

The Hague, September 24, 2023.

Dear Members of the House of Representatives and Senate,

All education staff will receive a ten percent pay increase retroactively from July 1, 2023. And a one-time payment in November and an increased travel allowance.

All education staff?

(It's like Asterix and Obelix when referring to the domination of "all" Gaul by the Romans).

No, only personnel from the European Netherlands. The Caribbean Netherlands is excluded from this. I won't say "willfully", but still.... Another example showing that the Caribbean Netherlands is not quite included in the country of the Netherlands after all.

Not for the first time I advocate removing the legal partitions between the Caribbean and European Netherlands and only allowing exceptions that are constitutionally defensible (namely resulting from GW art. 132a, paragraph 4). In principle, these exceptions are possible if circumstances in the Caribbean Netherlands are *substantially* different from those in the European Netherlands.

In practice, however, existing differences are simply maintained rather than eliminated. This results, among other things, in lower benefits and sometimes even no benefits (for example, in the case of unemployment) and a targeted action to remedy this is lacking to date! Any action in that context is one aimed at postponing or delaying. Political decision-making...

A veritable committee has been created for the Social Minimum Caribbean Netherlands; that a Social Minimum different from the European Netherlands has escaped the cloud of thought at all and found a place in the physical world seems unconstitutional anyway. Let's see if that committee itself finds it so (its final result is expected in October).

Back to pay raises in the education domain. It's a bit crowded in the election rhetoric these days, and the Caribbean Netherlands is getting scant attention (although I must admit: in the election manifesto of the Christian Union and of D66, I detect more (positive) attention to the Caribbean Netherlands than ever before), but I hope that this observation finds a hook in your perception and sticks. From your actions in the (near) future, I hope to find corrective and leveling measures.

Yours sincerely,

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cc: *National Ombudsman*