**Flahaut to become peace offering for US?**

The Genocide Act has created tension during the negotiations over the formation of the new government. According to certain sources, the US is applying pressure to have André Flahaut (PS) replaced as Minister for Defence and Louis Michel (MR) replaced as Minister for Foreign Affairs in the new government. Michel is refusing to yield. At the European summit in Thessaloniki Premier Verhofstadt called the rumours ‘gossip’. On Wednesday, however, the government hurriedly decided to pass three new suits for war crimes against, among other, George W. Bush, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld, Tommy Franks and Tony Blair on to the US and UK (FF).

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**INTRODUCTION**

The new Euthanasia Act has been in force since September 2002. Now, doctors can help terminally ill patients who are living in unbearable pain to end their lives if asked to do so. The Purple-Green Verhofs tadt I government took three years to vote through the Act after innumerable amendments to the bill, hearings and debates in the Chamber and Senate. The Christian Democratic opposition was firmly opposed, and that is not insignificant in a country where the majority of hospitals are still part of the Catholic umbrella organisation Caritas. It would now be very interesting to know to what extent this Act has now influenced the use of euthanasia on the ground. But barely nine months after its introduction, it is still a little early to start examining the situation. Nevertheless, the results of a study from 2001 in various European regions - including Flanders - on euthanasia practices and other forms of medical decisions at the end of life have just been published. These revealed that in that year, when the Euthanasia Act had still not been ratified but the public debate was in full swing, 40% of all Flemish deaths were attributable to a medical decision. Around 1.8% died following the administration of an euthanasia drug. But barely 17% of these had actually asked for this themselves, as the Act of 2002 stipulates. The percentage of life terminations without request (1.5%) is still higher in Flanders than in the Netherlands, Italy or Denmark, where it remains limited to less than 0.6% of deaths. One of the co-authors of the study attributes that high figure to the fact that here terminal patients wait to make their request until they are no longer able to do so (De Morgen, 18 June). Nonetheless, the number of cases of euthanasia without request has fallen compared to 1998. Studies show that then no fewer than 3.2% of deaths fell into this category in 1998. What is also striking is that the number of cases of euthanasia on request fell in 2001. But according to De Standaard that is mainly due to the fact that more and more doctors are resorting to life-shortening (palliative) pain control measures. This treatment and the stopping of certain treatments are also life-shortening and dependent on medical decisions that lie outside the Euthanasia Act and consequently in a grey area. In the vast majority of these cases, however, it is also important to examine whether the rights of the terminal patient are adequately protected, says the paper.

Frank Vandecaveye | editor in chief
Federal government refuses to amend Genocide Act

According to former NATO Secretary-General Willy Claes Washington is simply refusing to listen to any explanation

Within the majority parties not everyone is clearly on the same wavelength regarding the Genocide Act, after American Defence Secretary Rumsfeld threatened at a NATO summit in Evere that the USA would freeze its contribution to the new NATO building in Brussels if the Act remained in place. Minister for Foreign Affairs Louis Michel (MR) and Premier Verhofstadt (VLD) feel there is no reason to amend the Act a second time. The Act, which allows cases to be brought in Belgium against crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide, anywhere in the world, quickly led to diplomatic incidents, including with the USA, when among others George Bush Sr and General Franks were charged. The government therefore decided in April this year to amend the Act. Henceforth the Federal Public Prosecutor’s Office could decide not to initiate an investigation, for example if the case seemed unfounded. Furthermore, the Justice minister could immediately refer a case to the court of origin of the alleged criminal. Foreign Affairs Minister Louis Michel is refusing to amend the Act again and promised to meet his US colleague Colin Powell. ‘Then the ethical added value of the Act will disappear,’ says Michel. The Socialists of the PS and SP-A support Michel. SPA overseas specialist Dirk Vandermaelen points out that there are sufficient international treaties that specify that a host country of an international institution can take the necessary precautions to give representatives of a Member State free access to the institution without problems.

For the Americans this is not enough; they are demanding that the Genocide Act be repealed, because Washington does not want to allow a single US national to be tried by foreign courts. For this reason American also refuses to acknowledge the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

VLD Chairman Karel De Gucht, on the other hand, wants to give in to American pressure. He pointed out that Brussels occupies a unique position as a meeting place for diplomats and he wants to be able to guarantee them immunity. He also wonders whether no distinction between democracies and allies and other countries can be introduced.

According to former NATO Secretary-General Willy Claes, Belgium is now paying for its stance on the Iraq question and Washington is therefore simply refusing to listen to any explanation about changes in the Genocide Act (FF).

FABIAN LEFEVERE • DE MORGEN • 18 JUNE

The removal from Brussels of NATO headquarters which US Defence Secretary Rumsfeld threatened if Belgium does not amend its Genocide Act could have serious economic consequences. It would be a real catastrophe for the entire Brussels economy and a social bloodbath for the hotel sector. Pierre Verbeke, Director of the prestigious Hotel Métropole, says that ‘tens of thousands of overnight bookings that are directly linked to these international headquarters’ would be lost. The departure, which would involve a loss of 120 million euros in revenue, would deal a severe financial blow not only to Brussels but to the whole of Belgium. Any relocation would also cause considerable unemployment. In 2001, 2,872 military staff and civilian employees worked in Evere. The Secretary-General had 1077 civilians on his payroll, almost half of them Belgian. In the meantime discussions are being held to comply with the Americans. There will be no amendment of the Genocide Act. But Premier Verhofstadt wants to hand the legal files on Yaron and Bush senior over to the USA. At Verhofstadt’s instigation, Justice Minister Verwilghen asked for the opinion of the court indictment division on this intervention. It is not certain whether this will follow Verhofstadt. Verhofstadt wants rid of a couple of diplomatically sensitive symbolic dossiers. Daddy Bush is accused of crimes against humanity during the first Gulf War. Moshe Yaron was the commander of the Israeli troops who entered Beirut in 1982 and watched as Lebanese Christian Lebanese militia murdered hundreds of Palestinians in the refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila.

Willy Claes: ‘It’s five to twelve. We have a choice between an idealistic, ethical position and a pragmatic, realistic one. For some time I have argued in favour of the second, because at certain times a small country has to submit to indisputable balances of power. The analyses carried out in government circles are too mild and optimistic. Another element is involved: we are paying for what happened in the Iraq question.’ Amendments to the Genocide Act are also not enough for the Americans, Claes concludes, for the simple reason that the Americans do not want to understand the message. Premier Verhofstadt is reducing everything to a misunderstanding and believes that the Act does not therefore need amending again. But Verhofstadt is wrong, according to Claes: ‘Things have now moved on. Now there is the Iraq crisis. We are now at the stage where our diplomats in Washington are no longer received at any level. No one wants to listen to them any more. This means they can’t even try to convince the Americans because they are no longer listening.’ Finally, according to Claes, there is a third element that is annoying Washington excessively: the mini-defence summit in Brussels between Belgium, Luxembourg, France and Germany. In particular, the fact that the text of that meeting referred to a new military headquarters rankles the Americans. Claes: ‘Now the circle is complete. The Americans clearly intend teaching the Belgians a lesson and scrapping Brussel’s as the headquarters of NATO.’
VLD generation conflict: Denys drops ambitions, Coveliers hits out

Denys would be satisfied with a role as 'coach' within the party, Coveliers is likely to become faction leader in the Senate

At the negotiating table where the Liberals and Socialists are knocking together a coalition agreement, an agreement has been reached over the extension of immunity to all international representatives who visit Brussels for NATO or EU meetings. Guy Verhofstadt gave legal experts the task of examining how the immunity legislation for diplomats can be extended. However, no changes are being made to the Genocide Act and its universal scope. According to De Financieel-Economische Tijd (19 June), the American General James Jones, Commander of the Allied forces in Europe, has denied that the US has plans to relocate NATO (FF).

KOEN VIDAL/RUUD GOOSSENS/TOM COCHEZ • DE MORGEN • 19 JUNE

‘An internal legal investigation in Foreign Affairs has revealed that there is a NATO treaty from 1956 in which immunity is explicitly granted to these international observers. That article can be read as one of the restrictions which the Genocide Act imposes upon itself,’ says Didier Seeuws, Spokesman for the Department of Foreign Affairs. Perhaps it is enough to make existing international treaties more explicit, for example by extending the legislation on immunity. By this gesture the Socialists and Liberals are hoping to dispel the USA’s worries concerning the Genocide Act without tinkering with the Act itself.

Verhofstadt: ‘It would be stupid to throw the baby out with the bathwater; the Genocide Act has many merits.’ The question remains whether this solution is enough to make the US withdraw its threat to take NATO’s headquarters out of Brussels. After all, Rumsfeld openly targeted the Genocide Act itself.

WWW.BUITENLANDSEZAKEN.BE

Ten days ago Denys was harshly critical of the replacement of the VLD ministers Jaak Gabriëls and Guy Vanhengel by Marino Keuleen and Patricia Cessens. He felt personally offended, because he was seeking a portfolio for the fourth time and was unhappy that age had clearly become the criterion for the appointment of ministers.

After a brief week’s rest and reflection abroad, Denys has by his own admission sorted himself out. ‘I’ve reconciled myself to the fact that I will never become a minister,’ he said yesterday. ‘I don’t want to be bitter about it, but I don’t want to be dragged into VLD dissidence either.’

On Sunday Denys had talks with the outgoing Premier and formateur Guy Verhofstadt. Yesterday he spoke with

Party Chairman Karel de Gucht. Denys suggested to him that, after the example of the ‘senior employees’ who make their experience available in the private sector for training younger people, experienced MPs with a thorough dossier knowledge could act as ‘coaches’. ‘Why can an MP not be involved from the outset and more closely in the decision-making process, for example in inter-cabinet work groups?’ Denys asked. These work groups of cabinet employees from all majority factions prepare government decisions.

According to Denys, Verhofstadt and De Gucht were open to his suggestion. The ‘coach’ idea still has to be developed further.

WWW.VLD.BE
Bloody burglary again cranks up discussion on self-defence

On Saturday 14 June the West Flanders city of Kortrijk was shocked by a bloody raid on a jeweller’s. In broad daylight, three Serbian gangsters smashed the shop window to pieces with a sledgehammer, but the owner, an experienced marksman, reacted with a cool head and immediately opened fire. One gangster died from his wounds, a second was found in the getaway car with a bullet in the lungs, a third was hit in the shoulder, went on the run and has not yet been found. No warrant was issued for the arrest of the owner. Investigations must show whether the man acted out of legitimate self-defence. The bloody outcome of the attempted burglary again triggered discussions on a possible amendment to the law on legitimate self-defence.

The current law on legitimate self-defence already offers every opportunity to defend your property. Verhofstadt’s security specialist says with their coalition partner Spirit, are in favour of the introduction of fiscal supporting measures to protect businesses. They have the backing of Brice De Ruyver, Premier Verhofstadt’s security specialist (FF).

WIM WINCKELMANS • HET NIEUWSBLAD • 16 JUNE

‘The current law on legitimate self-defence already offers every opportunity to defend your property. At present, no one is obliged to let their goods be carried offrobbed. The courts take account of the circumstances and the compulsive instinct, whereby someone is no longer held responsible for his actions if he is attacked for the umpteenth time.’ That the Harelbeek jeweller Wouter Tybergien was still convicted but given a suspended sentence is for De Ruyver an indication of the way the law administration is going. Tybergien was convicted because he fired when the attackers were clearly already on the run, in other words after the attack. An amendment to the existing law will give out a dangerous signal. If we make it clear that shooting is allowed, I fear gangsters will also adjust their attitudes. Then we’ll have shoot-outs between a couple of professional criminals and a shopkeeper. That’s an unfair fight. Then I can’t imagine either what sort of accidents might happen.’

Opinion

PAUL GEUDENS • GAZET VAN ANTWERPEN • 17 JUNE

Should politicians take notice of the ‘vox populi’ and give everyone the right to defend his property with weapons? The classic answer comes from the United States, where gun ownership and use are much more common, where there is also the death penalty as the ultimate deterrent, but where violence is more common than here. In any case, if you consider extending legitimate defence, you are faced with difficult choices. Should it only apply to traders? And to all traders? In other words, not only jewellers and clothing boutique owners, but also butchers and café owners? Does something have to actually be stolen before you can shoot (back)? Does it have to involve costly jewellery, or is a denim jacket enough? In any case, why should traders be the only ones allowed to use their weapons? My car is just as likely to be stolen as a gold ring is from a jeweller. Can I then defend myself as an ‘ordinary citizen’ against carjackers? If you begin to tinker with the law, who knows where you will end up. To be perfectly clear: this is not about giving ram-raiders and other burglars a safe passage. Absolutely not. Criminals must be dealt with harshly. And the victims must be protected instead of being criminalised. What it is about is whether our society will become safer by extending the self-defence laws. And I have my doubts about that. Give the police the chance to act effectively and in the meantime have faith in the wisdom of the judge to assess whether each individual case involves legitimate self-defence. In most cases the judge already has sufficient room for interpretation.

NUMBER OF FOREIGNERS THAT HAVE ADOPTED BELGIAN NATIONALITY BETWEEN 1994 AND 2002

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SOURCE: DS-INFOGRAPHICS

LAW ON FLEXIBLE OBTAINMENT OF BELGIAN NATIONALITY
Court finds 25 million dollars in securities in LHSP investigation

three banks and one holding are claiming the money

On 18 June in a Dexia Bank safe in Amsterdam the court seized 25 million dollars worth of Parvest securities which belonged to Jo Lernout, Pol Hauspie and Nico Willaert, the Managing Directors of the now bankrupt speech technology firm Lernout & Hauspie Speech Products (LHSP). The trio bought the securities with the proceeds of the sale of LHSP shares to the General Manager of LHSP, Gaston Bastiaens, who paid 25 million dollars for them. Bastiaens borrowed the money from Artesia Bank, now part of Dexia (FF).

RENE DE WITTE • DE FINANCIEEL-
ECONOMISCHE TIJD • 18 JUNE

Days before the transaction Lernout, Hauspie and Willaert each instructed Banque Artesia Nederland to buy shares in the Parvest Short Term Dollar fund with their share of the proceeds of the share sale (8.33 million dollars per man) to Paribas Luxembourg. The shares had to be delivered materially. Until recently it seemed that the material delivery never took place and that the shares were held in securities accounts. Last week, however, a rogatory commission found the papers in an Amsterdam safe in Dexia Bank. The commission, headed by Ghent Examining Magistrate Henri Hémans, who is leading the judicial investigation into LHSP, headed to Amsterdam with a team of investigators from the Federal police. On Tuesday the investigators found a package of 14 kg of Parvest titles in a Dexia safe on the Herengracht in Amsterdam, the property of the three LHSP bosses. The shares were in a safe belonging to Dexia, formerly Artesia, has to do with the events of autumn 2000. Around the time the Parvest shares entered the Netherlands, all Hell had broken loose at LHSP. After some time Bastiaens’ shares were hardly worth anything at all. In November 20002 Artesia seized the Parvest shares. Now the court has seized the papers. The shares are apparently still worth around their purchase price. Barely two weeks ago there was some commotion about the 625,000 LHSP shares that Bastiaens bought. Several shareholders of L&H Holding, the anchoring company above LHSP, are claiming that the shares actually belonged to L&H Holding. Lernout, Hauspie and Willaert apparently sold them to Gaston Bastiaens without the knowledge of the shareholders. L&H Holding was declared bankrupt on 2 June.

FF EDITORIAL TEAM

Following the discovery of the 25 million dollars of Parvest securities, no fewer than three banks and one holding are claiming them. Artesia Bank was the first to lay claim to the securities because it had lent money to LHSP General Manager Bastiaens, who had negotiated a loan with the bank and had provided LHSP shares as security, which subsequently lost all their value. At the beginning of 2002 L&H Holding took Artesia Bank Nederland to court and also laid claim to the securities. However, the Ypres judge, who had to pass judgment on the bankruptcy of the holding, clearly did not believe that the securities are the property of L&H Holding. On 2 June he declared L&H Holding bankrupt, which has since appealed against the ruling. However, according to De Standaard (19 June), Indosuez Bank (Crédit Agricole) is also laying claim to the Parvest securities. In 2000 Lernout, Hauspie and Willaert went to Crédit Agricole in Luxembourg with a document of title from BNP-Paribas, the bank through which they had bought the Parvest shares, and used this to take out a loan.

WWW.LHSP.BE

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WWW.LHSP.BE

Cost of maintaining order threatens soccer league clubs

On 1 August a Royal Decree will be issued making it possible for local authorities to pass on the costs of maintaining order at football matches (or rock festivals) outside the stadium to the clubs. The local authority itself will decide whether or not to have the clubs pay. For many clubs this will mean an additional bill of on average 10,000 euros per match, for some smaller top-rank clubs even the financial death blow. The Prof League is hoping that the Royal Decree will be reviewed in extremis (FF).

GEERT LAMBAERTS •
HET NIEUWSBLAD • 18 JUNE

The dossier on paying for maintaining order is an old one that goes back to 1990, when the then Minister for Home Affairs, Louis Tobback, judged that the taxpayer should no longer foot the bill for maintaining order. Compartmentalisation in the stadium, the use of stewards, fan cards, cameras to identify troublemakers: in the fight against hooliganism clubs have made considerable efforts over the past six years,’ says Prof Ligue spokesman Sterckx. ‘To make matters worse clubs would now have to foot the bill for maintaining order on public roads. If the Royal Decree concerned is actually approved, that seems to me serious evidence of powerlessness on the part of the government.’ The Prof Ligue hopes to be able to force negotiations with the new ministers for Home Affairs and Justice. ‘In these difficult times the clubs are not able to meet the cost of maintaining order. We’re still hoping for an amendment,’ says Sterckx.

The average cost per match is calculated at around 10,000 euros. ‘But if the police have to use horses and helicopters at high-risk matches, that amount can rise to between 75,000 and 100,000 euros,’ says Club Brugge Director Antoine Vanhove. ‘It’s mainly clubs from small municipalities that will suffer,’ says the Manager of Westerlo, Herman Wijnants. ‘For us it amounts to 170,000 euros per season. That’s more than 5% of our budget. Then we had better put a stop to it.’
Ford Genk temporarily cuts back production

in the longer term there are no fears for jobs at Ford Genk

On Monday 16 June there was bad news for the Ford car assembly plant in Genk, Limburg. An internal memo reveals that production of the Ford Mondeo is to be cut by one third. Ford Genk builds all the Ford Mondeos on its own, with some 268,000 leaving the production line last year, in addition to 94,000 Ford Transit vans. Over the next few months 11,000 fewer Mondeos will be produced. The trade unions are not at present worried about job losses. However, it is likely that around 3000 workers will have to work in rotation up to the end of this year. As well as the Mondeo cutbacks, efforts are also being made to production of the Ford Transit. But in the longer term there are no fears for jobs at Ford Genk. In 2002 Ford decided to invest 900 million euros in the plant. Production of the Transit is to move to Turkey, but a restructuring towards a more flexible production system will ensure that within four years around 450,000 cars of four different types are rolling off the production line, including the new Ford Focus. To attract investment, former Flemish Economic Affairs Minister Jaak Gabriëls (VLD) promised to bear 7.6 million euros of the training cost. In 2002 the Flemish Government is also providing 50 million euros in economic expansion support. But for this it must first obtain the approval of the European Commission. There is therefore no reason to panic, although falling car sales is not good news for the car industry in general and Ford Belgium in particular (FF).

Ruben Mooijman • De Standaard • 17 June

In the first five months of this year 32,000 fewer cars were sold in Belgium than in the same period last year. That is a drop of 12.6%. Europe as a whole sold 240,000 fewer cars, a drop of 3.8%. The car industry is taking one blow after another, says Wilfried Baeken of Ford Belgium. ‘We won’t make cars if they can’t be sold.’ Ford wants to cut production in Western Europe by 90,000 vehicles.

But downward sales figures are not the only explanation for the steps taken in Genk. After all, production of the Mondeo is dropping faster than the market. In April 2001, shortly after the launch of the new Mondeo, 1,550 cars rolled off the production line each day in Genk. Now that figure is 1,140, and that is still too many. There are two reasons for this drop. Firstly, the public has become a little tired of the Mondeo. Ford hopes to do something about this after the summer with a face-lift. Secondly, this car lies in a segment that has been hit particularly hard by the shrinking market. While family cars like the Ford Focus and the Opel Astra are standing up reasonably well, the somewhat larger medium-sized cars like the Mondeo and the Opel Vectra are having to battle competition from MPVs and off-road vehicles.

Such whimsical market trends are giving managers of large car manufacturers grey hair. They have to take account of an increasingly short lifecycle for new models. The time is long gone when models could remain on the market for ten years or more. Matching production capacity to the sometimes rapid changes in demand represents a major challenge for car manufacturers. Soon after a model is introduced the cars cannot be produced fast enough, even if the plants are operating at full capacity. But a couple of years later manufacturers are faced with overcapacity if the consumer has found another preference. To overcome this problem, car manufacturers are trying to equip their plants so that more than one model can be built on the same production line. The two assembly lines at the Genk plant will be able to accommodate four models. ‘Depending on demand you can then increase the production capacity of one model and reduce that of another,’ explains Baeken.

It is that type of development that must ensure that car production remains present in a country such as Belgium. The increasing dependence of suppliers also makes the closure or relocation of a car plant less obvious, says Pieter Donck of Agoria Automotive. Through outsourcing, manufacturers have placed large parts of the production process with suppliers.

Www.Agoria.be
Www.Ford.be
Www.Febiac.be

In-vitro fertilisation refunded

On 23 June it will be twenty years since the first test-tube baby was born at Leuven University Hospital. Since then infertile couples have increasingly resorted to in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) to fulfil their desire for a child. In 2001 some four thousand women tried to become pregnant via this technique. But IVF costs around 1,250 euros per attempt and the first attempt is rarely successful. Many couples have spent a small fortune on it. Social Affairs Minister Frank Vandenbroucke felt that IVF should no longer remain the privilege of the more well-off. From 1 July the laboratory costs of IVF will be refunded by the health insurance funds. For patients this will keep the costs down to around 300 to 500 euros per attempt. The refunding will apply to the first six attempts, from the seventh patients will again have to pay the full amount (FF).

Veerle Beel • De Standaard • 18 June

There are still restrictions. For example, the minister is attaching a condition to his refund depending on the number of embryos that can be implanted. Too often still, IVF treatment ends in a multiple pregnancy. However, triplets and even twins still present a risk, both during pregnancy and at birth. And often they require extra medical care after the generally premature birth. Having to spend weeks in an incubator also costs the government a great deal of money. If these costs can be reduced, the government can allow itself to lower access to IVF. And so the minister has decided in consultation with medical experts that women aged 35 or younger can only have one embryo placed back in the first attempt and in the second attempt one or, only if the quality of the embryos is not as good, two. Women aged between 36 and 39 can have two fertilised eggs implanted in the first attempt and from the second time three. Between 40 and 42 there will be no restrictions. And from 43 it is too late: then there is no more refund.

Www.Vandenbroucke.com
Kyoto standard demands difficult decisions in next government

To meet the Kyoto standard - 7.5% fewer emissions of harmful greenhouse gases by 2010 compared with 1990 - both the Federal and Regional Governments of this country will have to take drastic action. Emissions are currently 15.5% above 1990 levels. The Flemish Government did its homework last year with the 2003-2005 Climate Plan, which contains 33 measures to reduce CO2 equivalent emissions by a third. During the work to form a new government over the past few days the Federal Government also rushed through a whole host of measures. The most striking of these are the preferential fiscal treatment for clean energy such as natural gas, LPG or electricity, the heavier taxation of fuel oil and the continuation - in a Government without Greens, it should be noted - of the withdrawal from nuclear energy by 2015. Verhofstadt II is siding firmly with wind power. A gigantic wind farm on the Thornton bank off the Belgian coast should eventually cover 6 to 10% of Belgium's electricity requirements. The idea of a wind farm on this sandbank 30 km off the coast is not new.

The company C-Power has already planned 60 windmills there, to be commissioned by 2004. The recent proposal would involve around 450 windmills. But according to De Financieel-Economische Tijd (18 January), the toughest debate on Kyoto is yet to come: namely how the regions will split the cost of some 220 million euros.

Wallonia wants a linear distribution, with each region contributing 7.5% of its budget. Flanders is a keen advocate of a distribution that takes account of the greater cost efficiency of the measures for industry.

www.c-power.be

Artificial cows brighten up Brussels

To the surprise of passers-by, the busiest parts of Brussels have been filled with colourful artificial cows since 17 June. This summer there will be around 200 throughout the city. The project, entitled ‘Art on Cows’, has its roots in Zurich. Around five years ago there were no fewer than 812 such cows in the Swiss city. Since then the artificial cows have brightened up many city centres: New York, Chicago, Bilbao, London, Luxembourg and Salzburg. (FF).

The cows have been painted over the past few weeks in the old port station Tour & Taxis. Well-known and not so well-known artists got to work on a cow 1.40 metres tall and 2.20 metres long in the temporary studio. Even former Premier Mark Eyskens was there. The choice of artists was made by businesses, which could buy an art cow for 4,250 euros. When the project is over these Maecenases can keep the cow or sell it for a good cause.

The cows are painted with road signs, a map, Japanese fans, the triumphant runner Peter Van Peteghem, etc. etc. Many have been given a new skin. The Discow, for example, is covered in small mirrors, and the Cowquillage is decorated in mussels and sea-shells, a nod to Marcel Broodthaers. The most striking, however, is the Vacca Pilosa Viridis by Daniël Ost: this has a skin of real grass that has to be watered if it does not rain. You can only ask yourself what will be left once these cows have survived the Brussels weather and local vandals. This is the weak spot of open-air exhibitions: some cows will not survive the summer. The organisers have set up a Repair & Cleaning team and taken out insurance for the cows. But it is doubtful whether this is enough to keep the whole herd intact. It is therefore advisable not to delay in visiting this open-air exhibition.

www.cows.be
CULTURE

Diary

MUSIC, DANCE, THEATRE

• Until August: Aficralia, the Caravan, moving African circus in Flemish towns www.africalia.be

• Until 30 June: Aficralia: urban music, rap, street dancing, slam; info: www.africalia.be

• 25 June: O zomati, Ancienne Belgique, Brussels; info: 02/548.24.24 www.abconcerts.be

• 22 June to 6 July: mostly Händel Festiv- al, organisation: PSK and De Munt with the Women’s-Orchestra and the Oratorium Belschazzar, Brussels; info: www.bozar.be

• 26 to 29 June: Rock Werchter with Coldplay, REM, Stereophonics, Moby, Metallica, Cypress Hill, Massive Attack, Radiohead, and others; info: 0900/26060 www.rockwerchter.be

• 27 to 29 June: Couleur Café with Terence Trent d’Arby, I Muvrini, Le Peuple d’Herbe, Jimmy Cliff, Salif Keita and others, Brussels; info: www.couleur-cafe.be

• 28 June: Youssou N’Dour Rivierenhof, Deurne; info: 070/222.192

• 2 July: John Cale, Ancienne Belgique, Brussels; info: 0900/26060 www.abconcerts.be

• 2 to 10 July: Klinkende Munt, Munt- plein, Brussels with Spook and the Gauy, Belgian Afrobeat Association, Frank Longo’s Klezmer Brass Allstars, Dave Douglas Quintet and D Grazzoppa’s DJ Big-band; info: www.beursschouwburg.be

• 4 and 5 July: Open Tropen with Orijsha, The Waiters, Zuco 103, Turnhout; info: 014/42.75.55

• 29 June: Carmina Burana with Mil- lenium, LaReverdie, Modo Antiquo, Medieval and Renaissance music, Land-commanderij Aldenbiesen, Bilzen www.musica.be

• 27 and 28 June: Harelbeke Rock & Blues Festival with Eric Burdon & The New Animals and Dave Edmunds & Band; info: 056/72.49.45 www.livemusicharelbeke.be

• 4 and 5 July: Graspop, Dessel, Heavy Metal Festival with Alice Cooper, Iron Maiden, Anthrax and others; info: www.graspop.be

• 5 July: Rock Zottegem with Iggy Pop, INXS, Echo & The Bunnymen, Arid; info: www.rockzottegem.be

• 11, 12 and 13 July: Cactus Festival, Bruges, with Susanne Vega, Joe Jackson, stereo MC’s, Boz Scaggs, Toots & The Maytals and Bonnie Raitt.

• 5 July: Blues Festival with Tony Joe White, Rivierenhof, Deurne; info: 03/070/222.192

• 15 and 19 July: Cassandra Wilson and Zap Mama, Rivierenhof, Deurne; info: 03/070/222.192

• 22 and 23 July: Robbie Williams, Sportspaleis, Antwerp; info: 0900/26060

• 30 June: Renee Fleming, De Munt, Brussels; info: 02/512.64.22

• 18 to 29 June: Mayumana, Stadsc- houwburg, Antwerp and Capitolé Ghent; info: 03/227.03.06

• 18 to 27 July: Blue Note Jazz Festival with Herbie Hancock, Bijloke, Ghent; Info: www.bluenotefestival.com

• 1,2 and 3 August: Folkfestival Dra- nouter with Daniel Lanois, Afro Celt Sound System, Linda Thompson, Beht Gibbons and others; info: www.folkdra- nouter.com

EXPO

• From 22 March to 17 January: Jacques Brel, ‘The right to dream’, exhibition, Schildknaapstraat 50, Brussels; reservation required; info: www.jacquesbrel.be

• Until 28 September: Jacobs en Window, Ghent; info: 019/53.09.38

• Until 28 September: The Groen- inghemuseum in Bruges reopened after facelift; info: 050/44.87.12

• Until 30 August: 50 Years of Matchbox; Toys museum, Mechelen; info: 015/55.70.75 www.speelgoedmuseum.be

• Until 29 June: SMAK exhibitions: Smal- lieu Gaandere- jen, Ostend; info: 059/80.55.00

• Until 14 September: Art en marge, exhibition of art brut by asylum patients, Museum Dr. Guislain, Ghent; info: www.museumdrguislain.be 09/216.35.95

• Until 28 September: Jan Fabre, Search- ing for Utopia, exhibition, Zwart Huis, Knokke; info: 050/61.36.65

• Until 29 June: SMAK exhibitions: Ars The fading of colours by Patrick Guns; info: www.smak.be

• Until 6 July: Artists on the move: meeting between North and South with Philip Aguirre, Soly Sissé, Gerald Dederen, Michel François, Mshac: Gaba, Kan Si, Laone Lopes, Birame Niayée enz., De Markten, Brussels

• Until 9 November: Guided by Heroes, exhibition, Z33, Hasselt

• Until 3 August: The four seasons in the art of the Low Countries, City Museum Leuven; info: 016/22.69.06 www.leu- ven.be

• Until 22 June: Jan Vanriet, exhibition, De Zware Pantser, Antwerp; info: 03/233.13.45

• Until 28 June: Cris Brodahl, Galerie Annette de Keyser, Antwerp; info: 03/231.90.56

• Until 7 September: Exhibition: Masters- pieces of Belgian Art, the Simon Collection, Museum of Elsene, Brussels; info: 02/512.64.22

• Until 21 September: Art on Cows, Open Air Exhibition, City Centre, Brussels; info: www.cows.be

• Until 14 September: Luc Deleu & Tops P Office exhibition, Open Air Museum Middelheim, Antwerp; info: 03/827.15.34 www.antwerpen.be/cultuur/museum-middelheim

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