

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

He has been assassinated on May 6th 2002, Hilversum

The Netherlands, he was shot by Volkert van der G.



In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

Pim Fortuyn: At your service - with this slogan he started his

campaign in 2002

Annus Horribilis 2002 in The Netherlands

The Netherlands on the brink of revolution?

The Voorhout-Lecture 2003

By HELMUT HETZEL

"The freethinking of one age is the common sense of the next" (Matthew Arnold 1822-1888)

I) Introduction - I would like to thank you for inviting me to hold this year's Voorhout lecture. It is a great pleasure for me to have this opportunity to speak to you tonight.

The title of my lecture is Annus horribilis 2002 - The Netherlands on the brink of revolution?

For many people, the year 2002 certainly was an annus horribilis. For the people, for instance, who became victims of natural disasters, the people who lost their jobs or all those who lost relatives or friends - and of course for all those who still have their money invested in shares.

In many ways, the year 2002 was an exciting year for The Netherlands, full of changes, happy and unhappy ones, in many ways, a historical year. But was it also an annus horribilis?

Before I try to answer that question, I would like to tell you a story. A story about something that happened during the annual reception hosted by the **Speaker of the Dutch Parliament** for members of the press.

Every year, just before Christmas, the Speaker - currently **Frans Weisglas** - hosts a reception for foreign and Dutch journalists.

The most recent reception was completely different from previous ones. Everything was different. For the first time, the reception wasn't held in the Nieuwspoort press centre, but instead in the Parliament building.

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

For the first time we all had to go through security checkpoints.

Mr Weisglas talked openly about what many politicians and journalists in The Netherlands - and many other people, too - feel. And what they feel is fear. The fear, for example, of becoming a victim of violence. And that fear is constantly being fed because politicians and journalists are still receiving anonymous threatening letters.

But this is not the only fear that has been preying on politicians' and journalists' minds and emotions since **the murder of Pim Fortuyn on 6 May last year**. The style of debating in The Netherlands has changed. Discussions have become harder, more direct and hurtful, sometimes even irreconcilable. And that's completely different from what they were like just a year ago.

This can be illustrated by something that happened during the Speaker's press reception.

A Dutch colleague remarked that he thought the **LPF** were a bunch of idiots. Another journalist protested and left the room. And that was the end of the discussion.

A year ago, before 6 May, this wouldn't have happened in The Netherlands, at least not among journalists.

Why am I telling you this?

Because I think that this example illustrates the current social and political climate in The Netherlands. **Consensus has been replaced by confrontation. Relaxation by tension.**

The Netherlands is upset, disoriented, and instable. People are annoyed. Political culture has changed. **2002 has been a turning point.**

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

As the **Newsweek correspondent Friso Endt (79)** says, "I no longer recognise my own country."

What has happened in The Netherlands? Why do the Dutch themselves no longer recognise their own country?

Before trying to answer this question, I would like to remind you of the most important milestones in **The Netherlands in 2002**.

Here they are:

1.1.2002: Introduction of the euro

2.2.2002: Royal Wedding (the happy milestone)

6.3.2002: Pim Fortuyn's landslide victory in the local elections in Rotterdam

6.5.2002: Pim Fortuyn's assassination in Hilversum

15.5.2002: National elections

6.10.2002: The death of Prince Claus, husband of Queen Beatrix

15.10.2002: The burial of Prince Claus in Delft

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

16.10.2001: The resignation of the Balkenende government.

For a while, the Dutch people, who had been disoriented and torn apart by the assassination of Pim Fortuyn, were once again united in their mourning of Prince Claus. But for how long?

After 6 May, The Netherlands was on the edge of a revolution, maybe even on the edge of civil war.

I'll come back to this a little later. **First let's talk about Fortuyn.**



In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

II) **Pim Fortuyn** and the impact he had on society and politics in The Netherlands

Pim Fortuyn was ridiculed for being '**the bald professor**'. He was called the 'queer who creates a stage for himself'. Some saw him as the

Dutch Le Pen, or as Jörg Haider in the Polder, even as the new Mussolini. Pim Fortuyn was different from any politician The Netherlands had ever seen before. He was totally un-Dutch.

He did everything that for so long had been 'not done' in this country. He was a braggart and a boaster. He had himself driven around in a Daimler. He had a butler, a chauffeur and two lapdogs, and was openly gay. He used to call himself 'the philosopher in the darkroom'.

But Pim Fortuyn had something many other Dutch politicians lack - and that was charisma. He was exceptionally outspoken. He knew what people felt and talked about. He was a populist. But he was neither the Dutch Jörg Haider nor the Le Pen of The Netherlands. He was not a racist and nor was he anti-semitic.

Pim Fortuyn was a provocative man, a gay, a dandy with a craving for recognition, an enormous ego and an obsession with creating a stage for himself. He highlighted the sores that the policies of Prime Minister Kok's government had created in large parts of Dutch society.

That's what I wanted to say about Pim Fortuyn as a person.

What did Pim Fortuyn achieve?

Pim Fortuyn effectively put an end to the dictatorship of political correctness in The Netherlands. He pushed away the layer of taboos that had become thicker and thicker during the eight years of government by the 'purple coalition' under prime minister Wim Kok.

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

The Netherlands could breath freely. **Open discussions started up again. Without taboos.** Everybody was talking about politics again. At the baker's, the butcher's or the greengrocer's, politics were being discussed everywhere. And that was thanks to Pim Fortuyn.

What more could a democracy want?

Pim Fortuyn gave Dutch democracy the kiss of life. He was the people's politician.

Pim Fortuyn stripped the mask off the renowned Dutch tolerance by describing it as **'repressive tolerance', as Herbert Marcuse** so aptly analysed it in his masterpiece The One-Dimensional Man.

As Marcuse says in his book, the language of the people confronted official and pseudo-official language with malicious and challenging humour. It was as if the man on the street - or his spokesman (myself - Helmut Hetzel - would say Pim Fortuyn) - used his own vocabulary as a means of pitting his humanity against the powers that be; as if rejection and revolution, which had for so long been repressed in the political domain, were expressing themselves in vocabulary that called a spade a spade.

That is exactly what Pim Fortuyn achieved.

If I may translate Marcuse freely, "**Beat the egghead and dig it.**"

Pim Fortuyn demanded an end to the 'culture of regents'. Which also meant: we've had enough of The Hague's political newspeak.

Pim Fortuyn filled the communication gap that had arisen between politicians and the people.

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

He was a great communicator - just like **Ronald Reagan**. He stood for freedom of the press and freedom of speech. He was an expert in using the right of free speech as a weapon.

III) The mock tolerance of The Netherlands

Let's get back to the question of what has happened in The Netherlands? Why is it that the Dutch don't recognize their country any more?

Queen Beatrix analysed the situation in her country during her Christmas speech:

"We live in disturbing times without peace and with vague feelings of fear. Society seems to be disintegrating. It has broken loose from its old moorings and seems unable to deal with the loss of its old certainties. For far too long, people's anxieties and concerns have simply been ignored. An imposed open-mindedness, which meant an acceptance of things that should not be accepted, led to mock tolerance."

'Mock tolerance' is the keyword to the present crisis in The Netherlands. Mock tolerance is what Herbert Marcuse called 'repressive tolerance'. Mock tolerance is what Pim Fortuyn exposed as pseudo-principles in The Netherlands.

Mock tolerance is what for years had been regarded as politically correct by most leftist opinion leaders and had dominated public discussion with the force of a moral sledgehammer.

The guiding principle was 'if it mustn't be true, it can't be true'!

For years, Dutch journalists didn't dare to mention the nationality of suspected criminals in order to avoid being accused of discrimination.

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

For too long, problems were simply ignored. To give just a few examples:

* more and more lessons in Dutch schools are being cancelled because of a shortage of teachers;

* hospital waiting lists for operations have become longer and longer;

* gangs of youths are terrorizing the inner cities and the police do nothing about it;

* far too little is being invested in Research and Development,

* there is a limit to what is referred to as the 'multicultural society';

* an intellectual debate with the Islamic world has become unavoidable after what happened on 9-11,

* a bicycle thief is also a thief.

These were the issues that Pim Fortuyn addressed because Wim Kok's government had largely swept them under the carpet.

Some of these issues will probably fade into the background soon because of the threat of war against the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and the continuing economic crisis. But the political shortcomings I referred to above are so pressing that the next government will be forced to do something about them.

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr



Volkert van der. G. murder of Pim Fortuyn - he is an example of mock tolerance



In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

Pim Fortuyn killed by Volkert van der G.

Mediapark Hilversum, May 6th 2002, 18.05 hours

IV) The indifference of politicians and the executive

Mock tolerance is one side of the Dutch coin. Indifference, ignorance and arrogance are the other one.

In February 2002, I asked the then Prime Minister Wim Kok, "How do you explain Fortuyn's success?" His answer was "I don't know." That's all I got for an answer.

Two months later, in April 2002, I again asked Wim Kok, "How do you intend to pit yourself against Pim Fortuyn?" And his answer was, "We need to make sure that the achievements of the `purple coalition´ are recognised." Which means: increase PR to cover up the shortcomings of the Kok administration.

On 3 January 2003, Wim Kok said in an interview with the Dutch broadcasting organisation VPRO that he still had no explanation for Fortuyn's success and for the fact that his Partij van de Arbeid lost half its parliamentary seats in last year's elections. Obviously Kok still doesn't understand what's going on in his country.

When Kok was still prime minister, he refused an interview with **Newsweek** for a cover story entitled Playing by Dutch rules.

Speaking of ignorance ...

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

There were many reasons for the storm of indignation that, under the influence of Pim Fortuyn, grew into a revolution and finally swept across The Netherlands last year.

I've already mentioned a few. But just let me give you some more examples. A young Dutchman was attacked by a gang of young Moroccans. They wanted his mobile phone, but he refused to hand it over. He was beaten up and lay bleeding on the ground. The police arrived, but weren't interested in finding out what had happened. They didn't ask the people involved in the beating to identify themselves. They didn't call a doctor. Instead they just told everybody to go home.

The young Dutchman is bitter. "I no longer feel safe in my own country," he says.

Which party do you think he is going to vote for?

Just to avoid any misunderstandings, I want to make the politically correct announcement that I'm not using this example to denounce 'the Moroccans' or any other ethnic group. I'm just describing an incident that took place.

This incident does, however, illustrate another big problem that makes so many Dutch people feel unsafe. And it's one of the reasons why **1.6 million Dutch people voted for the LPF. It explains Pim Fortuyn's success.**

It's the problem of indifference. The police should have investigated the violent attack. But they didn't. The victim and the aggressors were treated the same.

To quote **Hans Wiegel**, who has been asked by his liberal party, the VVD, to help with its election campaign: **"Ministers very soon tend to loose contact with reality."** This holds true for prime ministers and many politicians and also for some of the executive. Too often, they turn a blind eye to people breaking the law. The famous Dutch 'policy of toleration' (gedoogbeleid, as it is called in Dutch)

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

has turned into a boomerang.

The indifference of the established political classes to ordinary people's problems and the obliviousness of parts of the executive to these problems are the reasons why many people in The Netherlands have lost their confidence in the proper functioning of at least some of their instruments of state. People no longer feel that politicians take them seriously.

Politicians' indifference means the state has lost credibility with many people.

And then, of course, there's **the trauma of Srebrenica**, which has affected the nation's self-confidence.

Srebrenica is the

Wounded Knee of The Netherlands

. In Srebrenica, both the Dutch army and Dutch politics failed, but no one wants to take responsibility for the failure.

.. as if that was not enough, it was in the annus horribilis of 2002 that the Dutch realised that even the trains no longer ran on time. Even worse, you never knew if they would be running at all.

..., many Dutch people are losing their bearings, their terms of reference are being disrupted. This has affected their self-esteem. The country is tormented by doubt and has developed an identity crisis.

Last year, the Dutch looked at themselves in a mirror. And what did they see? They saw that **Frau Antje's**

cheerful smile had turned into the hideous face of Volkert van der G. It was a shock because people realised that Volkert van der G. - that's us as well. The Dutch experienced a Jekyll and Hyde sensation.

And then the big silence about the backgrounds of Pim Fortuyn's murderer settled in. A few days ago we heard that **Volkert van der G.**'s wife is a close friend of one of the people who pelted Pim Fortuyn with gateau's in March 2002 in the Nieuwspoor press centre. By the way,

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

these gateau's were not filled with cream but with faeces.

In the view of this and many other discoveries about which I won't go into details now, one can't help thinking: Was Volkert van der G. really the only one involved in this? In my view: No.

My assumption is: Pim Fortuyn's murder was not the act of a single person. A network was behind it, a whole group. Pim Fortuyn's assassination was planned well in advance.

V) 6 May 2002 - The assassination - The Netherlands on the edge of civil war?

Not only Pim Fortuyn was assassinated on 6 May. His murder was also an attack on the freedom of speech, an attack on the freedom of the press and an attack on the freedom of expression.

Let's think back to 6 May 2002: First, shots were heard in the Hilversum Media park. Then sirens started wailing, windowpanes rattled and Molotov cocktails were thrown. Shouts went out of "Melkert - murderer, Kok - murderer". The atmosphere around the Parliament building in The Hague on the evening of 6 May was explosive.

The cabinet was called for an emergency meeting to discuss the crisis. Some politicians locked themselves in their offices. They were afraid to go outside, were afraid of being lynched by Fortuyn's angry supporters. People's blood was boiling. The Hague had become a powder keg that could explode at any minute.

The outrage reached large proportions; people were extremely angry about this cowardly assassination. Even people who didn't share Fortuyn's political ideas.

It was past midnight when **Prime Minister Kok**, together with his Ministers of Home Affairs and Justice, appeared in front of the TV cameras. Unintentionally they stirred up public opinion

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

against the government by announcing that security arrangements for Pim Fortuyn had been checked before the day's events and there had been no need for bodyguards. This announcement was seen as contemptuous since Fortuyn had repeatedly warned in interviews that he was in danger of being attacked. Later, a parliamentary investigation came to the conclusion that Fortuyn should have been assigned bodyguards. But he never got them.

I want to put the following to you:

Imagine ... what if a second murder had taken place after Fortuyn's assassination? Imagine ... what if another well-known politician or even the Prime Minister had been shot in the aftermath of 6 May? What could have happened?

On 6 May and on the days that followed, The Netherlands was on the edge of civil war. The slightest provocation would have been enough for an uprising to have escalated into an orgy of violence.

Fortunately that did not happen. Pim Fortuyn's family poured water onto the flames of a potential uprising. The election campaign was stopped. A clever move because it tempered the rage - anger was replaced by grief.

{youtube}qBBJ1bOtSHI{/youtube}

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

VI) New elections, instability and the future

The political tremor caused by Pim Fortuyn and his assassination hasn't stopped. Only after the elections on 22 January will we know what actually happens.

The situation is still unstable to such an extent that business people are beginning to worry.

"There is no crisis yet, but we'll soon be in the middle of one if things don't change quickly. If The Netherlands continues to have a new government every six months, the country will become unstable. And a country that's unstable suffers a loss of confidence. And it's confidence that is the basis of our economy and our society. The Netherlands could lose its good reputation abroad."

These words of warning come from Unilever chairman, **Antony Burgmans**. And there are other captains of industry in The Netherlands and abroad who share his concerns.

One question is being asked over and over again: What's going to happen in the country of Erasmus and Rembrandt?

My opinion is that we've now moved into reverse.

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

The established political classes are winning back the territory they had lost and the LPF is falling apart from within.

The media as well has reversed into a roll-back strategy. After all, seventy per cent of Dutch journalists openly sympathize with the Partij van de Arbeid or other leftist parties. A number of well-known TV journalists are also members of the Partij van de Arbeid.

The question is whether it's possible for a journalist to be a party member and still be impartial? I don't think so.

The Netherlands will return to a stable government after the elections on 22 January. There'll either be a coalition between the CDA and the VVD or between the CDA and the PvdA. Jan-Peter Balkenende will stay prime minister and the CDA will be the biggest party.

However, The Netherlands will not return to the culture of political correctness that prevailed before Fortuyn. We're now seeing a culture of political openness in the election campaign - and this is a result of the fundamental changes Fortuyn initiated. Nothing will be the same as it was before 6 May.

VII) Concluding remarks regarding the discussion about 'standards and values' (normen and warden as the Dutch call them):

Some Dutch politicians - and they're not the only ones - would be well advised to re-read **Max Weber**

and what he said about the ethics of responsibility.

Immanuel Kant

and his categorical imperative would also be useful reading matter. By the way, Kant's categorical imperative states that you should:

"Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law."

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr

For those of you who understand German, I'll quote the original German:

"Handle so, dass die Maxime deines Handelns jederzeit zu einer allgemeinen Gesetzmäßigkeit erhoben werden könnte."

Thank you very much for your attention.

{youtube}gzdx9wYPcLk{/youtube}

The funeral of Pim Fortuyn, May 11th 2002

May 13th 2002: General Elections in The Netherlands. More than 1,6 Million Dutch voted for a dead man, they voted for Pim Fortuyn and his Party LPF, which became the second biggest political power in Holland. Meanwhile the LPF vanished from the political stage and does not exist anymore.

Copyright by Helmut Hetzel, Den Haag.

In Memoriam Pim Fortuyn

Geschrieben von: Helmut Hetzel

Samstag, 18. April 2009 um 07:26 Uhr - Aktualisiert Freitag, 01. Mai 2009 um 13:22 Uhr
