, and a brief survey of its political future.

II

PILLARISATION AND TWO THEORETICAL MODELS

The structures and functioning of the Dutch political system between 1915 and 1965 are generally described in terms of 'political pillarisation'. The main elements of this description are as follows. There are four different population-groups at the mass level: Protestants, Catholics, socialists and liberals. The first two groups have in common that they possess a confessionl orientation (though not the same confession) and have mixed socio-economic positions. The latter two groups have a non-confessional orientation in common but are socio-economically more profiled: the socialist population group consists relatively more of lower strata and the liberal one of relatively higher strata of the population.

These four groups are each relatively closed in their culture and structure. Interactions and communication among members of the four population groups are relatively few, not intensive and highly conflictual. Social activities (e.g. marriage, education and sporting activities) take place within the group, generally these activities are limited to the group to which one belongs. At the mass level, the Netherlands is divided into four blocs or so-called 'pillars' (zulien). Citizens identify themselves primarily with their own pillar and only secondarily with the national political system. Consequently, political activities, such as voting and membership of political parties, are highly pillarised and stable over time.

Powerful élites exist within the pillars, and the other members of the pillars give them ample room to rule and manoeuvre: the élites enjoy their confidence and possess wide freedom of action. The leaders of the different pillars negotiate with each other as representatives and make political compromises. Lijphart has formulated several striking characteristics of their political behaviour (which normatively can be described as 'rules of the game'): tolerance, summit meetings, proportional distribution, de-politicisation, secrecy, rational politics and ultimately decision-making by the government.

Thus, the political system of the pillarised Netherlands displays an image of considerable élitism: a small group effectively rules the many. Members of these small groups meet each other frequently, they practise common rules of the political game but possess different ideologies, depending on the population groups to which they belong. Yet one could question how a society consisting of four separated minorities, who have very little culture in
common and prefer a kind of 'apartheid', has been able to survive and even to acquire a relatively stable political order, compared with other countries. Two different answers to this question can be given.

Lijphart and 'the politics of accommodation'

Lijphart\(^7\) has formulated the first answer. In his opinion, the élites of the pillars have recognised the serious dangers facing a society in which four population-groups live in strict separation from each other. Such a society continuously suffers from centrifugal forces. There is a growing probability of mass political conflict between the population groups. The élites, anticipating a conflictual disintegration of the political system if they did not intervene, have actively striven for reconciliation of the sharp contrasts and for a decision-making system of continuous consensus-building ('consociational democracy'). They succeeded in this effort: their worst expectations did not materialise. Other features of the structure and functioning of the pillarised Dutch political system can also be explained by this 'self-negating prophecy'. The members of the pillars had great confidence in their leaders as well as giving them scope to manoeuvre, both necessary for accommodation. The rules of the game for political contact between the élites served to further this accommodation. Summit meetings facilitate the making of compromises, and depoliticisation of issues decreases hostile feelings. Proportionality prevents any minority from feeling discriminated against by the other three minority groups. The primacy of the government fulfils the function of highest referee.

The explanation for the stability of the pillarised Dutch political system, as rendered by Lijphart, is based on the attribution of positive functions to certain characteristics and implications of that system. Accommodating élitism makes sense because without it the Dutch society would fall apart in four population groups who lack mutual tolerance. The stability of the Dutch political order for more than half a century is thus seen to be due to the prudent performance of 'clairvoyant élites'.\(^8\)

This interpretation of political pillarisation has been given more historical depth by Daalder.\(^9\) He argues that the stability of the Dutch political system is not so much caused by sudden enlightened thinking and prudent behaviour on the part of élites who wanted to prevent their fears of political chaos becoming true, but is more as a result of a long-standing tradition of 'regent-mindality' in the Netherlands. For centuries, the Netherlands was divided into relatively independent and autonomous territorial units (provinces, counties, towns and villages), loosely tied in a unitary state, in which central decision-making was mainly characterised by a continuous process of consensus-building (horizontal meetings) and consultation of adherents (vertical deliberations).

This historical elaboration does not alter the interpretation of pillarisation-politics in the Netherlands too much. What is important is that a segmented society makes élitism necessary and that élites (regents) have succeeded in accommodating and stabilising the political order.

The model of 'political control by élites'

In Lijphart's original model, the sharp division of the Dutch society is considered to be given and exist as an independent variable.\(^10\) Elite behaviour
is considered to be a resultant: élites acted prudently and prevented instability.

But this interpretation can be modified, at least partially, as has been demonstrated by Van Schendelen.\textsuperscript{11} In his opinion, in any case a mutual relationship can be assumed between, on the one hand, pillarisation in society and, on the other, the behaviour of élites. Why should the social pillarisation not be at least partially a product and a result of the conduct of the élites? That was the question posed by Van Schendelen. The model, which seeks to explain Dutch political developments between 1915 and 1975 in terms of this pattern of mutual relationships, has not been elaborated much thus far.

Historians especially follow this mode of interpretation. A central element in this interpretation is the proposition that élites have reinforced social discord and division in order to consolidate their élite positions and that they succeeded to a considerable degree. For them, social discord was not only a problem but a facility as well which they have exploited and perfected.

The underlying assumption is that social divisions result in a ‘natural’ demand for political leadership, and this leadership has to reconcile political contrasts. Social division creates a political distribution of labour which is élitist in character. This is all the more so, when social divisions become evident in the sharp shape of pillarisation as existed in the Netherlands.

The reinforcement of social discord in the direction of pillarisation took place mainly at the beginning of this century. The traditional regents of Dutch politics were confronted with immense social problems, articulated by active and combative social movements. The top élites were put under great pressure to change their policies. The constitutional order itself became a subject of discussion as soon as the universal suffrage question was posed: recruitment of political leadership should be dependent on the preferences of the masses.

It is too much to suggest that the political leaders, as a reaction to these challenges, ‘constructed’ social pillarisation exclusively and completely to consolidate the social need for political leadership. This suggestion would result in a pure power theory, falling into a kind of élitist determinism, as demonstrated by (neo-) Marxist theorists as Fennema\textsuperscript{12} and Stuurman.\textsuperscript{13}

Political élites are seldom that effective. Besides, the origins of social pillarisation and accommodation had already existed for centuries in the Netherlands as already mentioned. It must also be emphasised that social discord creates a natural need for political leadership, but this does not give individuals in élites a guarantee of being retained in the leadership structure. Where social divisions create a demand for leadership and where divisions can be changed and manipulated, it is reasonable to assume that political élites have tried to maximise the benefits of this division. In that case, pillarisation can partially be considered as a result of these efforts.

The model of political control results in an interpretation of pillarisation politics different from the model of accommodation politics. The discord between minority groups compels the leadership to adopt methods of integrative regulation. The high degree of interaction and communication within the pillars offers a suitable network for social and political control. Cultural discord and animosity between the pillars results in minimal interaction and communication between them: the pillar boundaries keep out ‘foreign’ elements, ensuring the purity of the group culture, and above all keep
the members within the pillar. The pillar boundaries not only have a protective function, but also a vital confining function. They guarantee the élites a stable adherence of members, a rank-and-file which, through social control within the pillar, can be guided in the desired direction. Consequently, the élites have a vested interest in a fragmented culture, in separation and 'apartheid', and in tensions between the pillars. It is in their interest to keep a discretionary power or increase it. They will try to maximise this advantage by repeatedly stressing the superiority of their own group culture to their own group members by pointing out the threats posed by other pillars and by emphasising the 'smouldering fire' between the pillars which could break out at any moment and would result in instability and chaos. Profit being maximised, however, it is necessary to optimise social division itself. The 'smouldering fire' must be prevented from becoming reality, for the latter would be considered as a default on the part of the élites, and that could ultimately pave the way for their replacement. On the other hand, the fire should not be extinguished either, because then the élites would lose an important rationale for their existence. As a result, the most important social contrasts maintaining the pillarisation system, e.g. the confessional and the socio-economic differences, have been regularly emphasised by political leaders.

Using more or less the same political events between 1915 and 1965 in the Netherlands for analysis, the models of accommodation politics and of political control result in different explanations. The 'politics of accommodation' model takes social segmentation as a given starting-point and explains élite behaviour from this. The model of political control considers social segmentation to be at least partially dependent on élite behaviour. This basic divergence of the models consequently results in different answers to the question, how to analyse and explain changes in Dutch politics after 1965. As argued here, both analyses and explanations do not so much contradict, as Van Schendelen's seems to suggest, as complement one other. As we shall try to demonstrate, the politics of accommodation model, restricting the origins of Dutch pillarisation to characteristics on the mass level, explains depillarisation trends mainly through developments at the mass level. The political control model, focusing on élite behaviour as a pillarisation factor, explains depillarisation trends in the context of changing élite behaviour.

Two assessments of political change
Lijphart himself was the first to shift attention to changes in the Dutch political system after 1965. The changes observed by him mainly took place at the mass-level and can be represented as follows. The boundaries between the pillars are fading away; specific group-cultures are becoming less closed and exclusive; political culture at the mass level is becoming less segmented, more pluralistic and as such more homogeneous. Interactions and communications between the members of different pillars increase markedly, and the strong ties within the pillars are beginning to loosen. Considering élite behaviour to be more or less constant, Lijphart expects a shift from a 'consociational democracy' towards what he calls a 'cartel-democracy'. In his opinion, a cartel-democracy has two characteristics: 1) cultural pillarisation
has decreased sharply or disappeared completely because of developments of increasing de-ideologisation and deconessionalisation, and 2) the élites are still stimulated to co-operate because of the demands of the welfare state and the mixed economy. But the development towards a cartel democracy does not run smoothly. The multi-dimensional process of change which is taking place is not solely determined by cultural depillarisation, since it is itself a step-wise process. Other dimensions are: electoral shifts, neo-democratic criticisms of cartel developments, uncertain reactions of the élites towards new political events, discord between the political élites over political crisis management, and so on. According to Lijphart, a stable cartel democracy has not as yet been established in the Netherlands. He considers the political developments observed to be more a process that is taking place than as an end-state that has already been reached.

The analysis made by Daalder is very similar. Daalder observes cultural depillarisation at the mass level and a decline in the strong structural boundaries of the pillars. Culturally and structurally, more overlapping contacts between the population groups arise, resulting in increasing unity and homogeneity at the mass level. He ascertains an increase in political awareness and activism, while at the élite-level other political 'rules of the game' are developing. Tolerance is being substituted for contestation and conflict, summit meetings give way to self-determination at the grass-roots; proportionality changes into disproportionality caused by polarisation; politicisation replaces de-politicisation; secrecy yields to publicity; rational politics are challenged by critical reform movements, and the primacy of the government is threatened by new power centres, and with regard to the relations between élites and mass, authority claims are increasingly challenged; electoral preferences become inconstant, causing large parliamentary swings, and a call for more 'clarity' in politics arises.

The analyses of Lijphart and of Daalder have in common that they locate the ultimate causes for political change at the mass level, i.e. in the cultural and structural decline of the traditional pillars. Changes at the élite level are considered to be consequences of mass-level changes. The political leaders are represented as being in disarray, uncertain, indulgent and waiting. Neither Lijphart nor Daalder look for the origins of pillarisation at the élite level. In the same way, they overlook stimuli for political change at that level. That is incorrect, as the following analysis is intended to show.

III

POLITICAL CHANGE AT THE MASS LEVEL

Stating the problem

Pillarisation in the Netherlands can be considered as the unexpected result of the long-standing integration process of the Dutch voters in the political system. According to historical analysis, pillarisation originated in the interwar-era, but was not completed immediately. Passchier and Van der Wüsten have demonstrated that more electoral competition between parties was present in less pillarised communities and that the Dutch National Socialist
Party temporarily profited from this competition in winning votes. But even singular pillar-tied parties, for example the Socialists and the Communist parties, had to cope with floating voters. Only after the Second World War did parties succeed in tying their voters almost perfectly. The ideological climate of the 1950s (the Cold War period), combined with overt efforts of the parties to mobilise the electorate,20 stimulated this development.

The 'ideological ties' of the 1950s started to loosen in the 1960s. The main parties suffered severe electoral losses. Depillarisation became apparent in two respects: culturally in the challenge to political authority and structurally in fragmentation of the party system. Although the main parties recovered somewhat in the 1970s, the mobilisation problem seems to have become more serious in at least two respects. Firstly, the abolition of compulsory voting in 1970 made mobilisation more problematic, if not equally for all parties. The Dutch National Election Studies show that particularly voters from the lower social strata are less likely to vote.21 But the abolition of compulsory voting is not the only problem for parties, then forced to woo voters to vote. It seems also that the basis on which parties mobilise voters has itself changed. It is not the purpose of this article, to test this hypothesis, but a changing mobilisation basis raises the question of whether voters or parties have changed.

It might be said that politics is motivated by the well-known distinction between 'us' and 'them' feelings. The changing mobilisation basis could be described in these terms. Political élites (and affiliated ones in other spheres of society) have definitively lost the monopoly and authority to determine who 'we' and who 'they' are. In the 1950s it was clearer than nowadays whose political activities threatened the autonomy of the group. In the 1970s, vested interests were no longer able to control who in particular was to be considered as the political enemy. This loss of political control incidentally also allows political entrepreneurs to exploit alternative 'enemy images'; as for example racist parties do.

The leading question is: is this development stimulated by movements of the political parties or have voters, at last, become politically emancipated? Or, in the original formulation of De Jong: has party politics itself changed, or have voters changed?

The changing electorate
The latter interpretation has become favoured in post-war political science, as has been demonstrated by the 'consociational democracy' school for instance. Political science as the 'science of democracy' was mainly interested in the development of political orientations of ordinary citizens. 'A civic culture' and 'political moderation' (Almond and Verba) were considered prerequisites for the survival of democracy. Measurement of voters' attitudes, in particular their ideological contents and stability, became a classical research tradition. In this framework, changes in electoral behaviour are a derivation of the changing electorate which is becoming more independent and self-assured in making political decisions. It might even be said that in a sense this is a non-political approach: voting behaviour is presented as the result of social and cultural but non-political factors. As we have argued in Section II above, the explanations given by Lijphart and Daalder for political change at the mass
level in a sense fit into this interpretation of political change.

The model of rationalistic voting behaviour, increasingly adopted by an emancipated electorate, is another key element in this interpretation. Issue-voting, however, as a variant of rational voting, directly relates to the political context of voting, as is shown by various international election studies. Subsequently, the image of the changing electorate appears to deserve modification and completion. The question remains: in which respects and to what extent has the Dutch electorate changed?

Changes in actual voting behaviour can be distilled from Table 1, in which results for parliamentary elections in the Netherlands for 1972, 1977, 1981 and 1982 are presented.

### Table 1

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*Turnout* 83.5 87.6 86.6 80.8

*For the 1972 election the share of the votes and of the seats won by the three parties that later formed the CDA have been aggregated. The CDA itself was not formed until 1977.*

**List of abbreviations**

- CDA: Christian Democratic Appeal
- PvdA: Labour Party (social democrats)
- VVD: People’s Party of Freedom and Democracy (conservative liberals)
- PPR: Political Party of Radicals (ecologists)
- CPN: Communist Party of the Netherlands
- D'66: Democrats 1966 (progressive liberals)
- DS'70: Democratic Socialists 1970 (right-wing social democrats)
- SGP: State Reformed Party (orthodox Protestant religious)
- BP: Farmers’ Party
- GPV: Reformed Political Union (orthodox Protestant religious)
- PSP: Pacifist Socialist Party (radical socialists)
- RPF: Reformatory Political Federation (orthodox Protestant religious)
- RKPN: Roman Catholic Party of the Netherlands (orthodox Catholic religious)
- EVP: Evangelic People’s Party (left-wing Christian democrats)
- CP: Centre Party (right-wing reactionaries)
DEPILLARISATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

TABLE 2
ELECTORAL CHANGE IN THE NETHERLANDS SINCE THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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The Index is calculated for each election year by adding all gains and losses in party seats. The Format represents the number of parties, holding seats in Parliament.

- Figures until 1952 are multiplied with factor 1.5. In 1956 the total number of seats in Parliament was raised from 100 to 150.
- Corrected for the liberal regrouping which took place in that year.
- No index calculated because this was the first election after the Second World War.

Source: J.M. de Jong, 'Partijen, kiezers en electorale verandering' (mimeo), Erasmus University, Rotterdam, n.d.

For the theoretical backgrounds of the concepts of 'index' and 'format' refer to Pedersen, 'Changing patterns of electoral volatility in European party systems 1948-1977', where the mathematical formulations are developed and explained.

1982 are summarised. At first sight, there seems to be a remarkable stability in voters' support for Dutch political parties. Changes from one election to another are limited to a few percentage points for each party. The electoral cycle of the PvdA is the most extreme example. On further consideration, however, such minimal electoral changes are of utmost importance in the Dutch context. Because of the system of proportional representation, changes in voters' preferences are reflected in almost identical changes in results of parties and in seat distribution in Parliament. Moreover, electoral changes do have immediate consequences for the process of coalition formation and the resulting composition of the coalition. Electoral gains improve the bargaining power of the winning party, electoral losses worsen it for losing parties. The actual coalition outcome depends on the negotiation capabilities of the parties in question.

Table 2 gives figures of electoral change in the Netherlands since the First World War and shows a somewhat different perspective. It is not that electoral changes since 1967 are deviant, but rather that the relative electoral stability between 1948 and 1963 is an exception! In this period, political
challenge was absent or had not been tolerated. This can be seen from the small number of parties which competed in these years. From an organisational point of view, Dutch pillarisation was at a maximum in the period between both World Wars. In this period, political party competition was more vehement and electoral change was almost as much present as in the 'era of the floating voter', beginning with the election in 1967. The interpretation of Table 2, originally computed by De Jong, is incompatible with the central postulate of 'consociationalism', of stable voting-patterns in relation to stable party-positions.

The support for traditional parties remained, however, relatively stable in the 1970s, as also can be seen from Table 1. The traditional parties PvdA, CDA and VVD increasingly enjoyed a remarkably loyal electorate in these years after the period of depillarisation in the 1960s. This outcome makes the appearance of electoral change in the 1970s appear somewhat relative.

Dutch pillarisation was, as we have seen, based on two organisational factors: religion and socio-economic positions. These two factors also functioned in the period of pillarisation as determinants of voting behaviour of the Dutch electorate. With respect to the relation between religion and voting behaviour since 1967, the Dutch National Election Studies show that the number of religious voters who vote for a confessional party is declining continuously. At the same time, the number of religious voters favouring a non-confessional party is increasing just as steadily. Altogether this means that religion has become less important as a determining factor of voting behaviour.25

With regard to the relationship between socio-economic position and voting, Andeweg - indicating class by profession - observes in the period 1966-77 electoral gains for the VVD in the old middle classes.26 Nevertheless, he considers class-determined voting behaviour to be subject to unexplained fluctuations. But his analysis also shows something else. A distinction can be made between voting for the PvdA, a party traditionally identified with lower socio-economic strata, and voting for the VVD, a party traditionally favouring the interests of higher socio-economic strata. During the period 1966-77, growth of the PvdA is clearly limited to the working class and the lower new middle class. This trend illustrates, together with Andeweg's argument on the absence of political effects of individual social mobility, the continuing validity of the political class structure, at least with regard to its lower levels. More precisely formulated: the working class has maintained its support for its 'natural party', and this party, the PvdA, represents a 'political cleavage'. De Jong, for instance, bases this conclusion on two arguments:

1. After 1966, the proportion of voters from the working class supporting the PvdA, became larger than the proportion of voters of the working class supporting any other party:

2. The proportion of voters from the working class favouring the PvdA, became larger than the total proportion of the electorate voting for this party.27

The 1970s are generally considered to be the 'era of the floating vote' in Dutch politics. The phenomenon of electoral volatility has recently attracted
the close attention of political scientists. International electoral research, particularly in Western Europe, confirms the proposition of increasing electoral volatility in this period. International comparative analysis of electoral change has been undertaken by Pedersen, and he observed an increase in electoral change in most West European countries since the 1960s. Pedersen also ascertained a positive relationship between the size of electoral change and the number of competing parties. Hence, he considered the hypothesis as to whether the latter functions, at least partially, as a cause of electoral change.

The relationship between party competition and electoral change in the Netherlands already has been discussed above (see Table 2). The conclusion was that in this respect the 1970s are comparable with the inter-war years; in both periods party competition as well as electoral change were increasing compared with the 1950s. Electoral loyalty to the four main parties in the 1970s, however, was high and relatively stable, as we have seen in Table 1. This is remarkable in the light of the depillarization trends in the previous decade. But what happens to the 'disloyal' voters who change party support? The results of Dutch National Election studies show how close most floating voters stay to their original political home. Few direct electoral movements take place between left (PvdA) and right (VVD). Electoral change is most frequent in the centre of Dutch politics.

An explanation for the fact that most voters, if they change parties, stay near to their original political home, can be found in the concept of party identification. Party identification assumes that voters identify themselves as left or right. Furthermore, to prevent the danger of tautology, the identification thesis assumes a certain degree of stability in individual voter preferences in terms of left and right. The identification thesis has been extensively discussed by Van der Eijk and Niemöller in combination with the object of identification. Earlier, Thomassen referred to the problems connected with the use of the concept of party identification in the Dutch context, because of the instability of identification patterns. Van der Eijk and Niemöller, however, came to the conclusion that a voter identifies himself with more than one party. They recognize in the collected identification patterns a left-right distribution. Political affinity of most voters appears to extend further than a single party.

Van der Eijk and Niemöller conclude in their study that the greater the distance is between two parties on the left-right dimension, the smaller the eventuality is that they will be mentioned in conjunction with one another. Van der Eijk and Niemöller argue that identification ultimately relates to ideologies and that parties are instrumental in expressing this identification. The argument that political affinity of voters reaches beyond the party-level and refers to fundamental left-right ideologies of the electorate is somewhat weakened, however, by the variations in multiple identification between voters of separate parties. An example is the CDA-voter, who has more difficulty in mentioning a second party to identify with than voters of other parties have, as is shown by figures of Van der Eijk and Niemöller.

In political science, and especially in the theory of voting behaviour, a development can be observed from a social-deterministic model (including
variants of the so-called 'social cleavage' approach) towards a rationalistic model. Originally, the model was developed within public choice theory. In this approach, voters decide their vote as a result of a calculation of the utilities derived from the parties in competition. Voters are 'utility maximisers'. Political parties behave like free entrepreneurs, looking for those segments in the political market from which they expect to profit, i.e. making electoral gains. Political parties are vote maximisers. Similar to the postulate of consumer sovereignty in economics, consumer sovereignty is postulated in politics: the sovereign voter demands a certain policy which maximises his utility, the political party bends to this demand and offers that policy, thus maximising its vote. It is generally assumed in the rationalistic model that voters have policy orientations and that these determine their voting decision. Policy orientation implies that voters do have a clear preference for policies to be carried out by the party (parties) holding government office. Also, they identify each party with a policy, which the party promises to carry out. In elections, voters express a demand for a policy, and parties give promises to supply it. Thus, elections are a political marketplace where demand and supply are matched.

Van Giessen, Gerrichhauzen and Van Mierlo have tested the hypotheses of increasing policy orientations of Dutch voters in the 1970s. Using data of the Dutch National Election Studies, they distinguished four policy areas: abortion, income distribution, nuclear energy and nuclear arms. For each of these policy areas (or issues), they investigated the preferences of the voters, their information about the party positions on these issues, the specific party position as perceived by the voters, and finally the relation between issue preferences and voting decisions of the voters. The main conclusions of their research can be summarised as follows. The vast majority of the voters has a clear policy-preference on each of the four issues. Many voters, but a smaller majority, are able to perceive the party positions on these issues. A small majority, finally, is able to cast its vote on the basis of policy issues. Therefore, Van Giessen et al conclude that partial policy-orientation is present in the Dutch electorate, and that voters in the 1970s showed an increasing level of policy-orientation in their voting decisions.

In a multi-party system, election results do not directly produce a majority government. Between the first step of casting the votes and the ultimate one of selecting a government, lies the complex procedure of majority coalition-formation. Voters have only indirect influence on coalition-building in casting their votes. The election results set limits on the degree of freedom for coalition behaviour of parties, but within these limits parties have almost maximum freedom to choose with whom to negotiate and whom to ignore. This multi-step procedure for the selection of majority government through a coalition-formation process has increasingly come under question: from a democratic point of view, voters should have direct influence on the selection of government by the simple act of casting their vote.

Various Dutch National Election Studies have produced results which offer a clear illustration of the problem of coalition-formation in the Netherlands, as perceived by the electorate in the 1970s. In Table 3, voters' preferences for the coalition-composition are presented. After 1976, voters showed a
preference for a centre-left coalition over a centre-right one. Since 1981, however, this preference has changed: an increasing relative majority prefers a centre-right coalition. Christian Democratic voters, generally considered to hold a position between PvdA at the one hand and VVD on the other hand, have changed their preference during this period. The CDA-voters in 1967 judged PvdA and VVD to be equally attractive coalition partners. In the 1980s they developed a clear preference for the VVD as coalition partner.

**TABLE 3**

**VOTERS’ PREFERENCES FOR A LEFT GOVERNMENT (L), A CENTRE-LEFT GOVERNMENT (CL) OR A CENTRE-RIGHT GOVERNMENT (CR) (%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>CL</th>
<th>CR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Foppen, W.J. ‘Het centrum tussen links en rechts: 15 jaar voorkeuren voor een kabinet’ in C. van der Eijk and B. Niemüller (eds.), *In het spoor van de kiezer, aspecten van 10 jaar kieszorggedrag* (Meppel and Amsterdam, 1983).*

All these trends arguably lead to the conclusion that political change at the mass level in the Netherlands between 1970 and 1985 has become manifest in the following political phenomena:

1. electoral shifts, movements in support for traditional parties and declining religious and socio-economic determinants of voting behaviour;
2. electoral volatility and the problem of party-identification;
3. increasing policy-orientation of the electorate;
4. movements in coalition-preferences of the electorate.

The electorate, voting more rationally and in principle floating, however has not yet changed completely. More precisely, one could rather speak of an inconstant electorate, running after the caprices of the political agenda.

**IV**

**POLITICAL CHANGE AT THE ELITE LEVEL**

*Changing party-politics?*

This leads us to the second feature of political change, changing party politics, a development that has been associated with a strong emphasis on political modernisation, for instance of election campaigns (from traditional canvassing activities to modern television campaigning) and with changing political parties (from 'Lager-Parteien' to catch-all parties). The late Otto Kirchheimer originally formulated the concept of catch-all competition. He observed how after the Second World War the major parties started to compete directly for each other’s voters rather than relying on their traditional adherents.
I ideological differences between parties began to disappear. In the era of 'the end of ideology', parties developed from traditional class- or group-based organisations to real people's parties, each more or less representing a cross-section of the population. Kirchheimer's observations are still topical, but it should be recognised that most voters still consider the same political parties to have maintained their own identity. Over the years, Dutch voters continue to locate parties on a left–right continuum in almost the same sequence, as demonstrated by Van der Eyk and Niemöller. Voters still recognise parties on the basis of their material or ideological connections with church, trade union or business organisation. This confirms the validity of the concept of the 'frozen party system' as developed by Rokkan, although these connections are continuously eroding.

The traditional image-building of the main parties has hardly been attacked as yet. But the social bonds of these parties, on which this image-building was based, are subject to serious erosion processes now. This is the heart of the matter of the continuing depillarisation-process. This incongruence between uprooting parties and the ambiguous development of party-images is an additional argument for further analysis of the mobilisation problems of parties. The problem can be stated as follows. Could it be, perhaps, that political parties abandoned their original ideological positions earlier than the voters did? Answering this question, which runs counter to many a theory on the floating voter, obliges us to investigate whether the concept of a 'political home' to which one belongs still has any real meaning for voters. The first steps towards such an investigation are set out in two recent Dutch dissertations on voting behaviour, one by Andeweg and another by Van der Eyk and Niemöller.

According to Andeweg, the electorate has changed, and consequently the historical ties between parties and voters are broken. However, he did not map out the factors responsible for this break. In his opinion, they were not effective at the level of the social structure, that is, in changes in the life-situation of voter groups. In the opinion of Van der Eijk and Niemöller, it is the 'free intelligence' of the voters, freed from the determinants of social structure, which decides voting behaviour. However, existence of consumer-sovereignty on the electoral market, so often the stake and alleged outcome of rationalistic election studies, is not given hard proof by Van der Eijk and Niemöller.

Changing Elite Behaviour

In the course of this article references have been made to the need for analysis of elite behaviour (e.g. political parties) in relation to political change at the mass-level (e.g. voters). Changing elite behaviour is not only dependent on changing voters' behaviour, but also has to be considered as an autonomous factor, in its turn influencing voting behaviour. In this section, some changes at the elite level in the 1970s and their two-sided relationship with changes at the mass level are reconsidered briefly. At least four groups of changing elite-behaviour can be distinguished:
1. increasing coalition problems and instability;
2. increasing problems in relations between top and middle élites;
3. increasing party competition related to increasing mobilisation
problems towards the electorate;
4. changes in policies pursued.

Of course, these factors are empirically related and in a sense indivisible, but
the distinction is useful for analysis.

The coalition problem
The Dutch political system is confronted with increasing problems in
coalition formation, resulting in coalition instability which is shown in Table
4. It has hardly ever happened that in a single decade the coalition
composition has changed as many as four times from centre–right to
centre–left back to centre–right and so on!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Cabinet</th>
<th>Coalition composition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1967–71</td>
<td>De Jong</td>
<td>centre-right: KVP-ARP-CHU-VVD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971–72</td>
<td>Biesheuvel</td>
<td>centre-right: KVP-ARP-CHU-VVD-DS70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1977–81</td>
<td>Van Agt I</td>
<td>centre-right: CDA-VVD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981–82</td>
<td>Van Agt II (+III)</td>
<td>centre-left: CDA-PvdA-D66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982–</td>
<td>Lubbers</td>
<td>centre-right: CDA-VVD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1977 the three confessional parties, KVP, ARP and CHU, merged into a larger Christian
Democratic Party, CDA. For a historical-institutional account of the peculiarities of this merger
process, see J.G.A. Van Mierlo, ‘The merger of the Dutch Christian Democratic Party as a case
of party-internal coalition-making and its relation with inter-party coalition-making in the
Netherlands’, paper presented at the 1984 Joint Sessions of Workshops of the European
Consortium of Political Research held at Salzburg (Rotterdam, 1984).

The coalition process is not only problematic because of its unpredictable
outcome – an inherent feature of the Dutch multi-party system. In the 1970s
the process also became more complicated as coalition negotiations between
potential partners became more laborious. The PvdA and VVD still ‘exclude’
each other as coalition partners, thus behaving as extremists and playing into
the hands of the moderate centre party, the CDA. This party, refusing to take
up clear positions on the left–right dimension, is thus able to change coalition
partner either from the left (PvdA) or right (VVD), depending on several
interrelated factors, such as the party internal power relations, the compo-
sition and policies of the previous coalition and the estimated voter reactions
towards all this.44

Voters did react to previous coalitions by changing their coalition
preferences, and the Dutch National Election Studies have given some
indications of the influence of party political developments. In the years
1970–72, polarisation between political parties reached a climax, resulting in
the formation of ‘shadow-cabinets’ by the opposition and accompanied by the
dogma of 'political clarity'. The development of coalition preferences of the Dutch electorate showed a decreasing support for a centre-right cabinet in the period 1967–71 and an increasing support for a centre-left one, with a maximum difference between the preferences in 1971: 53 per cent preferred a centre-left coalition, and only 26 per cent a centre-right cabinet. Only two years later, in 1973, this preference majority resulted in a centre-left Den Uyl cabinet. In 1977, the electorate accorded its performance a landslide majority of coalition preference of 60 per cent as against 34 per cent of the voters preferring a centre-right coalition. The peculiarities, however, of the coalition-process ultimately resulted in a centre-right coalition, thus reflecting the minority preference of voters. The PvdA lost the 'coalition dance' after a historical victory at the election. Since then, the preference for a centre-left coalition has decreased while that for a centre-right one has grown. In 1982, 26 per cent preferred the latter against only 24 per cent for the former. Coalition preferences of the voters and coalition outcomes of the party élites appear to be leap-frogging.45

**Increasing problems with the middle élite**

It is a general phenomenon that the middle-ranking élite in the relationship between the top-rankers and the masses tend to take an extreme position, thus forcing the top élite to take a more extremist position compared with the usually more moderate position taken by the party's electorate.

The existence of the middle élite became a particular problem for the top élites of the PvdA. In the 1970s, the three confessional parties were involved in a difficult merger process to form the CDA, complicated by strong competition and struggle between the leading élites of the three parties which required their full attention. The VVD, on the other hand, developed smoothly from a former purely class-based party towards a more broadly-based one, resulting in electoral advances from which both the top and middle élites benefited.

The leaders of the PvdA reacted in a specific way: the middle élite were absorbed into the higher echelons or were rewarded with comparable positions in central government, local government, independent administrative authorities, and so on. The middle élite continually challenged the leadership by advocating extreme positions in internal discussions on party policy based on arguments of 'ideological purity', whereas party leaders tended to take more moderate positions, so aiming at maximising the support of a less extreme electorate. This classical strain affecting socialist parties stimulated the top élite to rather ineffective responses to the challenge.

Several party-official functions, vacated as a result of the promotion of former party officials, were almost immediately taken by new party members; they succeeded in rising up the party organisation by exploiting the process of internal democratisation, and they had the same interest in defending 'ideological purity' as their predecessors. These tensions between the vote-maximising top élite and ideologically pure middle élite culminated in 1977, since the landslide election victory was used as an argument by the leadership for a continuation of the existing coalition with the CDA, and by the middle élite as an argument to press political demands on the CDA. The eventual
victory of the middle élite in this debate had the effect of making the CDA switch to a coalition with the VVD. The middle élite of the PvdA had thus succeeded in turning the election victory of their party into a coalition defeat. The voters rewarded this unintended result of ‘ideological maximisation’ by deserting the party in large numbers in the following elections: in 1981 the percentage of PvdA-voters fell from 33.8 per cent to 28.3 per cent, thus almost completely wiping out the electoral advance of 1977.

*Party competition and mobilisation problems*

Party competition increased in the 1970s, but as we have seen this development can be regarded as similar to the situation of the inter-war period, thus making the relative political stability of the 1950s the exception and not the rule. Mobilisation problems, already present in the 1930s in local communities where pillarisation had failed to obtain a foothold, returned as voters were freed from the social determinants of political behaviour.

The parties started to poach on each other’s preserves on the political market, aiming at maximising electoral gains and minimising losses, both hazards of electoral fortune. The parties reacted in three ways. Firstly, they made efforts to unite into larger party groupings and were forced into unification by disastrous electoral losses in successive elections. Undoubtedly, this was the dominant motive for the three confessional parties.46 This merger did finally succeed after many years of political wrangling (the birth of the CDA in 1977), whereas the efforts to form a larger ‘progressive people’s party’ on the left of the political spectrum failed. The PvdA was unwillingly involved in this unification process, forced by the threat of gains by new rivals on the left (PPR) and on the right (DS’70, D’66). Such a ‘progressive concentration’ was not established, as a majority of the party élites (top and middle) ultimately gave priority to maintaining socialist ideology instead of substituting for it a progressive image, and doubting the mobilisation power of ideological change and organisational regrouping.

Secondly, the top élite intensified their communication with the electorate and made it more public. Parliamentary debate between competing parties increased enormously; ministers flooded Parliament with policy plans provoking fierce public discussion; television became the most important medium for this debate. In short, the electorate was given maximum opportunity to become convinced of the political performance of the leading élites.

Thirdly, cultural campaigns were mounted propagating slogans such as ‘solidarity’ and ‘national/common interest’ which should be defended against the dangers of economic crisis. Some technical policy issues were even attributed a symbolic significance and became subject of political argument. These cultural campaigns aimed at mobilising volatile and floating voters were waged in furious competition, resulting in a spiral of polarisation which threatened to get out of hand, since in its turn it hampered the already difficult coalition-building process after the election. Thus, a paradox arose between polarisation during election campaigns and co-operation after the elections, imposed on the parties as a consequence of their minority position in a multi-party system!
Policy-pressure

The political climate in the 1970s was such that policy pressures from the electorate on the top élite increased rapidly. Policy expectations of the voters expanded, partly as a result of the economic problems of the Dutch welfare state in crisis, partly as a consequence of élite behaviour in the 1960s, promising unlimited problem-solving ability of government in the context of indefinite economic prosperity. The yawning gap between policy demands and policy possibilities ultimately evoked two kinds of élite reaction, as Van Schendelen has explained in his 1978 article, cited previously.

Firstly, élites made efforts to moderate excessive expectations on the part of voters, beginning with the first oil-crisis in 1973. The top élite emphasised repeatedly that economic stagnation severely limits the problem-solution ability of government and that the national interest requires to give priority to the fight against economic crisis. Among the top élite, there was remarkably little competition and polarisation on this issue. They all seemed to agree that a reduction of policy expectations serves the interest of all parties. This type of élite reaction confirms the image of prudent élite behaviour, as emphasised by the 'politics of accommodation' school.

Secondly, élites react by using economic crisis as a facility. From the imperative of economic crisis management they derive arguments both to secure compliance from their voters and client groups and to mobilise scarce resources through emergency decision-making. Citizens and pressure groups are asked to give loyal support in the defined emergency situation. In this way, élites seek to persuade voters to endure all kinds of sacrifice which otherwise they would not be prepared to make. These and other variants of efforts to retain power in the hands of the top élite not only relieve the pressure exerted on the policy-making process, they also reinforce the top élite in their positions. If we stress this last aspect, economic crisis-management is not solely a problem, but also a method by which top people maintain (or recapture) original power positions. On this interpretation, élite behaviour is compatible with the model of 'political control by élites'.

In the 1970s problems of coalition-formation, of middle élite behaviour, of mobilising voters, and of excessive policy pressures, were interrelated and even reinforced each other. These problems of the leading élites have to be considered in relation to changing voting behaviour. Changing élite behaviour is not only a reaction to changing electoral behaviour, but also has to be considered just as much, at least as a partial cause, and in any case as a reinforcement of changing voting behaviour.

TOWARDS A CONCLUSION

Many political scientists and political journalists have called the 1970s in the Netherlands the 'era of political restoration'. This evaluation appears to be not only somewhat premature, but also depends on the definition of 'restoration'. For the purpose of this article, Van Schendelen's definition of political restoration is favoured. He defines political restoration as 'attempts at
restoration of crucial elements of pillarization-politics, as once practised at
the élite level. This definition is limited in the present context to the élite level.
The crucial elements in question have already been discussed in Section II.
Two different models in the consociational democracy approach have been
distinguished: the model of 'accommodation politics' and the model of
'political control'. The interpretation of 'political restoration' at the élite level
is different in the two models.

Restoration, defined as a return to the politics of accommodation, is not yet
present in the Netherlands. Relations are fundamentally different now, more
pluralistic and less fragmentary than in the period 1915–65. It is not the mass-
electorate that is sharply divided and in need of accommodation nowadays,
but the top élite who are divided and have to be reconciled. Centrifugal
forces are active at the élite level, especially in the policy sphere, and not as
much at the mass level. Between élite-culture and mass-culture there appears
to be a widening gap.

From the perspective of the model of political control, restoration implies
that top élites attempt to hamper the process of cultural pluralisation at the
mass level and try to bend it into more segmented group formation. The most
suitable mechanism for this attempt is cultural polarisation: through their
cultural influence, the top élite try to form segmented subcultures, and these
are subsequently structurally moulded and guarded. And, as we have seen,
cultural polarisation between top élites has increased considerably from 1972
onwards, changing from stressing mainly material values to emphasising non-
matter ones. Cultural polarisation is sought for the following reasons:

1. cultural polarisation reinforces the party's identity, and thus internal
   unification (CDA interest);
2. cultural polarisation reinforces feelings of threat, caused by rival
   ideologies, and thus serves to unite the party's rank and file (PvdA
   interest);
3. cultural polarisation mobilises parts of the electorate thus increasing
   the chance of electoral gains;
4. cultural polarisation freezes electoral relations at the mass level, thus
   reinforcing electoral stability;
5. cultural polarisation, reshaping social diversity into segmented
   pluralism, reinforces the natural demand for leadership in order to
   bridge social contrasts.

As such, cultural polarisation in short has to be considered as a tendency
towards restoration in Dutch politics at the present time.

Combining both consociational democracy variants ultimately leads to the
conclusion that the 1970s in the Netherlands were characterised by partial
restoration tendencies. Attempts by the top élite were aimed at delaying
depillarisation and reversing into pillarisation again, but they have been
thwarted so far by a reluctant mass whose emancipation cannot be stopped. In
Table 5, the characteristics of Dutch politics, distinguished in three periods,
are summarised. In this way, the period after 1972 is placed in a long-term
perspective.

Cultural polarisation appears to be favourable to the stability of the leading
TABLE 5

CHARACTERISTICS OF DUTCH POLITICS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period Variable</th>
<th>1915-65 (according to Lijphart)</th>
<th>1965-72 (according to Daalder)</th>
<th>1972-85 (according to Van Schendelen)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mass culture</td>
<td>pillarised</td>
<td>pluralistic</td>
<td>pluralistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mass structure</td>
<td>pillarised</td>
<td>pluralistic</td>
<td>pluralistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitudes of masses in relation to élites</td>
<td>passive and docile</td>
<td>active and critical</td>
<td>moderately active and deferential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>electoral preferences</td>
<td>static</td>
<td>dynamic</td>
<td>dynamic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>focus of political support</td>
<td>pillar and leaders</td>
<td>national regime-values</td>
<td>national regime-values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>élite culture</td>
<td>accommodating</td>
<td>polarising</td>
<td>confluent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>electoral outcomes</td>
<td>pillar-clusters</td>
<td>fragmentation</td>
<td>concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>middle élites</td>
<td>diffuse within pillar</td>
<td>new ‘leisured class’</td>
<td>professionalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>top élites</td>
<td>authoritative, lasting power-position</td>
<td>controversial, rapid circulation</td>
<td>controversial, rapid circulation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>function of parties</td>
<td>articulation</td>
<td>mobilisation</td>
<td>symbolic politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rules of the game</td>
<td>rational polities, secrecy, primacy of government, depoliticisation</td>
<td>critical politics, openness, power diffusion, politicisation</td>
<td>secrecy, informal power-coalitions, selective politicisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy possibilities</td>
<td>limited</td>
<td>large</td>
<td>limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>policy preferences</td>
<td>limited</td>
<td>large</td>
<td>large</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


éligites, but does it also favour other crucial elements of the political process? There are at least three doubts about this. In the first place, polarisation hampers the process of coalition formation. There is a tension between cultural polarisation practised by the top élites and the necessary co-operation among them. Therefore, polarisation should not be maximised, but reaches an optimum beyond which it becomes counter-productive. In the second place, cultural polarisation has its effects in the policy sphere. Policy expectations are stimulated enormously by this competition, and sooner or later the electorate demands their transformation into real policy outcomes. That, however, is difficult to achieve because polarised values cannot be reconciled so easily. In the third place, the reactions of society to cultural polarisation are uncertain. Will the voters take sides? Will the compromises made by the top élites ultimately be accepted? This was self-evident in the era of pillarisation, but may be questioned for the 1970s and 1980s. The top élites, having lost political control in the 1960s, have not yet regained it over the voters.

Hence, the following questions remain. Are the élites, besides practising polarisation, still able to co-operate? Will the policy process ultimately be able to bear this paradox between polarisation and co-operation? And will citizens and groups in society join this cultural polarisation or demand a more
pluralistic variant of consociational democracy? The Dutch political system seems to be passing the threshold of a dynamic future: cultural polarisation between élites and a large cultural distance between élite and mass. These questions and this conclusion, originally formulated by Van Schendelen in his article of 1978, are, several years further on, now even more topical for Dutch politics.

NOTES


4. See the literature anthologised above in note 2.

5. According to Lijphart's original contribution of 1968, his description of Dutch pillarisation has been criticised especially by historians on details, but not on essentials. I paraphrase here the summary as given by Van Schendelen, 'Verzuiling en Restauratie', pp. 42 ff.


7. See Lijphart, Politics of Accommodation.

8. Although not discussed by Lijphart, the citizens should not be considered less prudent. They take cover in 'apartheid' and separation, thus minimising the conflict. Also, they give the top elite room to manoeuvre, thus increasing the probability of compromise. This is the other side of the coin of 'consociationalism', also emphasised by Van Schendelen.


10. Lijphart modifies this assumption in his contribution to the Acta Politica special issue mentioned in note 1. Literally, he admits (on p. 12 of his article): 'In slightly different form, it (pillarisation) is both an independent and a dependent variable.' See A. Lijphart, 'Time Politics of Accommodation: Reflections, Fifteen Years Later', in Van Schendelen (ed.), Consociationalism, pp. 9-18.


14. See Van Schendelen 'Verzuiling en Restauratie', p. 44.

15. See Lijphart, Politics of Accommodation, especially Chapters 1 and 13.

16. See Daalder, Politiseren en Lijdelijkheid.

17. The postulate of 'sovereignty of the people' seems to dominate the background of the analysis: the people come first, the elites are secondary.

18. In an unpublished paper, the problem is stated in comparable terms by J.M. de Jong, 'Partijen, kiezers en elektorale verandering' (mimeo), Erasmus University, Rotterdam (n.d.).

20. See H. Bakvis, 'Electoral Stability and Electoral Change: The Case of the Dutch Catholics', Canadian Journal of Political Science, No. 3 (September 1981), pp. 543-545. According to this author, the electoral results of the KVP varied directly with the reminders of the bishops to the Roman-Catholics of their 'duty to vote Catholic'.


24. In the Dutch context, a party can win the election but lose the following coalition-formation. A sad example is shown by the performance of the PvdA in this respect in 1977.


27. These criteria are suggested and used for calculation by H. Daudt, 'Floating Voters and the Floating Vote' (dissertation), (Leiden 1961). The calculation is also based on the method of table-analysis, recently suggested by the same author: 'A simple scheme for analysing aggregate change', in Acta Politica, No. 3 (1983), pp. 293-306.


29. The concept of party identification is irrevocably linked with the 'Michigan School' of voting behaviour. The concept has been introduced in the early 1950s (see A. Campbell, G. Gurin and W.S. Miller, The Voter Decides, (Evanston IL, 1954). Its meaning and theoretical status have evolved through the 1950s and 1960s. Owing to this, slightly varying interpretations of what the concept involves have emerged in the literature. See, for a survey of the history of the concept and for an elaborate use of Dutch election data, C. van der Eijk, and B. Niemoller, Electoral Change in the Netherlands, Empirical Results and Methods of Measurement (dissertation), (Amsterdam, 1983).


32. See Van der Eijk and Niemoller, Electoral Change, p. 342.


37. This theme is further explored in De Jong, 'Partijen, kiezers en electorale verandering'. In this subsection, I paraphrase the main lines of his argument, although I disagree with him on details which are not relevant here.


DEPILLARISATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

40. Mobilisation of voters has become a general problem of political parties in Western Europe. See various articles in Daalder and Mair, *Western European Party Systems*. The mobilisation problem is discussed further in the Dutch political context below in this section.

41. Andeweg, *Dutch Voters Adrift*.

42. Van der Eijk and Niemöller, *Electoral Change*.

43. Van Schendelen, ‘Verzuiling en Restauratie’, pp. 47-50, discusses only the last three aspects of changing elite behaviour. The problem of coalition formation and coalition instability is not considered to be a separate factor. This is remarkable in view of a growing consensus among political scientists, that the coalition problem is the key to the crisis in Dutch politics.


46. Surprisingly, however, the KVP suffered most from electoral decline (in ten years from 1963 to 1972, voters’ support dropped to half), whereas the Protestant CHU suffered much less dramatic losses and the Calvinist ARP remained almost stable. Partly, this is due to the different deconffessionalisation process and the different positions of the parties for the three relevant population groups.

47. The theme of political restoration was perhaps a kind of fashion-article for political journalism in the late 1970s in the Netherlands, fitting into the general atmosphere of social depression in which related themes as ‘the crisis of the welfare state’, and the ‘narcissistic personality’ became popular. Concepts like this originally seem to be more theoretical constructs developed by some who have a particular interest in it, and then becoming social reality.

