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Attention of: U Bureau - Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, Lord Steel of Aikwood, Dr Otto Graf Lambsdorff, Lord Alderdice, Colin Eglin, Carlos Gasoliba, Viktor Orbán, Amnon Rubinstein, Matyas Eörsi, Bill Graham, Martina Gredier, Gerold Dieke, copy to Christian Ehlers

From: Jules Maaten, secretary general

Topic: Elections in the Netherlands

Date: 07 May 1998

Frits Bolkestein's VVD yesterday defied the opinion polls by having their best ever result in the general election of 6 May. For the first time in their history VVD became the second largest party of the Netherlands, over-taking the christian-democrats. The other winner of the election was the coalition partner of VVD, the Labour Party of Prime Minister Wim Kok. The third coalition partner, D66, lost heavily although not as much as expected, and both Frits Bolkestein and Wim Kok urged D66 to join negotiations for a continuation of their 'purple' coalition. As a whole, the government coalition won 4 percent more than in 1994. The oppositional Green Left party also made significant gains.

Percentages: Labour went from 24% in 1994 to 29 now, VVD from 19.9 to 24.7, the christian democrats from 22.2 to 18.4 (their biggest defeat ever), D66 from 15.5 to 9, Green Left from 3.5 to 7.2 and the Socialist Party from 1.3 to 3.8. The small christian parties remained stable. The extreme rightist CD party lost all their seats, as did the pensioners' parties.

If you wish, Frits Bolkestein can be contacted by fax at +31 70 318 2920 or by mail at Parliament (Tweede Kamer), Binnenhof 1, The Hague, Netherlands

10 May 1998,

Mr Frits Bolkestein MP,
Leader of VVD,
Tweede Kamer,
Binnenhof 1,
The Hague,
NETHERLANDS

Just a brief note of hearty congratulations on your excellent election result. I understand that it is the best ever result for VVD, and undoubtedly this a tribute to your extraordinary leadership. I am personally delighted and would also convey the congratulations of all your friends and admirers in Alliance.

Please also convey our Very Best Wishes to Hans van Baalen. If I remember correctly he was your campaign organizer. He obviously did well!

ALD243/16/12/11/108



Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie

MR DRS F. BOLKESTEIN
fractievoorzitter

The Lord Alderdice FRCPI FRCPsych
House of Lords
London SW1A 0PW
ENGELAND

25-05-1998

Dear John,

Many thanks for your congratulations with our election results. It was hard going but the results were worth it. We have never before achieved 25% of the votes and a quarter of the seats. We have left the Christian Democrats far behind us. The Socialists are still in first place but the next elections will see us in their position. We are now putting together a cabinet of the same colour as the present one (i.e. purple) and look forward to another four years of fruitful governing.

Yours truly,

Frits Bolkestein

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