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# Pro Rege

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Volume 10 | Number 3

Article 7

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March 1982

## Daar Gaat Het Om: Signalen voor Christelijk Politiek (Book Review)

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### Recommended Citation

Langley, McKendree R. (1982) "Daar Gaat Het Om: Signalen voor Christelijk Politiek (Book Review)," *Pro Rege*: Vol. 10: No. 3, 25 - 26.  
Available at: [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro\\_rege/vol10/iss3/7](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/pro_rege/vol10/iss3/7)

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command was directed to the apostles exclusively. Saravia argued for the apostolic character of the church, and thus that the commission was binding on all Christians. Nijenhuis recounts this debate in the context of a fine chapter on Saravia's ecclesiology. Central to his doctrine of the church in his mature writings, is Saravia's departure from the presbyterial system of his Dutch period and his strong advocacy of episcopacy on the basis of *ius divinum* (divine law). He saw hierarchy as a means of maintaining ecclesiastical order and uniformity. It was not only part of the third mark of church government, but it also had the patristic support which the continental position of the temporary elder did not. Contrary to Nijenhuis' judgment that Saravia was not an Erastian, the latter strongly defended the role of the king as divinely appointed head of Christian society, therefore also as having authority over the church.

Perhaps the most fascinating question raised by the author is the issue of Saravia's Calvinism. Nijenhuis deftly sketches the lines of Saravia's "catholic Calvinism": Scripture as the formal authority for the church, opposition to Coornherf's renaissance definition of justification as the restoration of man's ability to perform actual righteousness, defense of predestination and election (although not of a decretal definition of reprobation), opposition to Vorstius's appointment to succeed Arminius at Leiden, and for all practical purposes a Calvinian interpretation of the Lord's supper. Saravia actively opposed Puritan positions on ecclesiastical

reform and the continental theology of church government. Yet on most other substantive issues this alleged co-author of the Belgic Confession remained identifiably reformed to his death. We do well to note, therefore, the complexity of defining adjectives such as "reformed" and "Calvinist" and to correct the myopia which sees them too narrowly.

One would like to have Datheen and Moded handled with less condescension. Also, the repeated contention that Dutch Reformed church orders held to parity among the three offices in the church needs reexamination in the light of Dutch liturgical ordination forms. It would also be fruitful for Professor Nijenhuis to probe further the question of how one who contributed to the Belgic Confession, with its definition of church offices, could forsake those views and adopt an episcopal position. Was it exegetical progress that motivated Saravia, or was there a streak of opportunism in this reformed father whom the author himself suggests showed a penchant for plucking ecclesiastical plums?

When one sets such trifling questions aside, however, one sees Nijenhuis' biography of Saravia as a masterful interpretation of an interesting and important figure in reformed church life. The book is based on assiduous attention to the sources. It enriches our insight into the period measurably. Elegantly crafted, it appears when the resurgent dollar makes it even more appealing—for a time, at least—to the American buyer.

*Daar Gaat Het Om: Signalen voor Christelijk Politiek*, by Willem Aantjes and others. The Hague, The Netherlands: The Not By Bread Alone Workgroup, 1980. 118 pages, \$2.00. Reviewed by McKendree R. Langley, Associate Professor of History.

The stormy quest for a united Christian political party in Holland lasted from 1973 to 1980 when the three Protestant and Catholic parties fused into the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA). Once the CDA was a fact a new problem arose: the danger that the new Christian Democratic party would degenerate into a colorless center party and lose its radical-evangelical distinctiveness. It was to meet this new danger that the Not By Bread Alone Workgroup was established as the radical conscience of the CDA. Fourteen adherents of this workgroup contributed to the present booklet to express their ideals for keeping the new party from turning to a pragmatic centrism.

In addition to developing a basic political perspective, the authors also express their radical views on such important topics as nuclear weapons, Third World poverty, Middle East tensions, women's liberation, the role of the European Christian Democratic movement, the problem of minorities in Holland, and the problems created by Holland's wealth.

Willem Aantjes, the former parliamentary leader of

both the Anti-Revolutionary Party and the CDA, makes the point that the new party is facing an identity crisis. In his view the only way it can maintain its clear identity is by adhering to the Gospel as its basic norm and by adopting a social program designed to protect people, especially the socially weak. At the same time the concerns of power, security, and wealth are to be seen as false deities. Theologian Herman Fiolet writes that the church must provide biblical guidance for Christian parties on matters such as man as God's steward, the universal character of Christian love, the social function of property, and the earth as the place where the kingdom of God finds provisional expression. Missiologist Johannes Verkuyl expresses his view of the task of ethics for international politics. His concern is for Bible studies, prayer meetings, and Christian ethical reflection to be brought to bear on controversial problems today. He applauds the ecumenical basis of the CDA as appropriate to stem the tide of a militant and normless secularism and takes a strong stand for nuclear pacifism as an important contemporary con-

tribution to Christian thought and action, Michiel von Meyenfeldt of the Committee on the Problem of War of the Reformed Churches (GKN) also takes a strong pacifist's stand on nuclear weapons and says Holland faces the choice of either allowing the arms race to continue or leaving NATO. But von Meyenfeldt refrains from giving an answer to this difficult choice.

Administrative official Henk van Ruller endorses the policy of the Dutch Development Minister Jan De Koning of 1) treating the developing countries on an equal basis concerning their access to the international money and trade markets and 2) by means of publicity focussing Dutch development policy on the problems of the poorest countries first of all. Theologian Anton Wessels sees that continued confrontation between Israel and the Arabs threatens world peace, even peace between the USA and the USSR. For this reason Wessels calls for Israel (and the USA by implication) to engage in direct negotiations with the Palestine Liberation Organization of Yaser Arafat in order to deal with both the problems of the oppressed Palestinians and of the socially weak in Israel. CDA Europarlamentarian Bouke Beumer feels that developing countries are turning to the European Community for help and inspiration because of problems with both America and the Soviet Union. In this context Beumer feels the European Christian Democrats can have a positive influence in bringing about a world order of justice, freedom, and solidarity if based on biblical norms. The politically active women Philie Burgers, Mieke Schotting, and Marga Smit call for women to contribute to Christian politics on the basis of a feminist theology of emancipation.

Political youth leader Helmer Koetje addresses himself to the growing problem of third world minority groups in Holland, now estimated at about 720,000 persons. Koetje wants the CDA to have a special concern for these peoples as a matter of fraternal solidarity, and

*This Was John Calvin*, by Thea B. Van Halsema. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1959. 221 pages, paper, \$3.95. *Sermons on the Saving Work of Christ*, by John Calvin (translated by Leroy Nixon). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1980 (reprinted from Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company's 1950 edition). 302 pages, paper, \$7.95. *John Calvin's Sermons on the Ten Commandments*, edited and translated by Benjamin W. Farley. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1980. 326 pages, \$12.95. Reviewed by Russell Maatman, Professor of Chemistry.

Baker Book House has performed a useful service in providing us with these works by and about John Calvin. Van Halsema's book, sure to be as popular now as when it was first published, is crammed with interesting facts about Calvin and also is very easy to read. Nixon selected and translated twenty of Calvin's sermons—two on the deity and nativity of Christ, nine on his passion and resurrection, four on his ascension,

he calls on the Dutch government of CDA Prime Minister Dries Van Agt to implement a comprehensive minority policy embracing employment, housing, special education for their cultural needs, and social services. Bob Goudzwaard calls for the realization of a new mentality in economic life based on the Christian idea of stewardship and a modest life-style.

It is important for observers in America to recognize that the radical stance of this booklet is an honest attempt by sincere Christians to articulate a contemporary Christian Democratic political stance in the Dutch and European context. Reflection on the biblical norms for public affairs is always valuable for our own discussion and the present work is no exception. During the past generation it is quite true that Christian Democratic parties in several European countries have degenerated into pragmatic center/right or center/left parties, with little more than lip service to a Christian basis for politics. Since most of the contributors to this booklet are from the Anti-Revolutionary Party, founded a century ago by Abraham Kuyper, they are sensitive to the need constantly to relate Christian Democratic politics to personal faith and biblical norms. Thus they are correct in wanting to affirm a sound biblical basis for the CDA and an agenda of tasks and priorities that reflect that basis.

Yet it is debatable as to whether or not the CDA has a sufficient Christian basis, enthusiastically endorsed by its members, to prevent the gradual slide down the slippery road of pragmatism. Likewise the advocacy of direct Israeli negotiations with the PLO and the radical policies of nuclear pacifism and women's liberation are hotly debated within the CDA and among Christians everywhere.

Above all this booklet is a challenge to interested Reformed voters in North America to reflect on these important matters as carefully and for as long a period as have Dutch Christian Democrats.

and five on Pentecost and his return. Each sermon is based on a Scriptural passage which is printed in the text. Of Calvin's 200 sermons on Deuteronomy, Farley chose the sixteen on the ten commandments. These sermons were originally given in 1555. Both books of sermons are liberally footnoted; all three books are recommended to both the specialist and the general reader.