

# Current Concerns

The international journal for independent thought, ethical standards, moral responsibility,  
and for the promotion and respect of public international law, human rights and humanitarian law

English Edition of *Zeit-Fragen*

## Referendum against US FATCA: Muster the courage to say no

FATCA or "Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act" is an American law, which has been submitted to Switzerland for ratification. It demands from the Swiss banks to automatically pass on financial information of their "American" customers to US tax authorities. We are dealing with a non-exhaustive list of persons: Among other things, these are American citizens, dual citizens, persons with a US residence permit, companies, some of which are in American hands, but also the non-American spouses of all these people.

### FATCA contradicts national sovereignty

Article 2 of the proposed Swiss draft law for ratification provides that the obligations for Swiss financial institutions with regard to the US tax authorities IRS are determined by the legislation applicable in the United States. Thus FATCA demands from a part of Swiss banks to recognize foreign law over whose further development we have no control. With FATCA, Switzerland is subjecting itself to all future revisions of the US tax law, without any right of veto or the possibility of a referendum.

Thus FATCA establishes the extraterritoriality of US tax law, i.e. its priority over the law of any country in the world. The financial intermediaries (especially the banks) around the world will have to negotiate the topics, over which the US Treasury has the authority, directly with the latter and will be treated exclusively according to the American tax or criminal law. This is an evidence of American imperialism trying to control and to submit everything to the political ideas of Washington.

### FATCA destroys privacy

FATCA demands the automatic transfer of all financial data of Swiss bank clients in the United States. Citizens will no longer be able to fight back against this act of intrusion into their privacy committed by the state by means of judicial review. FATCA does not only target US citizens residing abroad: also dual citizens, Swiss spouses of US citizens and green card holders are subjected to this regulation.

*jpv.* On 27 September 2013, the Federal Assembly of the Swiss Confederation decided to approve the "agreement for cooperation to facilitate the implementation of FATCA" between Switzerland and the United States of America. At the same time, the Federal Council was authorized to ratify the agreement. On 8 October, a citizens' committee in the French-speaking part of Switzerland launched a referendum against this federal decision. 50 000 signatures have to be collected and authenticated by the communities by 16 January 2014 in order to allow Swiss voters to express their opinion on this point.

The Vaud association "Ligue vaudoise" has undertaken the coordination of the collection of signatures. The FATCA referendum committee asks you for your active help to bring about this important referendum. The signature sheets can be downloaded from the homepage [www.stop-fatca.ch](http://www.stop-fatca.ch) or ordered from the referendum committee "Stop FATCA, PO Box 6297, 1002 Lausanne".

Donation account:  
support committee  
FATCA-Referendum : PC 12-414995-7;  
IBAN: CH11 0900 0000 1241 4995 7  
BIC: POFICHBEXXX

## US Senator Rand Paul: Bill to repeal FATCA



Rand Paul  
(picture ma)

On 7 May 2013, US Senator *Rand Paul* of Kentucky introduced a bill (S. 887) in the Senate to repeal FATCA, even controversial in the US. The bill was read twice in the Senate and then referred to the Committee on Finance (status quo). The title of the bill is: "A bill to repeal the violation of sovereign nations' law and privacy matters".

Senator Paul is particularly critical about the fact that the US tax authority receives information about innocent citizens without having any suspicion of wrongdoing on their part. He also criticized that FATCA ignores laws of sovereign states. In addition, the US Treasury may enter into bilateral agreements with countries that do not require the consent of the Senat, and thus these agreements are withdrawn from democratic control in the US.

Paul's bill is supported by the US Credit Union National Association (Cuna), which represents the interests of 6,300 mostly smaller cooperative banks.

Source: "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", 9.5.2013

\* \* \*

Senator *Rand Paul*: "FATCA is a textbook example of a bad law that doesn't achieve its stated purpose but does manage to unleash a host of unanticipated destructive consequences [...] FATCA's harmful impacts cover the spectrum. It is a violation of Americans' constitutional protections, oversteps the limits of Executive power, disregards the mutual respect of sovereignty among nations and drains money from the federal treasury under the guise of replenishing it, and discourages overseas investment in the United States. [...]"

Tax evasion is a problem that should be addressed, but not in such an egregious way. FATCA violates important privacy protections, disregards the sovereign laws of other nations and will cost the US economy hundreds of billions of dollars in compliance costs," he continued. "FATCA should be repealed, and Congress should consider less onerous means of enforcing tax laws."

Source: [www.paul.senate.gov](http://www.paul.senate.gov)

# FATCA has serious disadvantages for Switzerland

by Hans Geiger, Emeritus Professor of Economics, University of Zurich, Weiningen ZH, [www.hansgeiger.ch](http://www.hansgeiger.ch)

*The FATCA (Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act) tax agreement is not a fat cat, but a costly bureaucratic monster; and the Federal Council cuddles it.*

FATCA is a new US act with which the Obama administration wants to prevent tax evasion by American overseas taxpayers. The Swiss Federal Council wants to settle an agreement with the United States to implement FATCA in Switzerland. After that, the Swiss Government wants to enact a FATCA law.

The renowned American tax lawyer *Herman B. Bouma* refers to the law as “sheer idiocy” in the *Tax Management International Journal*. The 400-pages work was arrogant and vexatious; it destroyed international relations, stood in contrast to the laws of other countries, was bad for the American economy, put immense administrative burdens on foreign banks, was a disadvantage for the Americans abroad and was totally inefficient, he said. It would yield the State only about 9 billion dollars in the course of 10 years and would thus finance only 10 hours of the current American government deficit (per year around 900 billion dollars). So it was not about money, but about the control of the citizens by the powerful state. With FATCA thousands of foreign financial service providers must automatically report the identity and the assets of its US customers to the American tax authorities IRS from 2014 on.

A withholding tax of 30% serves as an instrument of pressure for the United

States to enforce FATCA which is levied on all income and proceeds from the sale of US securities transactions and can only be avoided if the financial services provider signs a treaty with the IRS promising to comply with the FATCA rules.

So FATCA is based on agreements between the US tax authorities and thousands of non-US financial institutions. States are not part of the basic concept of FATCA.

FATCA contradicts international principles. However, the United States have the political and economic power to get their way.

Swiss banks will also have to cope with this situation. The majority will settle agreements with the US tax authorities. Local banks would have the opportunity to say no to American customers and to manage no US securities for their customers. Then they would not need to fulfil a FATCA agreement. However, Annex II to the State Treaty obliges “Financial institutions with local clientele” to accept US citizens residing in Switzerland (“expatriates”) as clients.

The waiver of American securities would represent a significant restriction of the investment opportunities also for smaller Swiss banks. For the majority of the Swiss banks thus the question is not “FATCA or no FATCA”. For Switzerland as a sovereign State, the question is: “FATCA with or without State Treaty?”

The Swiss Federal Council bases its approval of the State Treaty on “simplifications” and “facilitations” for the Swiss fi-

ancial institutions. However the relief claimed by the Federal Council is modest and often unclear and largely available without a treaty. The disadvantages of the agreement for Switzerland as a sovereign nation are, however, dramatic:

- The FATCA agreement continues to soften the banking secrecy. This happens even without the agreement, but with the agreement Switzerland gives its blessing. So the agreement says: “In the expectation [that...] Switzerland is supportive of the implementation of FATCA.”
- Article 1 of the agreement lists as its purpose, “implement FATCA with respect to all Swiss financial institutions”. Thus, Switzerland will not tolerate FATCA as a nuisance, but actively support the implementation of the “idiot” rules and regulations and make their compliance an obligation under Swiss law.
- Hence the Confederation forces the banks to collect a US withholding tax of 30% on the sale of American securities by Swiss citizens in Switzerland. The small Swiss local banks’ obligation to accept American citizens residing in Switzerland as customers grants a privilege to the Americans compared to all other nationalities. No Swiss bank has so far been obliged to accept persons of a certain nationality as customers. That is quite perverse.

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## “Referendum against ...”

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The bank secrecy just like the doctor or attorney-client privilege protects citizens from the arbitrariness of the state. Already, it has been undermined in order to combat tax evasion. The US wants to systematically and automatically get more and more access to personal information for better surveillance of the population.

In order to combat tax evasion, bank client secrecy can be lifted already today. FATCA is solely intended to enable the United States to systematically and automatically monitor as many citizens as possible, even the Swiss.

The current scandals in connection with the large-scale surveillance of citizens of other countries via the Internet show that it is not justifiable to sign a blank check for the US Congress so that it can use the customer files of the Switzerland-based companies in an absolutely legal way in the future.

## Switzerland can do without FATCA

If we reject FATCA, Swiss banks may have to adapt to new circumstances. Even without this agreement, banking institutions willing to voluntarily submit to American legislation can do so without thereby encroaching on the sovereignty of Switzerland. Despite all the horror stories, to reject FATCA does by no means signify bankruptcy. It is regrettable, however, that in 2008, after the rescue of UBS by the Swiss Confederation, the Swiss banks based in the United States did not find it necessary to separate their business activities on the two continents in order to prevent the problems occurred on American soil become a systemic risk for Switzerland.

In the United States there are many voices, including that of Senator *Rand Paul*, requesting the government to refrain from FATCA. China, an extremely important financial partner of the US, has already announced its intention to reject the agreement and has prohibited its financial institutions to submit to the demands of

Washington. The Swiss Confederation has to show pride and defend itself against any restrictions of its sovereignty. This freedom-killing and imperialist agreement is a serious violation of Swiss independence.

Over the past years, the Swiss population has never been given the opportunity to comment on the agreements that violate bank secrecy. Switzerland has already renounced too many of its principles, without receiving anything in return. It is time to say bravely no to unilateral demands and to strengthen the sovereignty and independence of Switzerland. The recent clashes concerning the “Lex USA” have shown how much our partners disregard democratic institutions.

In view of these attacks against our country, against its sovereignty and freedom, all that remains is the remedy of the referendum. Let’s have the courage to make use of it!

Source: [www.stop-fatca.ch](http://www.stop-fatca.ch). Official homepage of the referendum against the FATCA agreement between Switzerland and USA

## Bush officials targeted ex-chief of Nobel Prize-winning agency

by Marlise Simons (Paris)

*thk. The present debate about the USA's electronic eavesdropping operation on other states and the faked indignation displayed by some governments show us that honesty is no longer a value in big politics. Power interests dominate the way in which one deals with states even with those one regards "as friends". Everything serving the maintainance of one's power seems to be permitted. Decades later, when the archives will be opened, and the files will be published when those affected dare to inform the public, and the media finally listen to those who did not follow the mainstream, we, the obedient citizens, rub our eyes in disbelief, when reality hits us. The list of lies, intrigues, false-flag operations is long. Whoever thinks of the reasons that were put forward for the Yugoslav War in 1999, the war in Iraq in 2003 or the attack on Libya in 2011, will remember, what we were told at that time.*

*The following article from the "International Herald Tribune" relates to the above-mentioned countries and reveals another chapter of lies of US-politics. Perhaps we will succeed one day to integrate all those processes in our thinking, before we are taken in by the next state-prescribed lie.*

More than a decade before the international agency that monitors chemical weapons was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize last week (on October 11) a senior US diplomat, *John R. Bolton*, marched

into the office of the group's director general to inform him that he was being fired.

"He told me I had 24 hours to resign," said *José Bustani*, who was director general of the agency, the *Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons* in The Hague. "And if I didn't, I would have to face the consequences."

Mr Bustani, the agency's first director, was re-elected unanimously 11 months earlier. He was told by Mr Bolton, then the under secretary of state for arms control, that the *Bush* administration was unhappy with his management style.

Weeks later, on April 22, 2002, after an intense campaign led by Washington, Mr Bustani was ousted from his post in a vote in a special session.

The story behind his ouster has been the subject of interpretation and speculation for years, and Mr Bustani, a Brazilian diplomat, has kept a low profile since then. But with the agency thrust into the spotlight with news of the Nobel Prize, Mr Bustani agreed to discuss what he said was the real reason: the *Bush* administration's fear that chemical weapons inspections in Iraq would conflict with Washington's rationale for invading it.

Several officials involved in the events, some speaking publicly about them for the first time, confirmed his account.

Mr Bolton, who led the campaign against Mr Bustani, insists that he was removed for incompetence. In a telephone conversation, he confirmed that he had confronted Mr Bustani.

"I told him if he left voluntarily, we would give him a gracious and dignified exit," Mr Bolton said. But Mr Bustani wanted to push back, Mr Bolton said.

As Mr Bustani tells the story, the campaign against him began in late 2001, after Iraq and Libya had signaled to him that they wanted to join the Chemical Weapons Convention, the international treaty that the watchdog agency oversees, and inspectors were making plans to visit Iraq in January, he said.

To join, countries are required to provide a list of stockpiles and agree to the inspection and destruction of weapons, as Syria did last month after applying.

"We were putting together a team – we had a lot of discussions because we knew it would be difficult," Mr Bustani, who is now Brazil's ambassador to France, said Friday in his embassy office in Paris.

The plans, which he had conveyed to a number of countries, "caused an uproar in Washington," he said. Soon, Mr Bustani said, he was receiving warnings from American and other diplomats.

"By the end of December 2001, it became evident that the Americans were serious about getting rid of me," he said. "People were telling me, 'They want your head.'"

Mr Bolton called on Mr Bustani a second time, telling him to resign.

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- The FATCA agreement gives the abidance by American rules priority over Swiss law. So, for example, Article 4 of the agreement repeals the Article 271 of the Swiss Penal Code (Unlawful activities on behalf of a foreign state) in favor of the United States.
- In fact, FATCA means the automatic exchange of information even if this is formally slightly concealed. Officially, the Federal Council rejects the automatic exchange of information.
- The agreement should be "dynamic". If the United States change their rules, this applies automatically without modification of the agreement.
- Switzerland did not receive considerations by the United States for accepting the agreement. Switzerland has not achieved the desired control of the past. The reinforcement of "mutual as-

sistance in tax matters" referred to in the preamble of the agreement is diplomatic chatter.

The agreement with the United States has unprecedented effects on other countries, in particular on the EU:

- The EU wants the automatic exchange of information in tax matters from Switzerland. If Switzerland in fact grants the United States the automatic exchange of information, it will not refuse it the EU.
  - The EU requires of Switzerland "dynamic acquisition" of new EU law. If Switzerland admits the "dynamic acquisition" of new rules to the United States, it will not refuse this to the EU.
- The FATCA agreement and the FATCA law will provide the Swiss financial institutions with minimal facilitation at best. However, the agreement involves serious disadvantages for Switzerland as a sovereign country.

Source: *Auns-Bulletin* of March 2013  
(Translation *Current Concerns*)

### "The US monster act FATCA also affects the industry"

"The US monster act FATCA also affects the industry" is the headline of the "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" of 27 September this year. The "unilaterally defined regulation" is not limited to the financial sector. "The industry slowly realizes that it is affected by FATCA". For industrial companies which are also engaged in the banking business, the case is clear, but smaller companies without financial activities can also be registered via their bank connections. Each business group must now analyze hundreds of companies worldwide to clarify how exactly it is touched on by FATCA. A lapse could be costly.

Source: "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", from 27 September 2013

**"Bush officials targeted ..."**

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"I tried to persuade him not to put the organization through the vote," Mr Bolton said.

When Mr Bustani refused, his fate was sealed. The United States had marshaled its allies, and at an extraordinary session, Mr Bustani was ousted by a vote of 48 in favor and 7 against, with 43 abstentions. He was reportedly the first head of an international organization to be drummed out of office this way, and some nations said the pressure campaign had made them uneasy.

Mr Bolton's office had also circulated a paper that accused Mr Bustani of abrasive conduct and taking "ill-considered initiatives" without consulting with the United States and other member nations, diplomats said.

In the telephone interview, Mr Bolton insisted on Saturday that Mr Bustani's ouster had been necessary only "because he was incompetent and not using the organization's resources effectively."

But Mr Bustani and some senior officials, in Brazil and the United States, say Washington acted because it believed that the organization under him threatened to become an obstacle to the administration's plans in Iraq.

The push to remove Mr Bustani came shortly after the US-led invasion of Afghanistan, following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and as the Bush administration began internal debates on whether to invade Iraq.

At the heart of the issue, in Mr Bustani's view, was the question of weapons of mass destruction, among them chemical weapons. Washington claimed that *Saddam Hussein*, the Iraqi leader, possessed them, but Mr Bustani said his own experts had told him that they had helped to destroy those weapons in the 1990s, after the first Gulf War.

"Everybody knew there weren't any," he said. "An inspection would make it obvious there were no weapons to destroy. This would completely nullify the decision to invade."

Mr Bolton disputed that view. He said: "Bustani's removal was utterly unrelated to Iraq and Libya. He made that argument after we invaded."

Twice during the interview, Mr Bolton said: "If you're an honest reporter, you'll print that the kind of person who believes that argument is the kind who puts tin foil on his ears to ward off cosmic waves."

But diplomats in The Hague said Washington had circulated a paper saying that the chemical weapons inspection group, under Mr Bustani, was seeking an "inappropriate role in Iraq," which was really a matter for the United Nations Security Council.

*Avis Bohlen*, a career diplomat who served as Mr Bolton's deputy before her retirement, said in a telephone interview from Washington on Saturday that others besides Mr Bolton believed that Mr Bustani had "stepped over some lines," including in connection with Iraq. "The episode was very unpleasant for all concerned," she said.

Reached in São Paulo on Saturday, (October 12) *Celso Lafer*, the former foreign minister, said that in early 2002 he was sought out by Secretary of State *Colin R. Powell*, who a year earlier has sent a letter to Mr Bustani, praising him for his leadership.

Mr Lafer said Mr Powell told him, "I have people in the administration who don't want Bustani to stay, and my role is to inform you of this."

Mr Lafer recalled: "It was a complicated process, with the United States and particularly John Bolton and *Donald Rumsfeld* wanting the head of Bustani."

He continued: "My view is that the neocons wanted the freedom to act without multilateral constraints and, with Bustani wanting to act with more independence, this would limit their freedom of action. Bustani wanted to bring a number of countries into the organization, including Iraq and Libya. He had an important relationship with Russia and the US considered him less than docile."

To get Mr Bustani fired from his post took some effort. Washington failed to obtain a no-confidence motion from the agency's executive council. Then the United States, which was responsible for 22 percent of the agency's budget at the time, threatened to cut off its funding and warned that several other countries, including Japan, would follow suit, diplomats have said.

Mr Bustani recalled that the ambassador from Britain, one of the agency's most committed member nations, came to him and said that, regrettably, London had sent instructions to vote with Washington. With the United States and Japan covering almost half the budget, the organization ran the risk of collapsing, Mr Bustani said.

The tribunal of the *International Labor Organization* in Geneva later sided with Mr Bustani in calling the American allegations "extremely vague," and the dismiss-

al "unlawful." It awarded him the remainder of his unpaid salary and the equivalent of \$67,000 in damages, which he said he donated to the agency.

On Friday, while fielding a flow of messages in his office, Mr Bustani said he felt gratified about the Nobel Prize and did not regret his days at the agency.

"I had to start it from the beginning, create a code of conduct, a program of technical assistance," he said. "We almost doubled the membership."

He reflected on the contrast between Iraq and Syria. Inspectors from the agency are in Syria now, cataloging the government's stockpiles of chemical weapons as a step forward in Syria's civil war, now in its third year.

"In 2002, the US was determined to oppose Iraq joining the convention against the weapons which it did not even have," he said. "This time, joining the convention and having the inspectors present is part of the Syrian peace plan. It is such a fundamental shift." •

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# US global monitoring system serves primarily economic imperialism

by Prof Dr Eberhard Hamer, "Mittelstandsinstitut" (SME Institute Lower Saxony)

Since it was uncovered that also Merkel's mobile phone was bugged by US intelligence (as were 35 other heads of government in Europe and the world), the debate about growing national and in particular international control of our citizens which was suppressed before by the government, has entered a new, current stage: We all know that nothing remains hidden from the major intelligence agencies, especially the CIA and NSA (National Security Agency), which means that the enemy is always listening, inside as well as outside.

We also notice, however, that our government is too cowardly, too weak or is too deeply involved with the CIA itself, to be willing to actively put up resistance against being spied on as well as on the citizens. It becomes clear that we are still an occupied country and that the occupying power still has comprehensive rights in Germany. Therefore, the American intelligence chief Hayden and President Obama did neither accept the protests of European governments nor did they promise any relief. The Empire insists on its hegemony.

This is why the issues of national and international surveillance and control are actually about our constitutionally protected right to personal integrity and freedom and for the industry about their data security and unfair competition through Anglo-Saxon espionage. Practically there is already a cyber-war of the world power going on not only against terrorists (is Merkel a terrorist?), but against all people, governments, organisations and companies in the world.

## Big Brother is watching you!

We hoped that the days were gone when the subjects of the former communist countries lived in constant fear of government control, afraid of doing or saying anything that the state and the party might take as a pretext to marginalise, pursue, imprison, or at least to intensively monitor the individual. The desire for freedom from socialism in the past century was in particular the desire to be personally safe from the control of the state apparatuses, to shake off the compulsion to socialist "political correctness", i.e. people wanted to be able to act without fear of government interference and to say and think what they themselves and not what the official clique wanted them to think and say.

The monitoring and control by a powerful state apparatus such as State Security (Stasi), army, party and others has still not been enough to prevent popular movements in Poland or in the GDR in 1989. Apparently the

flood of incoming reports, messages, controls and data was so large that the control mechanisms were no longer able to master that flood, that they could less and less monitor and control because already the sighting and filing of incoming reports, control messages and data was too much for them.

In free Western democracies the trend went the other way round. From decade to decade the civil liberties in the formerly freest state we ever had were limited, controlled, and reduced to the bondage of its subjects. Meanwhile the German citizens are living in the growing fear not only of the private risks caused by threats of the globally operating gangs against whom the state does not take sufficient action, either intentionally or negligently, but also in fear of the state itself, with which they actually should be in agreement; in particular they fear

- exploitation, especially the entrepreneurs', by an ever greater encroachment by the growing fiscal and social state, which needs more and more income of an ever shrinking number of economic performers to redistribute it to more and more service recipients,
- a flood of legislation and bureaucracy which now regulates almost every action, every failure as well as the environmental conditions - at least in the commercial sector - restraining the freedom of the citizen even more, and which now prescribes and conducts and restricts to subservience not only the freedom of the common man, but in particular the necessary freedom of the entrepreneur, who is, however, indispensable for market economy and prosperity,
- a new Inquisition of opinion control that considers dissenters from the imposed "political correctness" as a threat and spies on them funded with public money, isolates them politically stigmatises and even imprisons them.<sup>1</sup>

The civil liberty of liberal democracy became more and more subdued under the socialist wave of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with communism, national socialism, international socialism and redistribution socialism and it apparently degenerated in the Liberal Party to an extent that the population politically punished that party which had promised liberalism, but was not courageous enough to enforce any liberties. The citizen has no longer the freedom to do as he likes, but he was told what to do and the latter was ever more - politically, journalistically, economically and socially - prescribed by the law, by public authorities and by the ruling networks. And in order to make the citizen fulfil the wishes of the functionaries respectively

of the authorities controlled by international networks, the states introduced more and more controls, action constraints, freedom restrictions and asset accesses through undemocratic supranational institutions, which in the meantime have reached such a threatening social dimension, that there is not much left of the originally democratic sovereignty of the citizen who has long since become subordinate to anonymous authoritarian decision-making processes.

For the increasing number of monitoring steps, of patronising, opinion making and economic exploitation of citizens, different reasons at national or supranational level are presented which have, however, always had the same direction, i.e. increasing restriction of freedom:

- On the lower level the alleged dangers of "nationalism", "xenophobia", "anti-Semitism" or "hate speech" were the appropriate means in order to secure the subjects' "political correctness".
- In the economic sector buzzwords like "social justice", "solidarity", "additional load to the strong shoulders" or "social compensation" in order to exploit the middle class were used not only for the benefit of the lower layers of the proletariat, but also to subsidise the corporations.
- On the top international level pseudo-hazards such as "terrorism", "international money laundering", "anti-Semitism", "anti-Americanism" or "tax evasion" were used in order to get a grip on the individual citizen even worldwide and to decide not only on his assets but also on his opinion.

In this sense, globalisation has actually not led to an expansion of freedom for the people in the world, but to the expansion of global control over the people, to new dimensions of subservience of the people, not only in terms of their national governments, but also in terms of international organisations, networks and world powers. Here are some examples:

## The transparent taxpayer

The example of German tax policy demonstrates the development from the honest taxpayer whose statements are believed in principle, towards the potential or alleged tax evader who needs to be fully controlled by total transparency because categorically no one believes him.

This development was certainly not only intentional, but also caused by bare financial necessity. The more international corporations moved their operations and corporate

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offices into tax havens where they had not been paying taxes for years, the more it became necessary by national taxation authorities to draw on the "Mittelstand" (SME) – who as top performers still underlie national taxation – to obtain the funds for the increasing redistribution towards the parties' social clientele. In Germany, the SME sector contributes to more than 80% net of all taxes because they did not flee with their small businesses, nor did they relocate themselves and their headquarters abroad to escape the highest tax burden in Europe.

Since April 2003, each German bank was obliged by the German *Federal Financial Supervisory Authority* (BaFin) to provide customer master data including account number, type of account, name and date of birth of the holder, the date of account setup and resolution, name and date of birth of the beneficial owner or the person entitled to access the account and more. Technically, the access has to be set up in such a manner that account information is provided to "BaFin" in less than 30 minutes without notification to the bank itself. With such automated anonymous access, "BaFin" directly provides courts, the *Federal Criminal Office* (BKA), the *Federal Intelligence Service* (BND), law enforcement agencies, with information and indirectly by way of the intelligence services the American CIA and the Israeli *Mossad*.

As of April 2005, the financial controls have become even stricter: From that date on even all tax administration authorities, tax offices, labor offices, social welfare offices, housing offices, student loan agencies and others can access client's bank data, without any preconditions, even if there is no suspicion of an offense.

Furthermore, there are control messages on capital income at EU level, particularly in cross-border financial transactions.

This was originally justified by the fight against undeclared work, then by the investigations against international crime (money laundering), and finally by the universal excuse: "fight of terrorism." Since then, 500 million accounts and deposits are being checked in Germany. The cost for infrastructure and transactions was not carried by the government but by the banks and so ultimately by the citizens themselves.

The surprising thing about this total financial control of citizens was that there was no essential protest against it. The citizens have apparently become habituated to such a degree that they accept this deprivation of freedom with subservient mentality.

**Global control of persons**

In a genuine democracy self-responsible citizens should be able to live freely without control. This ideal has gone since long. In-

creasingly, not only national states but the "Single World Power" and the financial powers behind it have introduced international, global control over people. Already in his 1835 published book "Democracy in America" *Alexis de Tocqueville* wrote: "The first thing that strikes the observation is an innumerable multitude of men, all equal and alike, incessantly endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives. Each of them, living apart, is as a stranger to the fate of all the rest; his children and his private friends constitute to him the whole of mankind. As for the rest of his fellow citizens, he is close to them, but he does not see them; he touches them, but he does not feel them; he exists only in himself and for himself alone; and if his kindred still remain to him, he may be said at any rate to have lost his country. Above this race of men stands an immense and tutelary power, which takes upon itself alone to secure their gratifications and to watch over their fate. That power is absolute, minute, regular, provident, and mild. It would be like the authority of a parent if, like that authority, its object was to prepare men for manhood; but it seeks, on the contrary, to keep them in perpetual childhood: it is well content that the people should rejoice, provided they think of nothing but rejoicing. For their happiness such a government willingly labors, but it chooses to be the sole agent and the only arbiter of that happiness; it provides for their security, foresees and supplies their necessities, facilitates their pleasures, manages their principal concerns, directs their industry, regulates the descent of property, and subdivides their inheritances: what remains, but to spare them all the care of thinking and all the trouble of living? Thus it every day renders the exercise of the free agency of man less useful and less frequent; it circumscribes the will within a narrower range and gradually robs a man of all the uses of himself. [...]"<sup>2</sup>

"After having thus successively taken each member of the community in its powerful grasp and fashioned him at will, the supreme power then extends its arm over the whole community. It covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules, minute and uniform, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate, to rise above the crowd. The will of man is not shattered, but softened, bent, and guided; men are seldom forced by it to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting. Such a power does not destroy, but it prevents existence; it does not tyrannize, but it compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people." With this description *Tocqueville* did not talk about Socialist, Nazi or Communist rule, but about the democracy that is leading since five generations, i.e. today's "Single World Power" (*Brzezinski*).

Obviously, contrary to all freedom fanfares, power is always associated with

control, patronizing and submission. The Mighty One in particular can only keep and reinforce his power if he has control over his sphere of influence.

Control in turn requires surveillance in order to detect opponents and dangerous developments in time.

Previously, this type of surveillance has been carried out by socialist countries in their national area by intelligence agencies. In the age of globalization the secret service of the "Single World Power" (NAS and CIA) is globally active for global surveillance. In Germany, there are practically two levels of surveillance:

- The federal authorities may theoretically only eavesdrop phone calls of German citizens with judicial approval, even only with approval of a Great Criminal Chamber.
- Although this surveillance operation has now risen to more than 20,000 cases per year it is very easy to bypass the judicial process. National intelligence agencies, not subject to the judicial procedures, can turn to the secret services of the occupying powers to get the wanted surveillance information. Based on mutual agreements there is a cheerful ever increasing exchange of illegal data going on. The spying by NSA and CIA on Germany is even paid by the Germans through the obligations to cover occupation costs (6.7 billion Euros annually). No wonder that the American spies are subservient in that matter to the German agencies.

To the abhorrence of the US and the whole world the former intelligence employee *Snowden* has revealed how CIA and NSA (National Security Agency) unscrupulously tap and process telephone calls, mails, faxes, and all the other data in the world – even the underwater cable.

**Economic espionage**

Whereas the German supervisors still face inhibitions due to necessary court orders or due to data protection, the global American surveillance is going on without any restraint:

In March 2000, the European Parliamentary Technology Assessment office reported, that no telephone, no fax – no matter whether via land line or mobile – and no e-mail should be protected from eavesdropping by the American National Security Agency (NSA). The NSA maintains the global monitoring system "Echelon", with which it monitors global telecommunications around the clock. The Echelon system is able to control over 3 billion phone calls, faxes and Internet connections on keywords every day.<sup>3</sup> Highly sophisticated memory-recognition programs can then use hard-coded "voice prints" to au-

**"US global monitoring system ..."**

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tomatically identify the target person of telephone conversations even in case the persons alter their voice. The Echelon system in Bad Aibling is extraterritorial by occupation law, i.e. not by German law, and thus inaccessible to German control. Nine other listening stations around the globe filter all telecommunication.

The European Parliament has dealt with the issue and asked themselves to what extent the US and the UK are using the Echelon system in order to operate industrial espionage against its European competitors. The British journalist *Duncan Cambell*, who has written two Echelon reports on behalf of the EU Parliament, estimates that around 40% of US intelligence activities are economic in nature, that hundreds of US companies could obtain large-scale orders before their continental European competitors through Echelon support, including large orders up to several billion dollars (*Enron, Boeing*). The espionage damage by Echelon is indicated in the same report by 4 billion dollars annually for Germany only.<sup>4</sup> Above all, the US economy gets hold of technological insider knowledge worth a double-digit billion annually with the help of Echelon by listening to the European research and development departments.

The Echelon system operates like a big vacuum cleaner and responds to certain sensitive words. Whoever uses a certain word by telephone, fax or other channels, is filed by Echelon and systematically monitored.

In addition, the Echelon system is also used by the Israeli Mossad secret service both politically and economically because of the "dual loyalties" (*Brzesinski*) of many of its employees.

So practically we are wiretapped worldwide through telecommunications by the "big brother", our conversations are recorded, analyzed and used for actions against us when needed, without our knowledge and without us or a court being able to stop it.

Due to the versatility of the Echelon systems they are linked to a large integrated system and divided into control areas, such as Germany, Europe, Africa, Western Russia or others. Special bugging devices tap the Intelsat and Inmarsat satellites, tap even the submarine cable with the help of long-term recorders and signal amplifiers by submarines with deep-sea diving facilities and try using the international "Enfopol" to trim the international legislation and telecommunications technology on interception – for example the German telecommunications monitoring ordinance or the mobile phone technology.

Where the national parliaments hesitate, supranational organizations such as the European Commission are sent forward, which banned the production and possession of tap-proof mobile phones by a directive.

**"Friends" fencing and eavesdropping!**by *Gotthard Frick, Bottmingen*

*Ms Merkel* and *Mr Hollande* find it absolutely inadmissible that their countries and they personally are massively overheard and spied by their close "friend" America. But the same people find it absolutely admissible that their Governments act as a dealer in stolen goods and buy data which had been stolen from the "friend" Switzerland.

Not only the writer himself, even most people among his friends are aware that we are constantly being spied upon by our own and foreign Governments, corporations, interest groups, criminal syndicates and individuals. Were the two heads of Government really so naive to become aware of this only until now? How do they prevent that this will continue – more concealed and technically more and more sophisticated – contrary to expected mutual assertions and agreements?

This story reminds of a fundamental truth pronounced already 200 years ago by a major British statesman and reviewed in 1940 by General *de Gaulle*, a truth we Swiss do no longer want to take notice of, because we believe that we are surrounded by a "bacon belt of friends": "Nations have no permanent friends and no permanent enemies, only permanent interests."

It is in America's interest to know as much as possible about all other countries and their political and economic leaders. It is in the interest of the highly indebted countries Germany and France to hold their hands on hidden assets. And states use military force to enforce what they consider their vital interests. Ethics and moral are irrelevant. The Nazis had expressed this fact even more brutal: "Right or wrong, my country!" That is why we need a credible army.

Under pressure from the US government, even the *German Lufthansa* had to bow to meet the new US law for air travel to the USA and to provide their booking system "Amadeus" for passenger control. Through the intended "biometric passports" this monitoring system will continue to be refined and generalized on international level. According to requirements of the UN agency ICAO passport photos will now be stored as a biometric feature on a chip in the European Union. Optionally, a country may additionally save the fingerprint or even the iris. In the medium term, the raw data of faces as well as the physical description will be required in a new standard with memory size for the contact-less chip of 32 KB to facilitate standardized and mass surveillance.

According to Snowden, the global US espionage and control of both the public and the businesses concerns Germany in particular, where the US enjoy general occupation rights and therefore extraterritoriality before German courts for their espionage organizations. Snowden has also pointed out that espionage and control were especially intended for the German economy. According to the traditional US policy the foreign missions, the military and the intelligence organizations are in fact not only security bodies, but also helpers of the American industry. Consequently, leading German technology and all telecommunications facilities of German companies that are of special interest to the United States are monitored. Therefore no new technological development in Germany remains undetected by the United States. The fact that the German economy is yet still high-

ly successful in export due to technological leadership remains almost incomprehensible in view of this espionage from all sides. Apparently, the American companies are not even able to sufficiently understand the presented German technology.

In the wake of Snowden's releases a brief outcry went through the German economy, when they were demonstrated, to what extent they were spied on by the US and *Mossad*. Contrary to the principle of inviolability of the "Grundgesetz" (Basic Law), however, the *Merkel* administration was capable of keeping the issue covered up and sent only its Minister of the Interior to the USA, who let himself be lectured and fobbed like a schoolboy about the USA's occupation rights. The German government is either unable or unwilling to prevent the extensive espionage on our industry. According to the EU calculation this amounts to a loss of 51 billion euro of espionage damage every year.

Experiencing every day how many unimportant things politicians and parties are preoccupied with, you really do not understand why the data espionage is not taken up as one of the largest and economically most harmful problems of this policy.

*Schäuble* shrugged this off by saying that "we're still not sovereign, we are an occupied country".

The Federal Minister of the Interior went to the US to protest and returned modestly as a rug. The Pirate Party as alleged privacy advocates has totally spared the topic. They are just interested in the issue that the police should not be allowed to collect their personal data after offenses. And the Chan-

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## Why should the Germans not be able to decide direct-democratically?

by Karl Müller

On 12 November several German media reported, that a working group, participating in the coalition negotiations, led by CSU politician *Hans-Peter Friedrich* and SPD politician *Thomas Oppermann*, had agreed on the introduction of popular initiatives and referenda. In the future it should be possible that the Germans would be able to vote on fundamental decisions in European policies. And it should be possible that with a collection of one million signatures within half a year, citizens themselves could bring about a referendum on a law that had been approved by the “Bundestag” and the “Bundesrat” (the two chambers of the German Parliament).

But already shortly after the working group’s result had been announced, CDU politicians categorically spoke out against it. *Günter Krings*, the party’s deputy parliamentary party leader, rejected the proposal by saying that the CDU was “against the weakening of Parliament with regard to legislation” the possibility of referenda would “undermine” the functioning of Parliament. The rejection was followed by other CDU politicians and also by the party president and inofficiating Chancellor *Angela Merkel*. By the *CDU-Konrad Adenauer Foundation* the crude statement was added that the Germans did not at all want a direct democracy. The media commentaries were divided. Proponents of direct democracy options at the federal level were confronted by negative judgments. The “*Rheinische Post*” said, for example, that referenda, “would draw into question Germany’s ability to act.”

### Germany is supposed to be a great power, taking on “leadership” in the world

Now, this is indeed an interesting quotation, because nobody in Switzerland would think of considering direct democracy as ques-

tioning the country’s ability to act. Obviously, you have to add the question what actions are planned then. In the last few weeks there was clear information about that too. German policy is to take on “leadership”, in Europe and in the world. At least, that is the core of a project report of the *Science and Politics Foundation* and of the *German Marshall Fund of the United States* of October 2013. Politicians of all parliamentary parties, editors of German mainstream media, so-called “experts” and further foundations such as the German *Bertelsmann Foundation* participated in the work on the project. The nearly 50-page report is titled “New Power. New responsibility. Elements of a German foreign and security policy for a world in transition.” As experienced foreign affairs politicians say, the purpose of such foundation reports is to make decisions already taken popular in public policy. The report points out: “What is needed are more creative will-power, ideas and initiatives. In the future Germany will have to take the lead more often and more firmly.” German policy’s goal should be to preserve and to continue extending globalization in economy and politics at any price, which Germany (who in Germany?) is particularly benefiting from. With it, there would be “allies”, including the US and Israel, “challengers”, including Russia and China, and “troublemakers”: here Iran, Syria, North Korea, Cuba and Venezuela are mentioned. In agreement with the “allies”, Germany is to take the lead whereas national initiatives “as the Emperor’s a hundred years ago” (“*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*” of 15 November) are to be avoided. Challengers are to be “integrated”, and if that did not work, they are to be “hedged” – like the “troublemakers”. For the project group, “harnessing” means to wage war if necessary. The project group did not

yet agree, whether such military interventions should be supported even without a Security Council mandate. But in a highlighted passage of the project report, the disregard for international law is placed side by side with the respect for international law.

The CDU’s categorical No has drastically demonstrated that at the federal level more direct democracy is not to be expected by the newly elected German parliament. Here, it is most likely also an important element, that the majority of Germans does want something else but a super power Germany, bringing disaster to the world also by warlike violence and, ultimately, once again on the Germans themselves. Fortunately, there are no majorities among the citizens for such a German “leadership role” in Europe and in the world.

The German “Grundgesetz” (Basic Law) – drawn on the immediate experience of a totalitarian regime of injustice – makes a distinction between law and legislation, and the state authority, above all, is committed to the law. Not every act of parliament fulfils law, and law does not always result in an act of parliament. The citizens being Germany’s sovereign, the final authority in all policy decisions is the natural right of the citizens and logical consequence of the recognition of human dignity and of the state’s responsibility to respect and to protect it. Article 20 of the Basic Law therefore regulates, that all power emanates from the people and that it must be possible, that it is exercised not only through elections and by authorities of the legislative, executive and judicial power, but also by voting. The legislation has been denying the Germans this fundamental right at the federal level for nearly 65 years. This is wrong and unacceptable – especially with respect to the policy that is being planned. •

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cellor was so little pressured from below, by the citizens and the media that she tried to sit the problem out as usual.

Meanwhile, Internet companies, and the German *Telekom* have admitted that in the total worldwide data traffic there are interfaces in Anglo-Saxon espionage countries, that even data connections from Germany to Germany were handled via foreign countries. *Telekom* – which let their account be handled in Israel – at least admitted that in future they would like to keep their data connections within the German law area by technical redesign.

What must not happen is that the population gives in to this espionage by the occupying powers. We need to mobilize busi-

ness organizations in particular, to make them exert pressure to stop foreign espionage for the benefit of their members.

A people who can be spied out without commenting this fact, has lost its competitiveness in international competition. Anyone who does not fight will lose. Since we all are concerned, we must stand up on all sides against data espionage!

Apparently there is a problem that already the Communist secret services had and that the FBI can also not solve. Since the fall of 2004, it has been behind with the evaluation of 123,000 hours of wire-tapped conversations. The possibilities of monitoring already exceed their capacity.

The global monitoring and espionage is apparently no heterogeneous phenomenon, but homogeneous and centrally directed worldwide.

It is both a cause of

- a global financial and monetary control in the sense of the “transparent citizen”,
- a global monitoring and control of all persons and
- the spying on new technologies and all the economic processes in Germany in favor of the US and its economy.

Thus, the global monitoring system is actually a means of domination with which “the only superpower” pursues its imperialist, political and military purposes in the interest of the global economic imperialists being behind. •

<sup>1</sup> cf. Hamer, Eberhard. *Der Weltgeld-Betrug*, pp. 185

<sup>2</sup> cited after [http://xroads.virginia.edu/Hyper/DETOC/ch4\\_06.htm](http://xroads.virginia.edu/Hyper/DETOC/ch4_06.htm)

<sup>3</sup> Farkas. *Schatten der Macht*, p. 120

<sup>4</sup> Schulzki-Haddouti, p. 129



# Instead of artificially producing “special needs students” – return to remedial teaching

by Dr phil Eliane Gautschi and Dr phil Henriette Hanke Güttinger

In the last decade, the number of special needs pupils in Swiss primary schools has doubled from 12,000 to 24,000.<sup>1</sup> These are 3.2% of all primary school pupils. At the same time, the total number of students has declined in this period. Many of these children have no therapeutic needs, but they are children who underachieve at school or display behavioral problems. Nevertheless, they are labelled “handicapped” or “disabled”. One reason for this is the intention to obtain more funding, because classroom teachers with integrated specialneeds pupils can make use of more funding and support measures. The misdiagnosis of “special needs pupils”, however, is a gross negligence and represents a serious disadvantage for the future of these children. Special needs pupils who are integrated into a regular classroom are usually exempt from achieving the appropriate learning objectives, which has severe consequences for all their lives. They lose the right to acquire the normal subject material together with their peers. The transfer to a secondary school or a regular apprenticeship is illusory. We deny these children their human right to education.

As experienced teachers in remedial education we cannot be indifferent. Therefore, we have dealt with this problem, examined it more closely and will in the following explain some of the basics of

how such problems might be tackled and solved.

## Are Swiss children dumber today than they were a decade ago?

Of course, this question can be clearly answered *no*. According to research and teaching experience, the human species is characterized by an extremely high degree of learning ability. That has not changed since the appearance of *Homo sapiens sapiens*. What then is the reason?

## Reasons for the duplication of special needs pupils

In 2002, a new federal law (Disability Discrimination Act) was enacted, which orders the cantons not to send special needs students to special schools but to integrate them as far as possible into the regular primary school classes (with adding a number of up to eight lessons weekly where support measures are to be applied). In addition to the special need students there are also children with underachievement and behavioral difficulties who used to attend so-called “small-sized classes”, however, this type of classes has been abolished in many cantons. These children and adolescents are now often integrated into regular classes and receive additional support, although with fewer lessons than the special needs students.

According to *Beatrice Kronenberg*, director of the *Swiss Center for Special Education*,<sup>2</sup> this different type of funding has led to the situation that children with such learning and behavioral difficulties are now attributed a mental or linguistic “disability” or even receive a psychiatric diagnosis, such as Asperger’s Syndrome. This way they become special need students with more support needs and respective higher funding. “Behind all this is the teachers’ demand for more resources” – so *Kronenberg*, since regular class teachers with integrated special need students receive more funding and support measures. “There is a hidden stigma if someone is falsely attributed a ‘mental disability’ or ‘speech impediment’ just to obtain funding,” *Kronenberg* continues.<sup>3</sup> The Head of *Special Education School Zurich*, *H.-R. Bischofberger*, is even more explicit. The special education system was “milked” from the regular class system and the “special students” served as the “cash cow”.<sup>4</sup>

## Profound studying instead of muddling

Given these shortcomings, it is high time to stop and seriously reconsider the pur-

**“Integrative school classes at their limits: More and more children are being diagnosed as underachieving, so that more money goes to the schools.”**

Since the introduction of the inclusive school and the removal of small and special classes, the number of pupils, who need special care, has increased. To make this possible and finance it, appropriate diagnoses would be needed, states *Beatrice Kronenberg* from the Swiss Centre for Remedial and Special Education: “What we are witnessing at present is, that diagnoses are made with the intention to receive more resources. This is understandable in itself, but actually an unhealthy mechanism.” This applied for example to the autistic disorder named “Asperger Syndrome”. But there were also regions, she said, with a conspicuous increase of children with linguistic or mental disabilities. For the remedial pedagogue and psychotherapist it is clear: “The offer simply controls the demand. In our area this is obvious.” For children with Asperger Syndrome and for pupils with special needs the funds flow from the coffers of the Health Department, not from that of the Department of Education. Therefore the Berne Education Director *Bernhard Pulver* speculates: “And then suddenly the effect is that ever more pupils with special needs or even more Asperger Syndrome diagnoses are coming up, if you can obtain more resources this way.” There had never been so many children with Asperger Syndrome, so many pupils with special needs, *Pulver* said in regard to an article in the “*Berner Zeitung*”. Therefore, the Bernese Director of Education now wants to check the books and to get an idea of the remedial education situation.

Source: SRF 1, Heute Morgen, 28.10.2013

## Paul Moor

The Swiss remedial teacher *Paul Moor* (1899–1977) belongs – together with *Heinrich Hanselmann* – to the pioneers of remedial education in Switzerland. They worked on the basis of the personalist view of the human being. Originally working as a mathematics teacher *Moor* trained to be a remedial pedagogue and together with his wife became principal of a children’s home near Fürstenwalde (Germany). From 1931 on he took on the direction of the newly opened observation station of the country education home *Albisbrunn*. In 1933 he became an assistant to professor *Hanselmann* at the Remedial Education Seminar (HPS) in Zurich, where he received his doctorate. From 1949 to 1961 he headed the HPS and in 1951 he took over the Department of Remedial Education at the University of Zurich as an Associate Professor. *Moor* was retired in 1968 and lived at Meilen, Lake Zurich, until his death in 1977. Many of his basic considerations are still valid today.

pose of our elementary school and our responsibilities as teachers, in particular as remedial educators.

## On the purpose of elementary school

Reading the article on the purpose of the elementary school of the various cantons is a delight. Each is very individual and yet agrees in principle: educating young people to enable them to perceive their future tasks in family, work, society, and in our direct democracy in the sense of the common good. An example is the Aar-

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gau Education Act of 1981 "Schools [...] which educate youth to have reverence for the Divine and respect for the fellow human beings and the environment, as well as to be independent and responsible citizens, with mature minds, by which their creative powers can be unfolded and they become familiar with the world of knowledge and work." This was valid as early as in 1848 when the Federal State was established, and still holds true today and in the future.

**On the teacher's duties ...**

The duty of the teacher is as well codified in the purpose clause of the Cantonal Constitution: he has to fulfill his duties by teaching his lessons and applying his pedagogy. This is especially true for working with children who have – for what ever individual reasons – deficiencies in their academic achievement and their social skills. As early as in the 1930s Alfred Adler had pointed with all clarity to this duty of the teacher: "If a child from a school in which it has learned nothing, comes to another school where all pupils are already ahead [...]. What will we do with such a child? It is not enough to declare: you cannot do what is asked of you. A duty arises for the teacher to find out these deficiencies and correct them, to find a way to bring the child as far as the others."<sup>5</sup>

**... and the remedial teacher's**

What is true for the teacher also applies for us remedial teachers. We, too, must re-consider and come back to our original duty.

In fact a dangerous habit has spread in remedial education. Today one renounces a careful anamnesis in the context of which the individual background and the development of the child's personality within the relational fabric of its family, its surroundings and its cultural environment will be obtained. Thus – so the original approach in remedial education – the underlying causes for the child's difficulties could be detected and then remedied. For some time past now remedial education orients itself towards psychiatric diagnostic systems and the children are attributed psychiatric disorders on the basis of symptoms. Often a drug treatment is applied. Just think of the exponentially grown supply of *Ritalin* and similar drugs. That way labeled or stigmatized, they are exposed to an economic utilization. Individual personal data are recorded electronically by educators, psychologists, psychiatrists, physicians, social workers and their further use is uncontrollable.<sup>6</sup>

If we base our work on ICD-10 and ICF (see below), we as remedial teachers cease to perform our duty to help and heal.

**A return to remedial education is the order of the day**

"Remedial Education" – according to Prof. Paul Moor (see box) – "consists of an appropriate education where aggravating conditions exist."<sup>7</sup> Thus, our duty is outlined as a pedagogical one. The following principles of research and remedial teaching and education practice have been time-proven to this day:

- 1 *First understand, then educate.*
- 2 *Do not fight the mistake, but bring forth that which is missing.*
- 3 *Not only the child, but also its environment is to be educated.*

These principles will be illustrated below by examples from the remedial teacher's practice.<sup>8</sup>

**Maria: First understand – then educate**

We are in a special school for children and youths with behavioral problems and learning difficulties. The school day is over; the children have packed their belongings and are now on their way home. The teacher is sitting at her desk, preparing for the next school day. There is a knock on the door and a young woman enters, smiling at the teacher. She is a former student. She has just received her high-school diploma (A levels), she reports, beaming with joy. The teacher's mind goes back in time: Over 12 years ago, little *Maria*, together with her mother, was standing in the door. The question was: is a switch indicated from the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade primary school to our special school? At first, *Maria* followed the conversation between her mother and the teacher, attentively. But soon she started to feel bored. She started to look around, exploring the classroom. I did not mind her doing that – why should the girl hear her story for the umpteenth time? Why hear again and again that she was "difficult"? With a book, color pencils and paper, she withdrew to a neighboring room. The mother reported her current problems at school. *Maria* was restless in her class, was hardly able to work in a focused way; she often got involved in quarrels with her classmates. The former teacher thought that *Maria* was overstrained and was often assuming the role of an outsider in her class. In math she was already "freed" from having grades. The mother was, however, uncertain if this was a good solution.

The teacher wanted to understand more about the child's development, so she asked about her first years. Her pedagogy and method of working is based on a personalist view of the human being;

**Instead of training teachers as pedagogues, they label children as having "special needs"**

*hbg.* In the beginning of May you read that the number of pupils with special needs had risen massively in the Canton of Zurich by 61% between 2000 and 2010! *Stefan Fritschi*, heading primary schools in Winterthur, said that during the last years a lot of children had been prematurely labelled pupils with special needs. The regular school was responsible for that. Experts suppose that schools are sending those children to a special school who are not easy to handle, and they do so in an increasing number in order to escape additional stress, NZZ reported. In a Berne newspaper you could read that in the Canton of Berne the number of children with autism has multiplied by factor 47 from 2005/2006 to 2010/11 (from 3 to 142) 95% are children diagnosed with Asperger syndrome.

Sources:

"*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*" of 3.5.13, p. 17;  
 "*Berner Zeitung*" [www.bernerzeitung.ch/region/kanton-bern/Asperger-Eine-Diagnose-macht-Karriere/story/11385072](http://www.bernerzeitung.ch/region/kanton-bern/Asperger-Eine-Diagnose-macht-Karriere/story/11385072)

*Problems that appear in special schools with children who are not easy to handle have to be addressed and resolved by pedagogy, by giving the kindergarten teachers and the teachers the necessary training and further training so that they become capable pedagogues in practice as well as in theory. Simultaneously harm-causing school reforms have to be cancelled without any substitute and be replaced by class teaching that is based on pedagogy.*

this is what she had learned in her education, however, long ago. She wanted to understand *Maria* – what had made her the way she was – in order to find the starting points for her future work with her. According to the mother, the circumstances had been difficult. Her marriage was unsettled; the father had taken little responsibility for the family and his daughter; they had now been living separately for a long time. She was very busy in her job. That was why *Maria* spent a lot of time with her grandparents or her aunt, fortunately all living nearby. *Maria*'s development had been inconspicuous at first; formerly she had been rather shy, but she could also be quite defiant. Her problems had started when she entered kindergarten. This is why she was checked by a child psychiatrist.

Now and then *Maria* came around, showed us a drawing, complaining that she was bored. The mother had brought the examination report. *Maria* had had to go through a series of tests with the result

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that she had *neurological coordination and perceptual disorders, a lack of self-control with a syndrome of hyperactivity and reactive disorders in consequence of a lack of self-esteem*. On the positive side, it was said that Maria had a *good intellectual capacity, that she was sensitive, enthusiastic, curious and able to establish contact, that she had good ideas, was forgiving and coping very well with her mother's job situation*. These symptoms were summarized in the *diagnosis POS (psycho-organic syndrome)*, a birth defect that could be announced at the disability insurance. POS was one of those trendy diagnoses at the time, it is now considered outdated and was replaced by the *hyperactive syndrome* and later by *ADHS*.

In her education, the teacher had learned about test procedures and knew that they were always a snapshot and that the results may have relied severely on the daily condition of the child and also on the approach of the testing psychologist or psychiatrist. So she takes note of the results, but she sees her focus in the area of remedial teaching, in her educational and healing mission. Maria is to learn how to overcome her difficulties.

The mother continues, telling me that she took much pleasure in her lively child, that she preferred this to a child that was hanging around intimidated or even dejected. She also takes care that Maria is enjoying her leisure time in a meaningful way. She herself is an enthusiastic sport. And Maria also likes to move and is member of a girls' gymnastics team.

As a consequence of the former check results, Maria had been prescribed *Methylphenidate*, but it had not been well-tolerated by her so that they broke off the therapy. Later Maria described this period of drug therapy like living wrapped in cotton wool. The teacher had often read similar reports and worked with this kind of children. Often the psychiatric descriptions referred to very lively, curious, but highly sensitive children who quickly felt they were not receiving sufficient attention. They had problems being around other children and many had not enough staying power to stick to their work carefully and for a long-time.

Fact was that Maria had not been able to keep pace in school, in spite of her good intellectual potential. The teacher supposed that Maria would need a lot of encouragement, but also a clear demanding and at the same time supporting attitude. A good and reliable relationship to the teacher and a well-structured teaching would give her security. This could provide an emotional foundation for learning. But

above all, Maria would have to be helped to play her part among others in a more serene and constructive way. When she had entered kindergarten, she had been a single child, untrained in dealing with other children. It did obviously not take much to let her feel insecure. As we saw later, she was looking for very close and exclusive relationships. If she found her favorite child playing with someone else, she was stunned and started a quarrel in the course of which she might also become rough. Maria had to learn to express her wishes in a fair way, that means considering the other children, as well. The teacher wondered how she could create an area to suffice the child's healthy craving for recognition. Maria had no siblings that could provide her with more realistic standards. She was always competing with the adults around her who naturally were ahead of her in many ways. It was not a problem that Maria was ambitious and wanted to be quick. But the way she was doing it now, resulted in her permanently feeling inferior. As we later saw even clearer, the wish to be quick was her emotional priority but it prevented her from learning. She was working cursorily and carelessly, producing a lot of errors this way, which in turn were annoying her. Thus she tripped up on herself ever and again. Her mother was very efficient, had to accomplish many tasks at the same time and was always on tiptoe. Was she Maria's role model? Here she also needed a clear guidance from her teacher. She provided the benchmark for her work.

So the teacher formed a first preliminary picture of Maria from the conversation with her mother and in the following days. This was the basis for her remedial educational work: First understand – then educate. Her relationship to Maria became a tool for working with her.

It was a long way to become the good student who was even able to finish a secondary school. Maria cleared obstacles and became more confident. Her biggest difficulty was and still is to get rid of the block tied to her leg consisting of her old diagnosis.

**Flavio : Not against the error, but bringing force that which is missing**

*Flavio's* parents were troubled. They were worried by his kindergarten report. When the children sat together in the circle, Flavio often seemed absent-minded. If he did lift his hand, he either said nothing or gave a completely wrong answer. If another child came near him, he shooed it away or tried to hit it. He was extremely awkward in his fine as well as gross motor skills. This also applied to gymnastics. He had no courage and cried easily. He could climb neither the wall bars nor onto the mat cart.

As to his cognitive abilities Flavio was difficult to assess. You never quite knew whether he was not able or just not willing to do something. "If he keeps on like this, the school psychologist must become involved" – quoted the kindergarten teacher.

The remedial teacher took charge. In the kindergarten dressing room, she met Flavio's mother, who had come to pick him up. Flavio wanted to put on his right shoe, but this was not so easy. He slouched his shoulders and looked helplessly at his mother, who assisted him immediately. They both interacted in a similar way when it came to putting on his warm winter jacket. Then the mother took his lunch (breakfast) box into her left hand and her boy by her right, said Goodbye and left the kindergarten. Due to this event, the remedial teacher decided on a first development approach: In the sense of a self-help approach Flavio should be brought to recognize his own strengths and learn to use them.

Though having initially adopted an uncommunicative "wait and see" attitude Flavio soon came to trust his remedial teacher. It quickly became clear that he was extremely quick-witted. He had a good cognitive grasp, mental agility, and a fine sense of humour. Once, when doing exercises with a ball, the remedial teacher said one time, "Take the ball into your arm." and the next time, "Take the ball onto your arm". She had meant the same thing both times but the little boy asked her with a mischievous smile and with the appropriate gestures: "Shall I take the ball into or onto my arm?"

Whenever the remedial teacher gave Flavio a task that he did not have confidence to do, he gave her his helpless look which meant "I don't understand a thing". It was the mute appeal: "Please won't you solve this for me!" Or he wearily laid his head upon his arms and said: "I'd rather do something else." But whenever he was encouraged by a friendly but firm "No, no, come on, I'll show you how to do it really well," Flavio's reaction was indeed sceptical at first, but then he always let himself in for an attempt, was successful and beamed with pleasure. The remedial teacher made these experiences the subject of a discussion with Flavio. In the course of a few weeks, he became bolder, he had a try instead of looking lost, and he developed more and more of the skills appropriate for his age. The remedial teacher made him practise his fine motor skills and also his gross motor skills in the gymnasium, with various gymnastic equipment like mat carts, gymnastic benches, the wall bars, hoops and balls.

The request to climb onto the mat cart, or onto three gymnastic benches piled

continued on page IV

**"Instead of artificially producing ..."**

continued from page III

one on top of the other, horrified Flavio at first, so that he uttered in a trembling voice: "I'm afraid! I can't do that!" His teacher encouraged him and promised that she would take him by the hand, and he yielded immediately and allowed himself – with shaky legs – to be led across the top gymnastic bench (one meter above the ground). When he had been led back and forth a few times, he had lost his fear and no longer needed the teacher's hand. He was afraid of each new exercise at first but soon allowed himself to be persuaded and instructed. When he realized that he could do what was asked of him, he was happy and often called out: "I'll do this eight more times!" He used to leave the gym proud and taller by half a head. Flavio went on practising his gross motor skills by further lessons in the gym and had soon reached the level appropriate to his age.

By being able to make up for his delay in development, Flavio was reinforced in his personality and became more self-confident. This also paved the way for a positive development in his dealings with his peers. In the next conversation with the kindergarten teacher no further mention was made of involving the school psychologist. It was crucial for his further positive development that Flavio's parents and kin-

dergarten teacher should encourage him to gain ever more self-confidence. Today, Flavio is in third grade and a good student, who is respected by his peers because of his kind and helpful manner.

**Reza: not only the child, the environment has to be educated as well**

In the first year of kindergarten *Reza* attracts attention. He sits quietly on his chair and follows closely what happens in the kindergarten circle. When the kindergarten teacher or the children talk to him, he nods friendly and says: "Yes". What he does next, does not meet the things the kindergarten teacher wants him to do. When *Reza* is tested, the scores are very low and range under "Light Mental Retardation." The parents who come from Eastern Europe do not agree to this classification. In the discussion the causes of *Reza's* difficulties become more apparent. His parents, who love him dearly, both work full-time and *Reza* stays in a Portuguese family during the day. Neither the child's day-care provider nor the parents talk a lot to *Reza* as he usually plays quietly for himself.

Willingly the parents react to the proposal of the remedial teachers to give more attention to *Reza* and to talk to him in the evening and on the weekends. The mother begins to involve him in her housework, looks at picture books with him and names the objects in it. *Reza* is amazed and then repeats the names. The father takes him

along to the allotment garden, talks about many things to him and kindly instructs him how to help him at work. Even if the father meets with the other men, *Reza* is now present and closely follows the discussions, even if he does not understand much. The kindergarten teacher and the remedial teacher contribute greatly so that *Reza* can catch up on his delayed linguistic and social development. With success. Two years later the teacher of the first class is delighted with *Reza*. Quietly and attentively he follows the lessons and understands exactly what they are about. In reading and arithmetic he is one of the best in his class.

For *Reza's* positive development his environment – in this case his parents – was of central importance. ●

<sup>1</sup> "Neue Luzerner Zeitung" of 2.2.2013, p.12.

<sup>2</sup> She operates on behalf of the Ministers of Education Conference EDK and the Federal Office for Social Insurance.

<sup>3</sup> Beatrice Kronenberg, cit. In: "Neue Luzerner Zeitung". 02.02.2013, p.12.

<sup>4</sup> Otto Speck, "Die wundersame Vermehrung von Schülern mit 'geistiger Behinderung' – und niemand empört sich!" In: *Vierteljahresschrift für Heilpädagogik und ihre Nachbargebiete*. 1/2013.

<sup>5</sup> Alfred Adler. *Individualpsychologie in der Schule*. Frankfurt am Main. 1976, p.37.

<sup>6</sup> See Gigantic US spy centre. In: *Current Concerns* No 15, 28 April 2013.

<sup>7</sup> Paul Moor. *Heilpädagogik. Ein pädagogisches Lehrbuch*. Berne 1965.

<sup>8</sup> For reasons of data protection, the examples were de-familiarized, but are authentic in their inner content.

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## DSM – ICD – ICF – classify first, then manage!

### Checklists and labels

eg/hhg. What to do when children are conspicuous in family and school? If they stand out through lack of concentration and lack of attention, if they disturb lessons by constant unrest, display affects, are anxious and shy or have pronounced mood swings? Until now, it has been the task of remedial educators to support these children and help them to overcome their difficulties. For some time, however, child and adolescent psychiatry have taken over this field of activities more and more. Their working tool is the biomedical International Psychiatric Classification System *ICD-10* of the *WHO* or the *DSM-4* coming from America (which will soon be replaced by the *DSM-5*). The problems of the children receive a name and a number: *ADHS*, *ADHD*, *Autism*, *Asperger's syndrome*, *UEMF=Specific developmental disorder in motor functions* ("clumsy fellow syndrome"), etc. What is to be added in the *DSM-5* is the *DMDD (Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder)* to label children who are irritable and aggressive, are prone to fits of rage, but in addition may be very sad, have some self-doubt and withdraw saddened. One observes, ticks checklists and completes questionnaires. Increasingly, organic brain dysfunctions serve as explanatory models. Therefore drugs are often used to treat those "disorders" (with severe side effects). A psychotherapeutic treatment is usually limited to some behavioral training. The work of remedial educators is intended as a logical continuation of this practice and part of the medical-psychiatric department.

#### ICD-10 and ICF: From the personalist to the mechanistic view of man

Behind this change there is a paradigm shift in both subject areas of work. In psychiatry, it occurred with the change from *ICD-9* to *ICD-10*: The personalist view of man, which had been the basis of European psychiatry tradition in the treatment of mentally ill patients hitherto, has been replaced by the American mechanistic conception. Since then mental illnesses have been conceived as disorders and explained as brain dysfunctions, which are described, classified and (drug-) "treated" on the basis of symptoms. A similar process took place in the field of remedial education with the introduction of the *ICF (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health)* as equivalent to the *ICD-10*. The *ICF* was adopted in 2001 by the General Assembly of the *World Health Organization, WHO*. It took the place of the *ICIDH (International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps)*, which had been

#### Pro Memoria

#### Father of ADHD: "ADHD is a fabricated disease"

The American psychiatrist *Leon Eisenberg*, the "scientific father of ADHD," in his last interview: "ADHD is a prime example of a fabricated disease."

(quoted in: *Der Spiegel*, No. 6/6.2.12, pp. 122-131, p. 128; cf. *Current Concerns from 27.2.2012*)

implemented in 1980 and then revised. The *ICF* has a "bio-psycho-social" background and recedes as well as the *ICD-10* from a holistic personalist conception of the human being. It classifies the consequences of health problems related to their environment. It divides people into separate areas that are allegedly affected by the disability (body functions, activities, participation, environmental factors and personal factors).

#### ICF-CY for children and young people

To include as well children and young people, the *WHO* launched a working group from 1998 to 2001 that drew up a corresponding version, the *ICF-CY (International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health for Children and Youth)*. At present it is applied in the special education diagnosis and practice. With standardized diagnosis instruments they want to classify the problems of the children. Experts dealing with the child are supposed to observe how children and young people with a disability "work" in their environment and to record the observations in a grid of predetermined category groups with uniform criteria and uniform language. Behavioral problems and learning difficulties are classified among disabilities as well as manifest physical restrictions. Interpersonal relationships are only considered as offers of relationship in the environment of the child or young person. Again, one observes, counts and edits questionnaires and checklists. Resultant from this, objectives are derived and plans are created under which parents, teachers and therapists work. The now common school assessment meeting the appropriate guidelines is based on the *ICF-YE*. No longer the child as a social being is in the focus, but his interpersonal relationships are reduced to the formal functioning in a social context. The remedial teacher is expected to ensure that the functionality of the child or young person is optimized. This amendment is intended to conduce the "professionalization" of the subject area.

#### The end of the remedial education?

Thus the original educational task of remedial educators is pushed aside. It had

been to understand children and young people as formed by their autobiographies, to help them build an inner strength to finally fill, as a mature personality, a meaningful place in family, work and society. As the examples from practice in this article show, the remedial teacher has thus to fulfill a complex educational work, in which his personality and his interpersonal competences are important tools. Should he become the manager of the children's difficulties instead, now? Observe and treat the child "from the outside"? In that case the human being as a developing personality will fall by the wayside and the hope to learn efficiently and become a fellow human being, – which actually is to be found in every "difficult" child – will be ruined. Such a development should not pass unchallenged. •

<sup>1</sup> As to the holistic personalist view of man compare *Current Concerns* No 17 of 13 May 2013, page 4

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# Another international expert calls ADHD an invention

by Moritz Nestor

In spring 2012 *Der Spiegel* quoted the inventor of the ADHD diagnosis as saying that this diagnosis is not a diagnosis but an *invention* (see box, p. III and *Current Concerns* from 1.3.2012). In *Der Spiegel* of 30.7.2012 the renowned 83-year-old developmental psychologist Jerome Kagan had another go, even more sharply:<sup>1</sup> Kagan is not anyone, quoted *Der Spiegel*: “On a list of the top 100 psychologists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century [...] the 83 year old is ranked number 22 – ahead of *Carl Gustav Jung* [...] and *Ivan Pavlov*.”<sup>2</sup>

*Der Spiegel*: “Experts say that 5.4 million American children show the typical symptoms of the hyperactive syndrome ADHD. And you want to claim that this mental illness is only an invention?”

Kagan: “Correct, it is an invention. Today, every child who does poorly in school is sent to the pediatrician, and he says: It is ADHD, and here is *Ritalin*. And yet, 90 percent of these 5.4 million have no dis-

turbed dopamine metabolism. The problem is: if doctors have a drug on hand, they go and provide the appropriate diagnosis.”

In the 60s psychological disorders in children were little known. Between 2000 and 2010 the number of in-patient treatments of children and adolescents in psychiatry and psychotherapy in Germany rose from 29,949 to 43,498, an increase of 45%! The prescribed daily doses of *Ritalin/Concerta* in Germany rose from 11 to 56 million during the same period. This is “due to a vague diagnostic practice” Kagan states: “If you interview children and adolescents in the age of 12 to 19 years, up to 40 percent can be classified as anxious or depressed. But if you look closer and ask how many of them are seriously impaired in their daily lives, the number shrinks to 8 percent. It is ridiculous to label every child that looks depressed or anxious as mentally ill. [...] When I was five years old, I began

to stutter. But my mother said: ‘That’s not that bad, your mind just works faster than your tongue.’ And I thought: ‘Wow, super, I’m just stuttering because I’m so smart.’”

For Kagan, the political significance is clear: “Well, it mainly means more money for the pharmaceutical industry and more money for psychiatrists and researchers.” And for the affected children it is a “signal that something is wrong with them – and this can be debilitating. I’m not the only psychologist who argues that way. But we are facing a powerful alliance: Pharmaceutical companies that make a billion dollar business and a profession that pursues its own interests.”

His most important lesson: “That’s why it is important to consider not only symptoms but also causes.” There is nothing to add. Let’s get to work. •

<sup>1</sup> “Tuition instead of pill.” In: *Der Spiegel* 31/2012, pp. 94.

<sup>2</sup> see also: Haggblom, SJ et al. (2002). “The 100 Most Eminent Psychologists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century”

## New special needs school concepts are instruments of change

eg. In Switzerland the point in time of the paradigm shift from remedial education based on the personalist view of the human being over to a mechanistic, utilitarian conception of children and adolescents was the introduction of the *NFA (New Financial Compensation)*. Thereby the responsibility for the special needs education was separated from the “IV” (“*Invalidenversicherung*”=Disability Insurance) and handed over to the cantons. They had to work out new ideas for the special education and decided on the “*Inter-cantonal Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Special Needs Education*”<sup>1</sup> in 2007. The ICF and the related concept of special education were the basis for further work.

### Teacher training colleges are taking the lead

The *PHZH (Zurich University of Teacher Education)* plays a leading role. It is one of the few educational institutions that work closely with the WHO and participated in the drafting of the *ICF-kid* version. It is a member of the *WHO-FIC Functioning and Disability Reference Group*.<sup>2</sup> In October 2006 the WHO had approved of the first version of the *ICF-CY* in Tunis. With the ratification of the *ICF* all member countries (including Switzerland) committed themselves to pressing ahead the adoption and application of the *ICF* in the institutions of health care and education. For children and

adolescents, the special version of *ICF-CY* was to become binding.

With the Education Board decision of 4 September 2006 a procedure for working with children with „special needs“, which had been worked out against the backdrop of the *ICF*, was declared obligatory in the canton of Zurich.<sup>3</sup> Together with the company *RehabNET AG* the *PHZH* project team developed a computer software for planning the support in education systems based on the *ICF CY*. This version is then to be adapted to different processes and needs of institutions.<sup>4</sup> In October 2007, *Judith Hollenweger (PHZH)* and *Peter Lienhardt (HfH Special Education University of Applied Sciences Zurich)* was commissioned by the General Secretariat of the *EDK (Directors of Education Conference)* to develop a standardized assessment process that should take effect in all cantons.<sup>5</sup>

### EU project MHADIE:

#### Data gathering – for whom?

The authors participated in the EU project *MHADIE (Measuring Health and Disability in Europe)* for their mandate. In this project, eleven countries (including Switzerland and Germany) and the WHO have joined. It intends to introduce the *ICF* in as many application areas of statistics, health and education as possible and to collect comparable national and international data. A set of guidelines has been drawn up on how exist-

ing data sources can be unified.<sup>6</sup> The question arises as to what purpose personal data of children and adolescents, that are considered to be “disabled”, are to be collected. The *EDK* looked for cantons that would participate in a pilot project: 17 agreed to participating in the pilot phase 1 (September to October 2008). The core of the project was a web-based collection tool, in which the participating school psychologists, special educators and doctors had to enter their data collected from clarification of the children. The corresponding computer program *MAS* was designed by the company *RehabNET* and should ensure “safe” data management. The aim of the project was to work out and determine the future conditions regarding those examinations from the evaluated data. And what is happening to the data that is being collected in the large computer? Which bodies gain insight into the most personal data of people and what for? •

<sup>1</sup> cf. [www.edk.ch/dyn/12917.php](http://www.edk.ch/dyn/12917.php). Until 15 August 2012 13 cantons had joined the Concordat.

<sup>2</sup> cf. [www.rehabnet.ch/index.php?page=72&lang=1](http://www.rehabnet.ch/index.php?page=72&lang=1)

<sup>3</sup> The already usual school location calls serve this purpose; their documentation and procedure are based on the *ICF*.

<sup>4</sup> cf. [www.rehabnet.ch/index.php?page=72&lang=1](http://www.rehabnet.ch/index.php?page=72&lang=1)

<sup>5</sup> cf. Hollenweger, Judith, Peter Lienhardt. Development of a standardized investigation procedure. In: *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Heilpädagogik*. 11-12 / 2008, p.11.

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# The power of empathy leading the way

## Impact of positive and negative expectations on the development of children

by Corinna Schmied, psychologist and remedial teacher, and Dipl. paed. lic. phil. Renate Caesar

*Teachers, parents or other people in the children's environment often approach the child with certain assumptions, theories or beliefs. Every expectation, whether conscious or unconscious, has implications for the child's further development, and may bear fruit either in the negative or in the positive way. Therein lie both a great responsibility and at the same time a great opportunity.*

### The "space, into which young people may develop"

Anyone dealing with children and young people knows from his own experience and from the encounter with others that educators often approach the child with certain subjectively influenced assumptions – based on various impressions, observations and encounters – and rashly form an image of the personality and the performance capability of a child, his weaknesses and his strengths. Often, this process happens unknowingly. Joachim Bauer, psychotherapist and professor of medicine, deals with this problem in his book "Lob der Schule" (In praise of school)<sup>1</sup> and with his remarks he refers to the great responsibility that is on the educator when he deals with young people: "By his vision and ideas about the child's development potential the teacher opens up the space for adolescents into which they may develop." (p. 85) "The way they are perceived by their parents and teachers allows the children and young people to understand not only who they are, but also who they might be; that means they perceive where their potential and possibilities for development lie." (pp. 26) "That is why children and young people seek to disclose – in the image that parents and teachers have formed about them – what they are (or could be), what they might be capable of, where their potentials and opportunities for development lie. This seeking process takes place unconsciously within a child and a young person, and yet it is one of the most important processes when it comes to education in general. The way we provide adolescents with information about themselves through our speech and behavior, we create a 'corridor' pointing to the future in which – to a certain degree

– the power of a self-fulfilling prophecy can develop." (p. 132)

Here, Bauer talks about a phenomenon that social psychology drew attention to, decades ago.

### "Pygmalion in the classroom" – a short excursion into the history of psychology

Already fifty years ago, psychological research dealt with the problem of expectations and their effects. Robert Rosenthal had then found and systematically studied the so-called observer-expectancy effect, later known as *Rosenthal Effect*. Rosenthal had discovered that scientific observers unconsciously convey their own hypothesis regarding the course of the experiment on the test person through verbal and non-verbal signals, i.e. they express their expectations which are perceptible to the test persons. These expectations lead to a "self-fulfilling prophecy". The test persons behave indeed as expected – an assumption, a prejudice, a prediction, a rumor or expectation can therefore become itself the cause for it to actually happen and come true.

The classic experiment by Robert Rosenthal (1965)<sup>2</sup>, which became famous under the name of "Pygmalion in the classroom", was groundbreaking. Rosenthal and *Leonore Jacobson* had then conducted an experiment at two American elementary schools to examine the impact of teachers' expectations on their students. In their experiment they were able to prove that the assumptions of teachers significantly influence the performance of their students: 45 percent (in the context of the experiment chosen arbitrarily, that is, randomly) of the students, who – vis à vis the teachers – had been predicted a positive intellectual development were actually flourishing during the year and had been able to increase their IQ and their school grades, some of them even essentially. Positive expectations of the teacher affect the child under certain conditions (these were well-defined in many subsequent studies) in such a way that the expectations are confirmed in the sense of a self-fulfilling prophecy.

It is, however, problematic for the development of children, if we approach them with negative expectations, since in

the reverse case expectations show their effect, as well.

### Negative expectations and problematic diagnoses in school

Teachers often experience that parents, often unconsciously, transfer impressions from their own history on their child. Statements of mothers like the following, "I was dyslexic myself, I know what I'm talking about", can often be heard by teachers in everyday school life. This mother quite naturally assumes that her daughter is a so-called dyslexic because she had been burdened with this diagnosis as a child. She charges her child with her own insecurity about whether spelling can really be mastered. Even before her daughter went to school, she had expected her to have problems with spelling later on. Her daughter felt this insecurity from the beginning – the lack of confidence of her mother and her negative expectations had the effect that already in the first grade the girl displayed a strong insecurity in writing, and the fear of failure accompanied all her studying. Today she says, "I'm just dyslexic", which means as much as, "I cannot help having problems spelling, because I have an illness or because my head does not work properly. I cannot learn, it's the way it is, I'm just different."

If parents doubt the academic abilities of their child, they transfer their doubts on their child, and throughout his whole life, to carry this burden will be hard on him: insecurity, discouragement, lack of belief in his own capability to learn and in himself will accompany his entire life. Conversely parents can "give wings" to their child if they believe in his or her potential for development, and when they let their child feel the pleasure they have in him and in his small steps of learning.

Even teachers sometimes have a glib idea of their students or pass the kid on to the next teacher thoughtlessly labeling him: "She is at the limits of her capacity", "he just does not have any more potential", "it does not make sense, she will simply not overcome her insufficient achievements", "she just cannot do mental arithmetic", "his brother was the same", "he is really just weak", "you

**"The power of empathy..."**

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will have to relieve her, she'll never cope with this objective", etc. How fast do these statements fix a prejudice, set an expectation which deprives the child of the opportunity for change, because due to false negative presuppositions we demand too little of him or her and have too little confidence in her capabilities, because we do not focus on the small development steps carefully enough and might not even notice them, because we do not believe in his development. Such a child is quickly driven into the "special education" corner.

Today, the problem of false expectations has become even more serious due to the frivolous and inflationary dealing with psychiatric, biologicistic diagnoses such as ADHD (Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder), autism, Asperger's syndrome, learning disorders, special giftedness, dyscalculia, dyslexia, mutism, mild mental deficiency, learning disability and others. ADHD is often diagnosed with children who are easy to distract, forgetful and inattentive or partly hyperactive and impulsive, while the diagnosis can be devastating for the further development of the child. "I am suffering from ADHD, you know ...", children respond today if you demand more order in their school material or if you ask for the forgotten homework, "... I just can't help it". The "Neue Zürcher Zeitung" of 19 August 2010 published a brief note on the problem of false theories, on whose background educators, psychologists and doctors ascribe their observations: "Many wrong ADHD diagnoses" was the title. The reader learns that, according to a study, about one million children living in the US have wrongfully been diagnosed with ADHD, usually at the request of educators (with all the consequences for the child!). It was found that in kindergarten children who are the youngest in their year, 60 percent are more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD – in school children twice as often – than in the oldest children in their class. This means that it is simply the appropriate emotional immaturity of the younger children due to their age and their level of development which the educators observed as abnormalities – and not, as was interpreted on the basis of false assumptions, an ADHD symptom! Each kindergarten teacher here knows that it makes a real difference if a child is a few months older or younger when considering a child's level of development.

Even in our schools, we find similar processes. Many teachers today conclude with amazing certainty that the child "is suffering from ADHD" when their pu-

pils show behavioral problems. If we approach a child with an unwarranted assumption every day, we run the risk of actually making this child a real problem case.

**"Lack of courage means underdevelopment"**

The individual psychologist *Alfred Adler*, who taught in the first third of the last century and whose pedagogical principles, even if they have almost been forgotten, are still valid today, was known for his unshakeable belief in each child's capacity for development. He recommended the educators that the best support for the development of the child was the "confidence in his own strength". "Later in life courageous children will not expect their fate to be effected by outside forces but will effect a change in their fortunes from inner strength." (p. 72)<sup>3</sup>

The newspaper "Chicago Tribune" summed up a lecture given by Adler under the title "Inspiring courage creates success" with the following words: "Children need optimism. Give the child the idea that it is good and capable to do much more, and in nine cases out of ten this will actually come true. Impress upon the child the conviction that he does everything wrong, that other children are superior to him and that his small errors are huge failures, and this is exactly the way to sow the seeds in him to be exactly that – a failure. [...] Only courage is able to develop all the potential skills and talents of the child: lack of courage means underdevelopment." (p. 224)

Teachers can help parents to become aware of these coherences and among colleagues they are able to draw their attention on problematic assumptions and expectations of their students. They can themselves look at their daily work with children and young people attentively and honestly and make sure to handle their own interpretations wisely and carefully. Thus they can remove many stones, sometimes even rocks out of the students' way.

**Knowledge of each child's viability and openness for change**

If we start teaching a child and we are convinced of this child's ability to learn, the child can feel the trust of the teacher and begins to study more boldly. One child needs more, the other less support, one child is a little faster, the other slower. It is important to always have an open door and a clear objective in mind, towards which we want to lead the child. Behind this door the next open door is waiting the passing of which requires some more learning steps. The doors should never be closed; we should not lose sight of the objective, because after

each learning step another is possible! These learning steps can be smaller or larger, depending on what we expect of the child. One should be careful and attentively perceive each of the child's steps, in order not to let it come to nothing; because with the teacher's knowledge of each step the child feels that there is a little more ground to stand on and he rises another bit above himself. The teacher's optimism, his patience, perseverance and confidence and his joy in the child and in his learning steps always pay off. So you can always experience something amazing, surprising, pleasing, touching: students who are considered slow learners, insecure, nervous, with problematic diagnoses that promise them rather dark future, start contributing to the activities in the classroom, they ask questions, they suddenly dare to solve a math task in front of the class, they expose themselves despite the risk that their answer could be wrong, they find friends among their peers and begin to behave among colleagues in a more natural, self-confident way, find their place there, start to be interested in studying, in issues that affect our world, they read and work driven by the concern for the cause and with a goal in mind; they even succeed in being integrated in regular classes in secondary school, may even go to grammar school (gymnasium), or enter an apprenticeship that they will perform excellently and thus work in a profession that will be a pleasure of a lifetime for them.

A teacher can set the course for the lives of the children who pass through his hands. Seeking, detecting and realizing their inherent potential he can lead children on the straight and direct path, away from detours and digressions that will cost them energy, disappointments, years and joy in life and often lead a human being into some "thicket" or dead end. "Mr M. has taught me arithmetic; since I have started studying with him, I can count", says a child in grade four who had always thought "I cannot do arithmetic". Or "Mr T. has made me great", says a former beginner who now attends secondary school, several years later, "he has made a man out of me". "Fortunately, you have demanded something from him from the very beginning and believed in him, or he would never have made it to secondary school", a mother says years later. "I would never have imagined having so many friends as I do now. I hope that we will never separate", says a former shy and lonely third-grader, who had always been considered a loner. "He helped me to find my way", says a student about his teach-

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Letter to  the Editor

## Curriculum 21 – danger for the direct democracy

Does it take a Curriculum 21? The deficiencies already existing today are a result of the previous reform and evaluation pressures by the UN, Bertelsmann, Pisa etc. These will continue with Curriculum 21 in the same way, keyword “Evaluation”. Also the promised comparableness of school graduations is not guaranteed through the continued since Cantonal sovereignty with the subject plans and the examinations go on to exist. The expressions in Curriculum 21 on the subjects like “specialised non-compulsory teaching subjects” or “physical well-being” as well as “media communication – feeling and experience” and other topics, sound

more like “Erlebnispädagogik” (experiential education) rather than school. Are the pupils to be treated with special needs education methods in the context of normal school lessons? It would be better to challenge and encourage students in an appropriate manner according to their age, and above all, not to spoil them, at school as well as at home. The Curriculum 21 does not promote education in the classical sense, the latter enabling democracy and empowering people living as responsible citizens; instead, it equips people with “competences”. This means that they finally will only have a selective knowledge at their disposal and re-

main in the end susceptible to manipulation. Any comprehensive thinking and reasoning is not encouraged, instead only the momentary here and now is focused on. The fact that the origin and introduction of the Curriculum 21 avoided and are still avoiding the direct-democratic possibilities and procedures is a rather strange process. Should Switzerland’s direct democracy be sacrificed bit by bit to other powers like the promoters of globalisation or the EU?

Lutz Geisen, Trimmis

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

### “The power of empathy...”

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er. A mother reported about her child, who had great difficulty when starting school. “He has just changed into secondary school, he now knows himself that it is important to study and that he does it for himself”.

Every child has the right to his own development and the full development of his inner potential. We should not interfere and stifle his skills with our own

doubts and false assumptions and expectations!

### Teachers as “second chance”

By the path outlined above teachers provide students with the chance to go their way without the ballast of doubt and lack of trust from the side of their role models and the persons they relate to indeed, they are given leeway for their own development: “Through the relationship to their teachers, children and young people often get to know a new and different

way to see the world and their lives and to face challenges. In this respect teachers can be a ‘second chance’. Teachers should be aware of the responsibility that grows out of this.” (Joachim Bauer: “Lob der Schule”, p. 137) •

<sup>1</sup> Joachim Bauer. *Lob der Schule. Perspektiven für Schüler, Lehrer und Eltern*, 2007

<sup>2</sup> cf. Frey, Dieter und Greif, Siegfried (Eds.) *Sozialpsychologie. Ein Handbuch in Schlüsselbegriffen*, 1983 And [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pygmalion\\_effect](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pygmalion_effect)

<sup>3</sup> Edward Hoffman. *Alfred Adler. Ein Leben für die Individualpsychologie*, 1997

# Radioactivity and cancer

by Dr-Ing Ernst Pauli

When talking about the phase-out of nuclear energy, there is debate about potentially rising electricity prices, about the question whether we will have sufficient power in the future to use the many comforts in everyday life which electric power provides today, or whether the sponsored growth of renewable energy is really a solution that we should strive for as it is distorting the power market. One is also aware of the immediate consequences of potential nuclear accidents, although the Chernobyl events have already faded away in our memories. Nuclear energy was back again on the up with many ambitious projects, when Fukushima triggered new awareness of the risks of nuclear power, and the phase-out of nuclear power was discussed. There is, however, a danger of sacrificing decisions reached on the nuclear phase-out in favor of political appropriateness and of reviving programs to further developing nuclear energy. It would not happen for the first time.

The catastrophic accidents involving large releases of radioactivity are the landmarks of this development. But also the normal and daily operation and the normal maintenance and charging of reactors do release radioactivity. All this, it is claimed, takes place in compliance with the limits for the radioactivity emissions, which are determined in elaborate monitoring networks with great effort. Safety is suggested, but why do the cancer rates permanently increase, since nuclear technology came up? Why in particular do the rates of child leukemia increase in many countries and in the vicinity of nuclear facilities? One does no longer hear anything concerning this topic. The actual effects of the released normal radioactivity are perhaps too unspectacular to find echo in the public and in the press. But they are real.

## Radioactive pollution caused by nuclear bomb testing

The considerable amounts of fission products such as Strontium-90 and Cesium-137 in our food, for example in raw milk in Germany, indicate constantly released radioactivity.<sup>1</sup> Before the age of nuclear technology, there was no such environmental pollution. A first rise came from the atmospheric nuclear weapons testing that took place during and after the Second World War, mainly in the 1950s and 1960s. By means of the first treaty to stop atmospheric nuclear testing, which was ratified and adhered to by many countries the pollution growth could be stopped and the peak of fission products in raw milk was reduced from 1963 onwards.

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“The ‘Kinderkrebsstudie’<sup>12</sup> resulted in observation of a statistically significant increase of the incidence of leukemia in children in the vicinity of nuclear power plants in Germany. The publication of these results has had unfortunately no effect in triggering a deeper discussion about the risks of nuclear energy except that the press was in a flurry for a short time only.”

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These trends were watched closely by vigilant citizens and scientists as early as in the fifties of the last century and first investigations of the spread of radioactivity and its impact were made. Such studies<sup>2</sup> showed as a result of the American nuclear weapons testing in the test area in the Nevada desert an impact on the incidence of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of the test site. In the Canadian province of Saskatchewan where a reliable and comprehensive cancer registry had already been established since 1932, the influence of rising radioactive pollution and its influence on child leukemia could be exactly observed. The incidence of childhood leukemia rose fourfold there between 1948 and the early 90s.<sup>3</sup> In the cancer register of Connecticut an increase in the frequency of leukemia of children aged 0–4 of 121% was reported for the time before the halt of atmospheric nuclear testing in 1963. In the years after the nuclear test ban with decreasing radiation, the rate fell back to 53%.<sup>4</sup> The rise in the cancer rate correlates to the radioactive pollution by the above-ground nuclear bomb tests conducted in the United States and elsewhere. In the 1960s there was no place on Earth, where the consequences of the fallout from above-ground nuclear bomb testings were not noticeable.<sup>5</sup>

## The accident at Chernobyl

A next almost equally high peak of the radioactive contamination of the environment was caused by the accident at Chernobyl in 1986 in the vicinity of the Chernobyl power plant, but also in some areas of Central Europe, in Finland and Sweden. Worth to mention that even today, 27 years after the accident, certain types of mushroom and wild boar meat from areas in Bavaria are not allowed to market respectively to eat because of the high radioactivity level.

Investigations carried out in the vicinity of the Chernobyl reactor, first in heavily loaded and then in non-impacted areas on 25,000 children each show in the first group a three times increased rate of childhood leukemia in the period from 1986 to 1996, i.e. immediately after the accident.<sup>6</sup>

But in Sweden in heavily polluted areas an increase in childhood leukemia incidence of 50%<sup>7</sup> was detected as well in consequence of the Chernobyl accident. In Finland, the increase amounted to 20%. There the rate correlates with the level of radioactivity in the investigated areas.<sup>8</sup> Radioactive pollution doesn't stop at the state borders. Correlation between the development and spread of nuclear technology and the strength of radioactive pollution with the frequency of occurrence of leukemia particularly in children become visible.

Also Switzerland is not spared by such influences. Childhood cancers have grown in the entire Switzerland from 20 cases per 100,000 children in the 1980s to 30 cases in the period of 2003 to 2007<sup>9</sup> and thus nationwide by 50%. About one-third of these cases belong to childhood leukemia. The sum of all observations shows more than clearly that increased radioactivity in the environment plays an important role.

The trend is drastic: the incidence of all cancers in children, particularly in the Nordic countries, has grown in the last 3 decades by about 30% according to a European investigation.<sup>10</sup> This general increase of children cancer and particularly of childhood leukemia is observed worldwide.<sup>11</sup> All these frightening figures have found little resonance in public. There is still confidence in the published opinion, that radioactivity from nuclear power plants is small in comparison to natural radiation exposure of humans and thus not relevant.

## Childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear power plants

The case of the “leukemia cluster” in the marsh of the river Elbe in Northern Germany has attracted attention, where 19 cases of childhood leukemia have occurred around the Krümmel nuclear power plant and the research reactors in Geesthacht since 1991 in a small area very close to the facilities. This is an unequalled incidence rate. This situation raised some political dust and triggered extensive scientific

**"Radioactivity and cancer"**

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ic work. Affected people there and in other places in the vicinity of nuclear power plants and nuclear facilities teamed up in initiatives and tried to explore and clarify the causes of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear power plants and to encourage authorities and responsible politicians to act. All too often this fails. But in this case the political discussion led to one of the most comprehensive and most accurate studies of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear power plants. It became known as "Kinderkrebsstudie"<sup>12</sup>. The study resulted in observation of a statistically significant increase of the incidence of leukemia in children in the vicinity of nuclear power plants in Germany. The publication of these results has had unfortunately no effect in triggering a deeper discussion about the risks of nuclear energy except that the press was in a flurry for a short time only.

Already in the introduction to the final report it is claimed without attempting to supply further evidence that the increased frequency of occurrence of childhood leukemia can't be traced back to nuclear power plants. The emission limits would of course be kept, and therefore a health risk could be excluded, it was claimed. But where do the many cases of this disease come from in such a small area? Any political leader should feel an appeal to act when learning about such contradictions, for example to investigate missing links in the cause and effect chain and clearly provide evidence. It would also include to question the radioactivity emission limits specified to protect us today. Even more so as the childhood leukemia, with a short latency period and due to the sensitivity of children, may be an early indication for future effects of exposure for the population as a whole.

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"This wealth of results makes it so amazing that the nuclear industry and the responsible authorities still negate a causal link between the radioactivity emitted by the NPP and the frequency of the disease. This was particularly evident in the discussions on the political level in Lower Saxony, Germany on the subject of the leukemia cluster in the Elbmarsch.<sup>20</sup> One is reminded of the behavior of the tobacco industry, from which one had to wring in a laborious process the concession of the causal relationship between the habit of smoking and lung cancer, when the links were already perfectly obvious. The situation regarding radioactivity, which you cannot see and do not feel, is more difficult and complex. It is always argued that the emission limits would be respected and that therefore no health danger could exist. But the story of establishing such radiation limits shows the influence of the military-industrial complex.

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"The wealth of scientific studies on the subject of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear facilities, – there are more than 60 extensive investigations including extensive meta-studies known – confirm the children cancer study. The cancer risk for young children in the vicinity of nuclear power stations is significantly increased. They are particularly sensitive before birth and at an age of up to 5 years, if they are exposed to a radiation dose. The increased rate of cell division in these years is the physicians' plausible explanation for the observed sensitivity. The incidence rate of the disease is, typical for this disease, declining significantly after the fifth year of life."

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The children cancer study covers the period from 1980 to 2003, in which there were 13,378 cases of cancer in children in Germany. Out of these there were 77 cancer cases within a radius of less than 5 km from the examined 22 nuclear power plants in 16 locations. 37 cases of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of the NPP did occur among these cancer cases. Involved in the study, because reliable data can only be provided on the basis of the given administrative units, were 41 counties nearby the NPP's, wherein 1,592 cases of cancer are registered. By comparing these cancers with 4,735 randomly selected so-called "controls", so children of the same age, similar settlements, etc., you can determine whether the children affected by cancer lived "closer" to the observed NPP compared to the control cases. By comparing the data it was determined that the frequency of occurrence of leukemia in children aged up to 5 years in the vicinity of the NPP was statistically significantly higher by a factor of 1.4.

**Numerous investigations about the increased incidence of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear power plants**

The wealth of scientific studies on the subject of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear facilities, – there are more

than 60 extensive investigations including extensive meta-studies known – confirm the children cancer study. The cancer risk for young children in the vicinity of nuclear power stations is significantly increased. They are particularly sensitive before birth and at an age of up to 5 years, if they are exposed to a radiation dose. The increased rate of cell division in these years is the physicians' plausible explanation for the observed sensitivity. The incidence rate of the disease is, typical for this disease, declining significantly after the fifth year of life.<sup>13</sup>

The situation in Switzerland is being investigated in the so-called CANUPI Study<sup>14</sup> (*Childhood Cancer and Nuclear Powerplants in Switzerland*). Included in the study are all 1.3 million children born in Switzerland since 1985. From 1985 to 2009 2,925 children were diagnosed with cancer in total, of which 953 with leukemia. 8 cases of leukemia were registered within a 5 km radius of the Swiss nuclear power plants whilst 6.8 cases were expected. The number corresponds to an increase in the risk of leukemia in the vicinity of NPP of 20%. On the basis of a few cases in the vicinity of nuclear power plants, the computed statistical scatter is large and the statement is not statistically significant. But that doesn't mean that the phenomenon is not there.

The observation that this disease came up started with the commissioning of the first nuclear power stations and nuclear installations. After the commissioning of the first German nuclear power plant in Lingen attentive doctors provided statistics, showing specific health effects, for instance a strong increase of still birth.<sup>15</sup> Studies in the UK around the nuclear reprocessing plant Windscale which has been renamed to cover up its inglorious history and now bears the name Sellafield, but also other British nuclear power plants, show alarming results.<sup>16</sup> For the age group under 25 years in the vicinity of the plants the risk of having leukemia is increased by a factor of 2. A simi-

**"Radioactivity and cancer"**

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lar picture is evident in France around the reprocessing plant in La Hague,<sup>17</sup> where in a study the frequency of bathing in the sea in the vicinity of the facility is strongly correlated with the incidence of the disease. Frequent bathing increased the risk of childhood leukemia, by a factor of 4.5. The works on this epidemiology are comprehensive and newer meta-studies<sup>18,19</sup> summed up the results of research. Whilst the relationship between the vicinity to the nuclear power plant and the occurrence of the diseases is often negated in the abstracts of scientific publications, because there was no statistical significance, still one can find a significant correlation in the detailed results in many studies, especially concerning childhood leukemia. The majority of studies carried out, a few are referred to here only for reasons of space, show in their entirety a clear picture that the incidence of childhood cancer around nuclear power stations and nuclear installations is demonstrably higher. This increase is always on top of the generally rising frequency of cancer, which is shown above, and gives a consistent picture of the cause and effects chain.

**The reactions of politics and society**

This wealth of results makes it so amazing that the nuclear industry and the responsible authorities still negate a causal link between the radioactivity emitted by the NPP and the frequency of the disease. This was particularly evident in the discussions on the political level in Lower Saxony, Germany on the subject of the leukemia cluster in the Elbmarsch.<sup>20</sup> One is reminded of the behavior of the tobacco industry, from which one had to wring in a laborious process the concession of the causal relationship between the habit of smoking and lung cancer, when the links were already perfectly obvious. The situation regarding radioactivity, which you cannot see and do not feel, is more difficult and complex. It is always argued that

the emission limits would be respected and that therefore no health danger could exist. But the story of establishing such radiation limits shows the influence of the military-industrial complex. In the early stages of the development of nuclear energy (1965) the radioactivity limits have been set in a way, "to offer to the nuclear industry sufficient room to manoeuvre for the expansion of their nuclear energy programs".<sup>21</sup> The limits would "maybe not represent a real balance between potential damage and probable benefits".<sup>21</sup> It is not incorporated, that the dose-response relationship does not have a threshold according to the findings of many scientists. Even the slightest radiation bears the risk of cancer – contradictory to the models where the current limits are based on. It is a purely defensive lie, when it is concluded that there is no health risk in many cases, derived from the compliance with the limits.

**Are there physically verifiable facts?**

If the disease increasingly occurs, then a cause must be detectable and traceable from the viewpoint of physics. Increased rates of leukemia at all and additional risks in the vicinity of nuclear facilities must have their cause in increased radioactive pollution and the presence of radioactive material in the environment, in particular around nuclear installations. An extensive systematic investigation in Canada<sup>22</sup> confirmed such presumption and concluded that less than 1 km away from nuclear power plants, the radioactivity in the soil, plants and even in food is hundred times higher compared to places that are 100 km away. Also in the vicinity of nuclear facilities in the Elbmarsch<sup>23</sup> and around the long since decommissioned Pebble Bed Reactor at Hamm Uentrop<sup>24</sup>, material was found, indicating an increased radioactive pollution.

How is it possible now that despite extensive monitoring activities, which always document compliance with prescribed emission limits, still effects of radioactivity can be observed? One must wonder whether the right observations

**After the switch-off of reactors the cancer rate drops**

ep. Not only the increase of radiation and the disease incidence in the vicinity of nuclear power plants in operation has been examined in studies. Studies show as well the decrease of morbidity from the moment on, when nuclear power plants are shut down. In the vicinity of three American power plants, the rate of childhood leukemia was specifically investigated after the shutdown of the reactors. The rate of leukemia in children aged 0–4 years close to the reactors fell after the decommissioning by 25%, whereas it remained virtually constant in the entire United States. In addition, the shutdown of the reactor Rancho SECO in Sacramento County, California, where 1.4 million people live in its immediate vicinity led to a significant reduction of the contamination of food products as well as to significant reductions of the incidence of child cancer. One estimates that in the 20 years after the shutdown of Rancho SECO, 4,319 cancer cases could be avoided in the general population.<sup>28</sup>

are made, and the right conclusions are drawn. Already the radioactivity, which is produced in the reactor and released in various ways, is not really measured, but calculated on the basis of models and assumptions and can thus be subject to manipulation. The different types of radiation show completely different impact and affect on different exposure paths. They include direct radiation release by the plant, release of gaseous emissions, the famous "fallout" (washout due to rain), which accumulates in the soil, up to the radioactive material in the food chain, in meat and milk, and in the human body. The path in the body, the remaining time in the body and the effect in the body is described by models. No wonder that such complexity has not a consistent appearance. A compelling chain of cause and effect is not determined this way.

An example from Switzerland was covered on in all newspapers for a short time this summer: the radioactive pollution in the sediment of the drinking water reservoir Lake of Biel, downstream the Swiss nuclear power plant Mühleberg, is clearly linked to events in the nuclear power plant and consequent releases of radioactivity. After evidence of these radioactive findings became known to a wider public, single events with release of radioactivity from the nuclear power plant from long ago were admitted by operators of the plant. In this case, complete evidence of correlation between operations in the

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"It is untenable to deny the influence of radiation if an increased incidence of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear facilities is seen in a variety of studies. What cannot be proved 100%, is nevertheless a reality to follow up. Citizens and dedicated scientists have worked out the facts around nuclear power plants in many countries. A follow up of politics is needed. When discussing the nuclear phase-out, one has to be aware that not only the risk of accidents with a release of radioactivity, but also a permanent release of radioactivity causes an increased risk of cancer in the vicinity but also in wider distances from the nuclear facilities."

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power plant and the resulting pollution could be established.<sup>25</sup>

**Not only the nuclear accident,  
but also the normal operation  
of reactors causes damage**

It is a question difficult to answer, whether the limits for emitting radioactivity from nuclear power plants are always reliably established. The data from the various permanent monitoring systems provide at least information that this is not always the case. So, significantly increased levels of radiation are measured during maintenance work on nuclear power plants. The peaks of tritium concentrations in the river Rhine and river Aare in Switzerland reflect the maintenance intervals of several nuclear power plants in Switzerland.<sup>26</sup> Enormous concentrations of C14 (a radioactive isotope of carbon) are measured in the vicinity of the German nuclear power plant in Neckarwestheim cyclically during maintenance operations.<sup>27</sup>

It is untenable to deny the influence of radiation if an increased incidence of childhood leukemia in the vicinity of nuclear facilities is seen in a variety of studies. What cannot be proved 100%, is nevertheless a reality to follow up. Citizens and dedicated scientists have worked out the facts around nuclear power plants in many countries. A follow up of politics is needed. When discussing the nuclear phase-out, one has to be aware that not only the risk of accidents with a release of radioactivity, but also a permanent release of radioactivity causes an increased risk of cancer in the vicinity but also in wider distances from the nuclear facilities. •

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## A child finds its way into life

by Dr Andreas Bau, pediatrician

*With regard to its social nature, the human being tries, from its very first breath onwards, to bond with the person responsible for it. A secure bond which has a reliable basis forms the fundament for the development of a successful personality.*

*In the following example, the mother is not able to play her part as the primary responsible caregiver. Read below how a child although born drug-addicted, and later at risk of failing in school and in life could receive appropriate help. At the beginning of school, because of lacking attention and arbitrary behavior she was given a psychiatric diagnosis and psycho-pharmaceutical medicine. Help came from the grandparents and professionals from the medical and psychological field.*

Sarah was born in 1992. The mother was a hard-core addict to heroin at that time and injected herself a large dose of heroin an hour before the birth of her first and only child. Sarah was born into the world underweight and heavily dependent. The doctors in the children's hospital, to which the baby was immediately brought, struggled to make her get through her first days of life. The mother, who consumed various drugs, visited her daughter inconsistently. After four weeks, she took her out of the hospital against the doctor's advice. The youth care agency did not object since the mother argued that "without my baby, I cannot get rid of my addiction."

Considering the condition of their daughter, the mother's parents began to take care of their grandchild in a loving and consistent way, shortly after her birth. This caring support was continued in the following years, since the mother frequently disappeared for several months without letting anyone know and without leaving an address. Whenever she showed up again, she immediately took Sarah with her. Different detoxification programs did not succeed with the mother. The grandparents decided that whatever they had done wrong when raising their own daughter, they would do better with their grandchild. The grandparents were quite down-to-earth and value-oriented in child-raising issues. This was confirmed by the way they raised their grandchild. During the time their own daughter had grown up, they had been influenced by the ideas of the 68-revolution and what was good for herself, which corresponded to popular child-raising theories in some circles at the time. Now they were aware of these connections and they were determined not to repeat the same mistakes.

Sarah developed a very nervous and inconsistent behavior. In kindergarten, she

was a loner and made no friends with the other children. She often left the room without asking permission, returned, however, after a while and without being asked and resumed her activity. In response to the question, why she did that, she could not give an answer. The kindergarten teacher repeatedly expressed that she suspected a perception problem with autistic tendencies. By working out her plans and intentions the child showed great persistence. The grandparents were happy about this persistence because it was an evidence that she had a strong character. After the disappointing experience with their own daughter, they raised their grandchild with clear and loving instructions. The benevolent emotional interplay with their grandchild resulted in the child becoming very attached to its grandparents.

When Sarah was six years old, the mother began a one-and-a half year withdrawal program which she successfully finished. The dependency over the years had led to problematic bodily and psychological consequences. Sarah lived with her grandparents during the length of the withdrawal program. After the completion of the withdrawal program, Sarah lived interchangeably with her mother or with her grandparents. When Sarah lived with them, the grandparents visited a pediatrician regularly who would discuss with them all their questions, especially those regarding child-raising. It was a pleasure for the pediatrician to see how their benevolent constancy resulted in building up a friendship with Sarah. The local youth welfare agency repeatedly tried to interrupt the child-raising process since it would rather have seen Sarah living with her mother instead of with the grandparents. With the support of the pediatrician, the grandparents were able to assert their view that they were the best replacement for the mother. In addition, Sarah developed a friendship to her pediatrician (as she always called him).

At the age of six, Sarah started school in an integrated class (a class in which well-achieving children and children with special needs are mixed), led by a team of teachers. The team was not capable of building up a supporting and trusting relationship to Sarah.

Direct quote of the grandparents: "The team quickly focused on Sarah's inner nervousness and gave her much attention when dealing with her in class. In the course of time, there was a noticeable improvement of her general concentration in some aspects, however, the interior nervousness remained which was accompanied by a tendency towards bellicosity. Around the time of advancement from the first to the second grade, there were several talks

with the teachers, that often resulted in different opinions with respect to the recommended measures. Some unjustified criticism was given as well which precluded good team work. So the teachers suggested among other things that Sarah should be introduced to a doctor with the goal that he prescribed *Ritalin* to calm her down. This was indeed done beginning at 24.1.99. Sarah's general condition had not noticeably changed. Quite the contrary, we had noticed that, due to the consumption of *Ritalin*, several changes had occurred such as loss of appetite, signs of exhaustion, concentration difficulties, stomach ache and nausea. After several consultations with the doctor the consumption of *Ritalin* was stopped in December 2000. The teaching team was informed and did not agree with this decision. There was more criticism claiming mistakes concerning the grandparents' approach which resulted in the recommendation to get the youth welfare agency involved. As such, we were no longer ready to leave Sarah in a school where one could not expect caring attention. An immediate attempt was made by the school authority to get Sarah a place at another school. Cooperation with the responsible teachers in the school was no longer possible due to the differing approaches to education and could finally no longer be considered acceptable in regard to Sarah's well-being."

The teaching team had made an ADH 'diagnosis' in a school child without having consulted a doctor. A teacher from this team said in a debate with the pediatrician: "Without *Ritalin*, I will no longer teach that child."

Due to the persistence of the grandparents and with active support of the pediatrician, Sarah was able to visit a normal class beginning with the third grade at another school. The new teacher, who is responsible for all the lessons except sports was delighted by the new school child, with her lively behavior and her persistence. Still it occurred now and then that Sarah left the class without asking permission. The teacher noticed this behavior but did not comment it. She seized on everything positive in the child, just like the grandparents did. She was happy, when Sarah came back and invited her warmly to work with the others. Sarah liked the teacher and felt respected by her. The teacher took care that Sarah was integrated in the class. The other school children actively helped, sensitively guided by the teacher so that Sarah felt comfortable in the new class. A morale developed in the class: this task we will solve together. A medicinal treatment with *Ritalin* was no longer

Letter to  the Editor

## Bypassing the children's well-being

If you follow the ongoing debates in education from kindergarten to high school, it must be noted that dangerous ideologies are at work, negating the fundamental insights concerning the well-being of children and society.

We know that in all youth surveys the sheltering family is wanted. We know that in the individual ontogeny of the child at least until the third year of its life the close relationship with the mother is required since it needs to learn the basic patterns of socially living together in a small group like the family. We see, that we are approaching structural unemployment. We hardly ever have budgets capable of being financed. However, for an attractive salary for the essential social work of the mothers and the cheaper "professional parents", which would spare us expensive full-time day schools, we don't have any money to spend.

We have known since 1991 from studies of the Max Planck Institute for scien-

tific education research that the comprehensive school until the 14<sup>th</sup> year of age, has, the following disadvantages:

- a) there has been a coincidence of several different talents here, on one hand it results in a loss of self-esteem of the less talented and the otherwise engaged persons, on the other hand, in "aggressive boredom" of the talented.
- b) You have to differentiate (performance groups) in the classes. The result is a very close competition, the class cohesion, class solidarity and helpfulness is destroyed – which is the opposite of the intended pro-social results which the ideologues say they envisage.
- c) The comparison of the well-proven form of schools with the comprehensive schools results in a lower overall learning experience.
- d) Finally, it was observed that performance is extensively untypical in puberty. Therefore, the assessment of a

child with respect to the course of its education is more difficult.

Furthermore: Have the negotiating ideologues ever had contact with teachers who teach classes with "arbitrarily-behaving" children, linguistically lagging behind and at the same time displaying "macho behavior" as a result of their socialisation? Still politicians without appropriate knowledge and experience are "reforming" with ill consequences for the children and the society.

At least I would like to recommend the book of *M. Felten*, "Children want to be productive – How parents and teachers can assist them" (Kösel-publishing house, Munich, 2000), and to read the extremely up-to-date educational edition of the Swiss weekly newspaper *Current Concerns* dated 31.10.2013 (22<sup>nd</sup> year, edition No. 31/32) to acquire some appropriate basic knowledge.

*Prof Dr Heinrich Wohlmeyer*

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## Americanization of Education

As always, the reading of *Current Concerns* was a great pleasure for us. In the special issue on education we read from the first to the twelfth page excellent articles round about the Curriculum 21: the headmaster, the secondary school teachers, the high school teachers, the educational politicians, the historians and the parents. Such a concentrated multiplicity of profound, lifely and compassionate viewpoints is unique and exists only in *Current Concerns*. My attention was much attract-

ed by the article of *Dr Balz Kling* concerning the Americanization of education. Many of the facts gathered in this article were new for me. Although I have dealt intensively with education and education policy in Germany for decades, the impact of the EU (Bologna) and the OECD (Pisa) on the European education was at least approximately known to me, but about the context of Washington's hegemonic policy I learned only by your article. Therefore it amazes me that it still seems to remain

of outstanding importance to the German Chancellor. This is not politics at eye level. As a retired teacher, I'm going to take more time to become involved into these degenerative cultural changes and to support you in your epochal work.

*Anton Friedrich,*

*retired director of studies, Berlin*

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

### "A child finds its way ..."

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an issue. A productive exchanged took place between the teacher, the grandparents and the pediatrician. There were often common talks after office hours. It was also possible to involve her mother, who was able to continue her life without drugs. At the end of the fourth grade, Sarah no longer left the classroom during lessons, rather, she paid careful attention and cooperated well.

Beginning with the fifth grade, Sarah visited a gymnasium (grammar school). It was not possible for her to catch up on the required knowledge, so after detailed talks with the teacher, the grandparents, the mother and the pediatrician, Sarah changed to a comprehensive school and attended the junior high school level. Here again Sarah met a teacher who stood completely at her side. Her performance be-

came constantly better and Sarah grew into a self-confident young woman. With regard to her performance, she ranged among the top third. Since 2004, she lived entirely with her grandparents, since she no longer wanted to live with her mother. This arrangement had been amicably agreed upon. The legal custody stayed with the grandparents. As such, in the following year they could entirely, without the disturbing influence of the mother, attend to the education of their granddaughter. Sarah often visited her pediatrician in this office. The medical questions, which she asked, appeared only to be an excuse for another visit with him.

To conclude, here are a few sentences of the grandparents in direct quote: "Supported by weekly team sport activities, one can recognize in Sarah, that with these measures, one could reach a completely normal development. A further step to normalization was the decision in 2002, to help Sarah

change from an integrative class into a normal school class. Since these measures were taken, after a few weeks one could recognize in Sarah that she could acquire more personality and today, her appearance and self-confidence bring joy to those responsible for her upbringing.

Today, we are convinced to have been on the right path. And a further treatment with *Ritalin* would have surely meant a step backwards in her development. With today's viewpoint, with Sara's existing evenness of temperament and self-confident appearance, we may surely look towards the future with happiness and conviction that Sarah will stay on her path.

Personally, I can only warn against wanting to handle childcare's recurring problems with the wonder-drug *Ritalin*. With its consumption, more negative than positive reactions occur and hence it certainly does harm to a child's development." •

# The smallest domestic carnivores

## Ermine and Least Weasel (“Hermännchen”) – two similar dwarfs

by Heini Hofmann

The two miniatures among native martens, ermine or short-tailed weasel and mouse weasel or least weasel (popularly and affectionately also known as *Hermännchen*) are at the same time the smallest native predators. But despite their general occurrence and because of their clan-dastine mode of life one rarely becomes aware of these goblins.

Therefore, it is difficult to distinguish them, especially since the body size varies only conditionally. Hence, the intrinsically slightly larger ermine becomes smaller with increasing southern latitude and with the mouse weasel it is just the opposite. Therefore, occasionally the animals may seem to be the same size. In the Alpine countries they can be found in regions up to 3,000 meters altitude.

### Camouflage and snowshoes

The signalling elements in short: The ermine impresses by a light brown to reddish-brown colour on the upper side of its body, while throat and belly are white to yellowish. Typical is the black tail brush. But the latter does not change colour, where otherwise in winter the animal becomes evenly white (but this again really only under winter conditions). The winter coat, however, is not only characterized by camouflage, but also by longer and thicker hair. This is especially visible on the paws, where the winter hair is larger than the sole of the feet and thus appears as a kind of snowshoes.

As far as the colouring is concerned, the mouse weasel looks similar to the ermine. The back is light brown, throat and belly are white, the tail, however, entirely foxy red without the black brush. The *Hermännchen*, though, has a brown spot on both corners of its mouth which is missing on his cousin ermine. By the way, the least weasel may change its colour to white. This, however, occurs only in northern regions or at a high altitude. This means for the Swiss Central Plateau that white weasels which one perceives in winter are ermines.

### Total coverage in the underground

As far as the habitat is concerned, ermine and mouse weasel are modest. All, fields, meadows, hedges, orchards and forest edges are likewise agreeable to them, exempt the dense forests. As ideal habitat and suitable hunting ground, the short-tailed weasel prefers the richly covered banks of riversides, lakes and ponds. Being a perfect swimmer, it is not afraid of the nearby water.



*The ermine or short-tailed weasel has a brown upper side and a white throat and belly. It lives territorially, only the nest is defended in the closer vicinity.*  
(pictures: Grisons Museum of Natural History)

The mouse weasel has even chosen the underground as total coverage. Thanks to its small size, it may make use of the corridors dug by the rodents as a protection, for hunting and even for reproduction. This allows the *Hermännchen* to inhabit monotonous areas like intensively cultured crops, where any coverage by the growth of shrubs is kept at low.

### Wide spreading

*HH.* Both weasels are spread over a large part of the northern hemisphere, from North America to Europe and Siberia to Japan. In New Zealand, both species were abandoned (to fight the rabbit plague) and in North Africa, only the mouse weasel has settled.

In Europe, the occurrence area coincides. While the least weasel is not home to Iceland and Ireland alone, the short-tailed weasel is missing in Iceland as well as in the lower shelf of the Mediterranean.

Weasels are neither typical day nor crepuscular night animals, rather both, that is mainly active during the day in summer and mostly during the night in winter. Their nest which is lined with grass and leaves as well as with hair and feathers of prey is built under rock piles and stumps, in wood piles, old walls, in burrows of rodents, in winter even close to people, in

barns and stables. In the cold season their activity is drastically reduced and they spend up to 23 hours daily in their winter nest.

### When mothers turn furies

Like all martens, indeed, like most predators at all, even the weasels live territorially. In a territory of a few to many hectares which is not defended and which may overlap with territories of foreign species the swift goblins are constantly exploring and searching for food. Their own district is thereby marked with urine, feces and the musk-smelling anal gland secretion according to weasel habit.

Within the home range, only the nest and its closer vicinity are defended, but all the more intensively, since it is here where the animals look for peace and security and where they want to raise their young undisturbedly. Especially defending their young, weasel mothers know no boundaries and they fight back the intruders with unprecedented aggressiveness, even his Majesty, the two-legged creature. Therefore, often their defiant disorder towards enemies is humanised as “courage” or “audacity”.

### Precocity females, late-bloomer males

As far as the reproduction is concerned, the short-tailed weasel and the least wea-

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Weasels build their nests under rock piles and stumps, in wood piles and old walls, but also in burrows of rodents, from time to time even in barns and stables.



The ermine's winter coat is for camouflage, whereas the tail brush is always black. The long winter hair on the soles appear as a kind of snow shoes.

#### "The smallest domestic ..."

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sel differ significantly. With the ermine, the mating season is from May to July. After a few days of development, the fertilized eggs, however, enter a dormancy of several months and settle down in the uterus wall only in the following spring (March/April). In four weeks they develop into near-term embryos and in April/May they are born in three to twelve per litter.

The young ermines are born as blind, white-fluffy tiny little things of five centimetre length and a weight of only three grams. After 34 days their tiny eyes open.

#### Geologically old

*HH.* The representatives of the marten family or mustelids, as they are sonorously called in expert talk/technical jargon, are, within the carnivores, genetically close to the bear and dog family. Thanks to its high geological age "they found time" to develop a variety of adaptations to the tree, soil and water life.

Apart from the large mustelids (badgers and otters), especially the subfamily of small, slender, short-legged and long-tailed weasel species with no less than five representatives, namely the two actual, climbing efficient marten (marten and pine marten) and the three so-called earth or polecats (Iltis and both weasels, ermine and *Hermännchen*).

From the fourth week on they start eating meat in addition to the breast milk.

Like all young martens, young ermines play almost non-stop with their mother as well as with each other. They scramble about each other, play *Fangis* (tag) and thereby learn to threat and chase. But as early as with three months they leave their mother. Hard to believe, but the females are already adults, while the males, as late-bloomer become capable of reproduction only in the following summer.

#### Short life, many enemies

With the mouse weasel certain things are different than with the ermine. His mating season is from March to May, it may occur, though, throughout the year. It knows no dormancy. The non-extended gestation period lasts only for about five weeks. In contrast to the short-tailed weasel, the mouse weasel can have young ones twice per year. Just as the number of young per litter (three to eight), this is depending on the actual field mouse occurrence.

The young *Hermännchen* develop more rapidly than their colleagues, the ermines. With only 23 days they open their tiny eyes, even before the tenth weeks they become independent, and both sexes are sexually mature in the same year, if born in spring.

Although the individual weasel may age to half a dozen years, the average age of the weasel in the wild is limited and may get to approximately twelve months.

In addition, ermine and *Hermännchen* are also on the menu of larger predators (fox, house cat) as well as raptors (eagles, buzzards, owls and barn owl). However, the main enemy of the little goblins is man, directly (hunting and trapping box) and indirectly (road traffic and mouse poison bait).

#### Hunting at day time

Thanks to their slim and agile body, both weasels are capable of tracking their prey underground. The advantage of this hunting method is that it also works in winter under thick snow crusts. Only snow tunnels have to be dug to connect to the passage way.

The appetite of the weasel is based on what is available at the time. In poor vole years, increasingly field mouse and bank voles as well as birds are on the menu, occasionally even carrion. But even weasels seem to argue about taste. While during the reproduction period of the northern water vole the ermine is feeding almost exclusively on these, the least weasel despises this "offer" entirely and sticks to the smaller common vole. *Chacun à son goût!*

Special exhibition: From 23.10. 2013 to 26.1.2014, the Grisons Museum of Natural History at the Masanserstrasse 31 in Chur shows an exhibition on the theme of "Small animals, big hunters: - mouse weasel and ermine", designed by the Natural History Museum of Berne.

[www.naturmuseum.gr.ch](http://www.naturmuseum.gr.ch)