

In a Dutch Election, Globalists Lose Big



by Bruce Bawer

During the year or so between my first visit to the Netherlands, in August 1997, and my move to Amsterdam from New York, I not only put myself through a one-man crash course in Dutch; I also read every book I could find about Dutch history, society, art and culture, customs and character. But one key fact that I somehow missed entirely, and that only recently found its way onto my radar, is that the Netherlands is, after the U.S., the world's largest exporter of agricultural products.

At first blush it seems impossible. Yes, the U.S. being #1 is a no-brainer: nobody has anywhere near as much first-class farmland. But the Netherlands, which is 1/231 the size of the U.S.? Really? To travel across the Randstad, the crescent-shaped urban conglomeration that contains most of the major

cities, is to imagine that this little land must be a significant agriculture *importer*. How, then, can it possibly beat out giants like Russia, Canada, Brazil, Indonesia, and Australia? Well, as it happens, most of those giants are near the top of the export list: Brazil for coffee; Indonesia, palm oil; China, rice; Canada, oats. But if they're not at the very top of the list, it's because Russia and Canada are largely tundra, Brazil and Indonesia mostly jungle, and Australia almost entirely desert.

But the Netherlands? What's the secret? One word: innovation. Which shouldn't come as a surprise. Much of its current farmland wouldn't exist if not for the reclamation of land from the sea – a practice that is now some seven hundred years old and that, thanks to extraordinary technological innovations during the previous century, has more than doubled the country's area.

Last year, in an [article](#) for *Dutch Review*, Jesse Rintoul summed up some of the more impressive recent examples of innovations in Dutch farming. The University of Wageningen, thanks to “an alternative soil composite made of coco peat and rock wool,” managed to grow bananas in the Netherlands' not-exactly-banana-republic climate. A company called Nijssen/Granico produces “about 90,000 tons of animal feed a year entirely from human food waste.” And in Rotterdam, there's a “floating farm” that feeds cows “with leftovers from local restaurants.” The Dutch, notes Rintoul, have sought to “produce twice as much food using half as many resources.”

You'd think the Dutch would be immensely proud of these accomplishments – proud to be able not only to feed themselves but to sell their agricultural products all over the world. Alas, during the last couple of decades, as the Netherlands' agricultural sector has grown, so has the number of Dutch legislators who either are hard-core environmentalists or are pathetically eager to obey the globalists at the UN, EU, and World Economic Forum, who are using climate- scare rhetoric to

solidify their power.

So it is that while the Dutch government has done precious little to reverse the alarming changes wrought by mass Islamic immigration in the Netherlands' largest cities, it's chosen to take on – with well-nigh unprecedented imperiousness – its agricultural sector, to which no Dutchman should express anything but gratitude.

The conflict bubbled over in 2019, when a research institute complained that farmers – or, rather, cows – were responsible for an excessively high level of Dutch nitrogen emissions. Soon left-wingers were speaking solemnly of “the Dutch nitrogen crisis.” The European Court of Justice accused the kingdom of violating EU environmental regulations. A member of the lower house in The Hague proposed cutting in half the number of animals on Dutch farms. The same year, 2019, saw passage of the Climate Act, which called for closing down thousands of farms with the purported goal of cutting nitrogen emissions in half by 2030. Last year the Agriculture Ministry issued a draconian order that called for a well-nigh total halt to farming in some parts of the country.

In response to all this bullying, the farmers took action. Thousands of them used their tractors to block roads, impede food deliveries, and surround government buildings. There were many arrests. But Marine Le Pen supported them. So, in a 2022 speech, did Donald Trump, who condemned the Dutch “climate tyranny.” Having lost support from the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), the political party that had traditionally championed agricultural interests, the farmers and their allies formed the *BoerBurgerBeweging* (BBB), or Farmer-Citizen Movement, which quickly drew into its ranks conservatives who resented the international globalists for riding roughshod over national policy-making processes that were none of their damn business.

When I was first reading all those books about the Dutch, one

point that was made repeatedly was that they were a highly civilized people whose political debate (and, for that matter, corporate decision-making) was characterized by amicable deliberation and compromise. Impassioned mass protests of the kind that are routine in France were uncommon. Power plays were nearly unheard of. When gay people began to call for same-sex marriage, there wasn't rage on one side and hysteria on the other – there were temperate discussions. In 2001, as a result, the Netherlands became the first place on earth to institute same-sex marriage.

But from the beginning, the showdown over agriculture was different. It wasn't a matter of Dutch people hashing over an issue with other Dutch people. Instead, politicians and bureaucrats, at the behest of the UN, EU, and WEF, were issuing ultimatums to Dutch farmers – and, to everyone's surprise, the farmers, instead of rolling over and accepting their fate, put up a mass resistance that, at its core, was of a piece with the British vote for Brexit, the American election of Trump, the protests by "yellow jackets" in France, and the truckers' uprising in Canada.

The trucker parallel makes particular sense, given that, as Dutch commentator Eva Vlaardingerbroek put it in a recent YouTube [interview](#) with Jordan Peterson, the Netherlands and Canada "are both pilot countries for the WEF," with Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, like his Canadian counterpart Justin Trudeau, frequently receiving praise from WEF chairman Klaus Schwab for his abject servility – sorry, commendable cooperation. At the behest of globalists, charged Vlaardingerbroek, the Dutch government was "fighting a war of attrition against our farmers." The wishes of Dutch citizens, long known for their proud liberty and uncompromising self-government, now mattered less than directives originating far – well, not all that far (Brussels, Strasbourg, Geneva) – from the kingdom's borders.

Well, that all changed on March 15. In provincial elections,

which showed the highest turnout in years, the BBB won 137 out of 572 seats – a stunning victory. In every one of the Netherlands' twelve provinces, the BBB became the top party while Rutte's VVD lost 17 of its 80 seats. The VVD's partners in the governing coalition all experienced major shrinkage, too: the D66 lost 9 of its 41 seats, the CDA dropped from 72 to 43, and the CU declined from 31 to 22. Since the provincial councils will proceed, on May 30, to elect the Senate – the upper house of the Dutch legislature – the BBB will now (barring some freak development) become the largest party in that body.

News media in the Netherlands and abroad used the word “shock” to describe the BBB's upset win. It was as much of an upheaval as the Brexit and Trump victories, and like them it provided metropolitan globalists with a timely reminder that the deplorables exist. Not that the BBB didn't find support in the cities, too: the German newspaper *Die Welt* [noted](#) that its urban vote count was impressive, an apparent reflection of a widespread feeling “that the government cares about all kinds of things but not the prosperity and security of ordinary citizens.”

Needless to say, the BBB's triumph means that the government's plan to stick it to the farmers is almost certainly dead. But where does that leave the Islamic crisis? Will the farmers be on the right side of that issue? Geert Wilders, the face of public resistance to the Islamization of the Netherlands, seems to think so: as soon as the contours of the March 15 vote became clear, Wilders tweeted his congratulations to the BBB for having crushed Rutte's government and declared the readiness of his Freedom Party (PVV) to work together with the farmers. Alas, the PVV ended up losing 6 out of 40 seats, while Thierry Baudet's immigration-critical FvD had a disastrous night, dropping from an impressive 86 seats to a mere 15. Sad news, that. Still, at the moment, for the most part, things do seem to be looking up for the anti-globalist

cause in the Netherlands.

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