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Current Concerns

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Gordon Brown's Advance Against Switzerland Reeks of Rotten Eggs

thk. The illegal wars on the Balkans, in Iraq and Afghanistan have swallowed and continue to swallow enormous sums that are now missing in the British Treasury. Exorbitant military spending, which decreased slightly after the breakdown of the Soviet Union, has increased over the past decade and in 2008 was specified at 46 billion Pounds (circa 66 billion Dollars) – the second highest military budget in the world, mind you – and in 20 years will aggregate to almost 1 trillion pounds that are now missing from the treasury.

In addition, the current war expenditure is making the budget skyrocket. According to the Exchequer in London, the British Government spent 1.51 billion Pounds (2.17 billion Dollars) on the war in Afghanistan in the years 2007/08. And despite the financial crisis, this amount will increase to 2.32 billion Pounds (3.36 billion Dollars) for 2008/09. The Afghanistan war has lasted for almost 8 years and the costs are accumulating correspondingly. Although expenditures for the Iraq war were reduced during the same period from 1.46 billion Pounds to 1.4 billion, this cannot hide the fact that the war has also lasted for 6 years and that much higher costs were involved at the beginning of the war operations than are involved today. These officially declared sums do not include all the consequential costs for soldiers killed in action (compensation for surviving dependents), for invalid veterans and compensation for civilian casualties. Not to forget the horrendous amounts that the US has rustled up from its allied states to finance its wars, funds that have been funnelled out of the market. If the assumption is that to date the Iraq war has cost the US two to three trillion Dollars, then one can also begin to imagine the kind of sums involved here. The British have 67,000 soldiers deployed on active duty worldwide for which immense expenditures are earmarked as well.

Great Britain on the brink of national bankruptcy

The United Kingdom has already stood on the brink of economic and financial collapse once before, in 1982. *Margret Thatcher*, Britain's Iron Lady, used the same bag of tricks many rulers – whether kings, dictators or other «elected» presidents – before and after her. In order to deter attention from domestic problems, a theater of war is opened somewhere so that little observance is paid to one's own distaster at home. Back then the Falkland War served this purpose. Buffered by the euphoria of victory and renewed popularity, Thatcher cracked down with iron force on striking British coal miners, broke up the labour unions, and immediately began to privatize public enterprises, thus pumping short-term cash into the ailing economy. Twenty-five years later, the threat of the Northern Rock Bank's collapse in the fall of 2008 glaringly brought the current financial crisis to light. The British government immediately agreed to bail the bank out with 37 billion Pounds to forstall it from collapsing and creating a run on its threatened deposits. Gordon Brown was celebrated as a hero in the crisis, other states such as Germany followed his example.

WEF: Nationalization of Banks has shattered trust

It was still not enough. The financial crisis affected further money institutions and the

British government continued its practice of pumping billions of Pounds into stricken banks, who due to highly speculative investments were being drawn deeper into the crisis' maelstrom. The British government nationalized 4 major banks in total and gave financial aid to many more. The prospect of finding private financial sponsors to re-finance the banks' losses under these tense circumstances appeared increasingly hopeless. Trust in the once popular London financial center decreased markedly. Everything that had to do with money and finances is now in a state of free fall.

Ranking behind Peru, Chile and El Salvador

At the beginning of this year the World Economic Forum (WEF) ranked Great Britain's stability behind that of Peru, Chile and El Salvador after it had been placed at the top of the list only two years before in 2006. According to the WEF, nationalizing Britain's banks had effectively shattered trust in the country. Under these circumstances, Britain's status as a credit-worthy nation has been highly put in doubt, making the prospect of receiving further credit from the global financial markets even more hopeless. The country is now caught up in an acute financial emergency. The British government can no longer generate money because it has peddled off all of its state property.

Saving banks is strangling the national budget

The billions of Pounds that have been pumped into ailing banks is forcing the national debt to climb to dizzying heights. This year's national deficit is already at 118 billion Pounds and will undoubtedly continue to increase. Addressing the IMF in an attempt to prevent declaring bankruptcy as was the case in Iceland, Hungary and the Ukraine, seems to be the only short-term solution to the problem. The renowned hedgefunds manager *Jim Rogers* accordingly ad-

vised investors to sell all of their investments in British Pounds as the government is not telling the truth: "It's finished, I hate to say this, but I would not invest a single penny in Great Britain."

The money press is being oiled

Great Britain's new indebtedness for the year 2009 will be beyond 8% of the estimated GNP and which is way above the cut-off criteria valid for the Euro region. Before the crisis really took off, Great Britain had less debt than the EU average, which was primarily due to its oil and gas exports. They no longer suffice. Britain's financial situation has changed dramatically. Its entire national debt rose from 600 billion to 2 trillion Pounds within just one year. Thus the British online newspaper *dailymail.co.uk* titled its paper on 20 February: "£2trillion - the terrifying total of our national debt [...], that's £33,000 for every man, woman and child in Britain."

Currency loses 30% of its value

As a result of the government's policy of exorbitant debt, the Pound's value tailed and has landed almost on a par with the Euro. According to the *Bank of England*, within 6 months the Pound has lost 30% of its value. The once proud island state is now facing a bleak future. If worse comes to worse, more notes will have to be printed. In this respect the Bank of England has announced that it will print 70 billion Pounds. History has already shown what this means, the lesson to be learned from Germany in 1923: the annihilation of major assets, especially those of small savers.

The London banking world has to date still not overcome its loss of its once monopoly status in favor of the New York banking center. To be overtaken by sweet small Switzerland seems to call forth activity motivat-

ed by the most base political instincts: A 16th century strategy of financial policy, namely the activity of state-condoned piracy, such as of Sir Francis Drake, to attack Spanish merchant ships and rob them of gold and silver, is now re-appearing in modernized form. It seems that in order to finance illegal and murderous wars all means are justified. Britain threatens to blacklist Switzerland while in the same breath defends its own tax havens such as the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man, the Cayman Islands and the Bermudas. In the past decade the Labour Party has done everything to make London attractive as a financial center by implementing liberal regulations and tax incentives. It is very obvious that double standards are being applied here. What can be more insidious than to seek out a militarily weaker victim and give it an initial verbal bashing while completely ignoring one's own failure and looming national bankruptcy? Using Switzerland as a scapegoat is a cunning trick that the country in any event needs to counter.

In an interview with the "NZZ am Sonntag" published on 1 March 2009, the British ambassador to Switzerland demands with Anglo-Saxon haughtiness and impudence that Switzerland should compliantly adjust its tax laws according to Anglo-Saxon laws. This goes decidedly too far. Gordon Brown's rude and disrespectful arrogance in dealing with sovereign Switzerland proves that over the past decade and in the course of its immoral behaviour and its violations of international law, England has forgotten what diplomatic decency means. Misusing the power of the strongest is a fallback on a very dark era of our history. The British government is up to its ears in a catastrophic financial crisis that it and its ally, the US, is responsible for.

A good idea might be to take responsibility and begin to look for decent solutions before its own mismanagement and arrogance causes it to go under.

Broad Resistance against NATO Summit in Germany and France

War Criminals in NATO Governments Will Be Confronted with their Crimes

km. On 3 and 4 April NATO will celebrate its 60 year anniversary in Baden-Baden, Kehl and Strassbourg on invitation of the German and the French Government.

In 1949, the year of its foundation NATO fixed its noble goals: It wanted to be a pure defense alliance and perform its activities strictly within the scope of the UN-Charter.

Even that early, however, that was mere lip service for some of the NATO members. And after 1991, when the Warsaw Pact dissolved and NATO had actually lost its justification, the breach with these resolutions became complete.

Ten years ago when waging its illegal aggressive war against the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia their unrestrained power interests made the NATO states radically break with their own treaty principles. While the war was raging, only barely veiled by some questionable legit-

imization, the heads of the NATO states' governments gave themselves a new strategic concept that was no longer compatible with the UN-Charter. It is mere cynicism (and an alarm signal) that the German Chancellor Angela Merkel demanded that NATO should be more intertwined with the UN in future.

In many respects, the war against Yugoslavia was a breach of international law and a crime.

As an aggressive war it was a crime against peace ("Nuremberg Principles") and also a crime against international humanitarian law, since DU weapons and also radio-active weapons were employed. (Find the evidence, new research findings on page 5).

That means that on 3 and 4 April politicians and military are meeting in Baden-Baden, Kehl and Strassbourg who - if laws were properly applied - would have to

stand trial before the *International Criminal Court* in Den Haag.

But the war lords and war ladies of NATO would like to avoid having to face demonstrations and protests.

Just like in former years the meeting sites will be hermetically sealed, so that civil rights shall not be exercised and that one has to expect provocations of the citizens.

The manifold protests in the environment of the NATO summit, e.g. the Program of the *International Coordinating Committee Anti-Nato-Protest concrete*, however, give evidence that there are very many people, who will hold on to their publicly expressed "No to NATO Wars".

It will be of great importance that the NATO governments will be confronted on site with their severe war crimes that they have been committing since 1999 until this very day (Afghanistan).

National Wealth Wasted for Illegal and Futile Wars

German Social Democrats staging a farce in pre-election campaign

by Karl Mueller, Germany

In his book *"The Creature from Jekyll Island"* G. Edward Griffin points out that if someone intends to increase the debts of another country's government he just has to involve this country into a war or threaten it with a war. The more vehement the threat, the more devastating the war, the greater is the demand for credit.

Since 1990 Germany has got involved into one war after the other, step by step. Germany's pile of debt has been growing continuously as well since 1990. There are profiteers from the debts and the wars and both are to be found in the same quarters. But instead of holding the perpetrators accountable in view of the imminent national bankruptcy German politicians are on the watch out for scapegoats, with the German Social Democrats leading the way.

At first sight the money that Germany spent on its war involvement doesn't seem that high. Figures are not certain. On 16 January *spiegel online* reported that the German Government had confirmed a report of the *Bildzeitung* according to which "the deployments abroad had cost more than eleven billion euro since 1992". Compared to the 904 billion US-dollars the US government had spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan until the end of 2008, this sum seems relatively low. (The actual figures will of course be much higher; cf. "New estimates on US war-costs in Iraq and Afghanistan", *Telepolis*, 23.12.2008)

But these official numbers do not tell the truth. What about the 17 billion DM which the German Government paid as a contribution to the US-American war-budget for the Gulf War in 1991? (Source: Information decree of the German Foreign Office 19 February 1991) Were they no war expenditure?

And what are we supposed to think when we learn from a book published by the former German Minister of Finance *Oscar Lafontaine*

that in 2000 64 per cent of the worldwide capital exports had gone to the USA and that the US military budget in that year had been the same as the US trade balance deficit, namely 400 billion US dollars. *Lafontaine* concludes: "We could say that America makes the foreign countries pay for her enormous military power, above all the Japanese and the Europeans." (Oskar Lafontaine (2002): *Die Wut wächst*, ISBN 3-430-15973-3) What could the meaning of this statement be today, if seen against the background of a report by the US-American *Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment* (CSBA) (www.ebaon-line.org) that the wars led by the Bush Administration had been financed by credits, i.e. by debts [...]?"

It is a fact that until today there are no reliable figures about the costs of these wars. Obviously these costs are to be concealed by all means.

But it is also a fact that the official numbers of the military budgets are rather less conclusive. Fact is that all NATO states, Germany, as a dollar owning "export world champion" in particular, contributed essentially to the funding of the US-wars on credit – to a degree that we have not found in any statistics so far.

And last not least it is a fact that all these countries have run into enormous debt. They borrow money from the globally acting finance institutes. The interest and interest on interest can flow around the world and can be invested again for even more interest and compound interest. And it is the US-Government who has the highest demand for credit, above all for their wars devouring billions. War is big money's biggest bargain. That is why German interests for German debts are funding the US wars.

And Germany heaped up an enormous mountain of debt. The latest official figures which we have access to, are from September 2008. At that time – according to the *Deut-*

sche Bundesbank – the debts of all corporate bodies in Germany, that is of the Federation, the states and municipalities, amounted to 1,547,335 million euro, i.e. 1,547 billion euro. But this was before the special expenditures of the Government amounting to billions – which are also to be financed on credit.

How much money Germany owes to whom is not published. Mostly these are globally acting banks, at home and abroad. The figures published by the Bundesbank (19 February 2009) include only the figures until the end of 2007: 409 billion euro owed to national credit institutions, 814 billion to foreign creditors. The *Bundesrepublik Deutschland Finanzagentur GmbH*, in charge of credit raising for the Republic, listed the ten most important creditors in a press release on 16 December 2009 as follows: *Barclays Bank, Deutsche Bank, Merrill Lynch, UBS, Morgan Stanley, The Royal Bank of Scotland, Société General, J.P. Morgan, Goldman Sachs and Citygroup*. All these are banks that also finance the US-American wars.

This is where the big money is being made. Year for year Germany must pay the interest, going directly to the creditors – and on into the war chests. And these interest payments are rising continuously. According to the official data of Germany's Finance Ministry Germany had to pay 20 billion euro of interest in 1991 after the annexation of the German Democratic Republic (GDR), in the year 2000 this sum had risen to 39 billion, in 2008 to almost 42 billion and the medium-dated financial planning of the federation assesses the sum to be 47 billion in 2012.

Debt service is the second biggest budget item following the budget of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs. Third comes the military budget, a budget continuously rising as well. It amounts to 31 billion euro for 2009, which is two billion more than in 2008. Adding the yearly interest payment of Ger-

man states and municipalities. In 2007 they amounted to another 30 billion euro, which means more than 70 billion per year for interest alone.

And the citizens? They do not have any benefit from Germany's payment of interest for wars and for the wars it wages. More than 100 billion of tax money is being paid over to the world of finance and the military – and at the same time poverty in Germany is rising and everywhere corners are cut: in schools, in health care, old age pensions and in many other fields.

And now the election campaign...! The German social democrats, having lost any credibility themselves, and going down in polls, are now desperately searching for a success, tooth and nail. The very party that is mainly responsible for the enormous pile of debt, for the disastrous neo-liberal course of the German economy and finance policy, for the impoverishment of ever more people in Germany and for the German war participation, is now pretending to be particularly social and to be especially striving for justice. The simple truth is that they want to press money from other countries.

In February, the candidate of the Social Democratic Party for chancellor, Frank-Walter Steinmeier and the present Finance Minister Peer Steinbrück published a 19 pages pamphlet entitled "Re-arranging our financial markets fundamentally – Our principles for the capital markets". The paper babbles about "justice", "social market economy" and "responsibility", but actually it calls for coercive measures against other sovereign states.

One phrase, however, is apt to be turned against those who are living in the glasshouse, namely: "Those who are mainly responsible should bear the burden of this crisis as well." Shouldn't we primarily think of the war powers in this context, namely the USA, Israel, Great Britain and Germany and their bankers in New York and London? •

The Gordon Brown Show: Making the Money Printing Press Run

Gordon Brown is the Prime Minister of Great Britain. On March 4, the day before the BoE announced its decision to start printing money, he delivered an oration to the US Congress. The assembled politicians loved it, affording him 19 standing ovations in the course of his speech. His remarks consisted of the repeated claim that the world would soon rise from the ashes of the current financial crisis by the means of the "bold economic plan to restore prosperity" which he in Britain and Mr Obama in the US were so heroically concocting. "... this is not blind optimism or synthetic confidence to console people," said Mr Brown, "it is the practical affirmation for our times of our faith in a better future."

Is it? The Privateer has spent years analysing and explaining the "practical" steps which governments and the central and commercial banking system they oversee have taken. We present an overview in this issue in the last part of the Global Report - beginning with the headline "Who Decides?"

Ten years ago, Gordon Brown was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Prime Minister Tony Blair. In May 1999, he gave permission for the Bank of England to announce the commencement of Gold auctions. Between July 1999 and March 2002, the BoE held seventeen Gold auctions over the course of which they divested themselves of a total of about 400 Tonnes of Gold. The average "price" received for the Gold over those auctions was about \$US 275 per ounce. Please note also that the period over which the auctions were held - July 1999 to March 2002 - almost perfectly encompasses the "bottom" from which the current global Gold bull market emerged.

Ten years later, Mr Brown has "decided" again. This time, the BoE is printing "money". This is a last gasp effort to preserve a system whose fate was sealed, in Great Britain in particular, when the BoE began to openly sell Gold and use the proceeds to buy up US Treasury debt paper almost a decade ago. •

Source: *The Privateer* 2009, Volume - Early March Issue - Number 624, page 11

Weimar – Zimbabwe – Great Britain?

As you probably know, on March 5, the Bank of England (BoE) cut UK controlling interest rates in half – from 1.00 percent to 0.5 percent. That was widely expected, and regarded as unremarkable since the European Central Bank (ECB) also cut rates by 0.50 percent on the day. What garnered global headlines is the other step taken by the BoE. The Governor of the BoE, Mr *Mervyn King*, has decided to throw the bank headlong into into the process of quantitative easing "by obtaining permission from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to "print" 150 billion UK pounds. Most of this new money would be injected into the system by means of the BoE printing up "money" and using it to buy the debt paper of the UK government, ironically known as "gilts". This is the

one step which the US Fed has been reluctant to take, even though they have been publically considering it since last December.

Your Captain was "startled", to put it mildly, when the move by the BoE was explained by a newsreader on our local (Australian) evening news as follows. Please note, this is a paraphrase, not a quote. "It didn't work in what was called the Weimar Republic' in 1923. It didn't work in Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe. But Bank of England Governor Mervyn King is going to try it anyway. He is going to start printing money to rescue Britain from its worst recession since the 1930s." It is not every day that you see and hear a TV newsstory like that!

Even more piquant were reports from *Bloomberg* the following day. Here are some

quotes:

"We're groping in the dark. Ultimately we'll know it works if the economy turns around, and that we won't know for a couple of years."

"It's effectively printing money, but because all the other government policies haven't worked, I don't think the Bank of England was left with any other choice."

"While UK officials are at pains to deny similarities with the economic policies of Robert Mugabe's Zimbabwe, where printing money has fuelled hyperinflation, some economists argue that the Bank of England hasn't much of a choice left." •

Source: *The Privateer* 2009, Volume - Early March Issue - Number 624, page XX

The British Experience:

On March 5, the Bank of England (BoE) announced that it was cutting its controlling interest rates in half, from 1.0 percent to 0.5 percent. In essence, this step erases official British rates altogether with the British central bank joining its counterparts in the US and Japan in all but eliminating the discount charged commercial banks wanting to borrow "excess reserves" from the central bank. The move was almost universally expected and did not rate much "ink" in the media reporting of the event.

What DID rate the "ink", oceans of it in fact, was the announcement made by the BoE Governor Mervyn King that the bank had decided to directly inject new money into the economy by printing it and using it to buy debt paper issued by the British government. This "decision" was made after permission had been secured by the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling. As Mr Darling's equivalent on the opposition benches,

the Shadow Chancellor, pointed out: "It's effectively printing money, but because all the other government policies haven't worked, I don't think the Bank of England was left with any other choice." In essence, as you can see from this quote, the decision was bi-partisan.

Remember that Britain was the first of the Anglo-Saxon nations to begin the process of effectively nationalising its banking system with the takeover of Northern Rock in February 2008. Now, fast forward a year to February 2009 when the BoE announced its last rate cut, bringing controlling rates from 1.5 percent to 1.0 percent. A signal feature, hugely under-reported, of this particular rate cut was the storm of protest it ignited amongst the British public. The protest was by no means confined to those from whom it could have been expected, pensioners and people on fixed income, it cut across the entire nation. Small businesses were against it, so were wage and salary earners. Even a large number of mortgage holders were against it, perceiving quite correctly that any small savings they might make on their mortgage payments would be more than eaten up in the potential fall in the resale values of their properties.

In late February, it was reported that in January, UK savers had withdrawn a record 2.3 Billion Pounds from their bank accounts. This was the largest monthly withdrawal amount in the twelve year history of the survey, beating the previous record month by 800 million Pounds or over 53 percent. It was pointed out that since the middle of 2008, the BoE had cut rates from 5.0 percent to 1.0 percent. That meant that a saver with 100,000 Pounds on deposit in a bank had seen their annual net return fall from 3700 to 290 Pounds. Despite the "government guarantees", it was simply not worth keeping money in the bank. •

Source: *The Privateer* 2009, Volume - Early March Issue - Number 624, page 10

Let's not Be Blackmailed by the War Cartel

by Tobias Salander, Switzerland

In the 19th year of the war, the states of the US-UK-Germany war alliance are facing bankruptcy. Yet, instead of transforming the military-industrial complex into a peace economy and making the economic power serve the people, the wars are carried on, even extended – and states like Switzerland are attacked, in order to raise money for the empty war chest. Instead of following the guidelines of international law, the belligerent states always follow the same pattern: Back in the 5th century BC, the Chinese strategist *Sun Tzu* advised his emperor accordingly in his “Art of War”. For the Roman Emperors it was a basic rule, the Renaissance philosopher *Machiavelli* recommended it in his “Il principe”, in the 20th century the old strategy ran under the alias of “Gladio” or “Strategy of Tension”, in the 21st century under the title “War on Terror” or, since *Obama* has taken office, as actions of “smart” or “soft” power. Times and fashions may be changing, the idea remains the same – it is called “divide et impera”, divide and conquer:

Divide and conquer

In case you want to subjugate others, in sheer greed for power and money, do work with deceptions, lies, distortions of facts and in cold blood. Build pressure from outside. But study meticulously the object of your greed as well; define the ethnic groups living there: What do they have in common, what distinguishes them? Then try to instigate one group against the other, possibly with some agents provocateurs. Some infamous action here, a murder there, home-made or by paid agents if necessary, some media amplification, and the thing gets going.

Disseminate atrocity propaganda, let one group call for help and present yourself as the rescuer in the self-provoked emergency. Let the media cover the intervention, conceal it neatly as a humanitarian act and obtain the recognition of the manipulated international public. Chaos may arise in consequence of the intervention and the local population may be under shock, which is actually desirable because it allows the implementation of far-reaching changes much faster – and without significant resistance. Finally, offer your

helping hand to reconstruct the infrastructure you have destroyed, if possible with your own companies. With the help of dexterous media coverage, the movie industry and spin doctors skilled in psychological warfare, the country, bombed back to the Stone Age, is being rebuilt. Finally, the whole story is turned into a computer game to demonstrate children as early as possible how we can “help” all over the world while filling our pockets and maintaining a clean conscience.

NATO and the strategy of tension

After World War II, the US dominated Western alliance NATO acted according to the method sketched above. *Giulio Andreotti* admitted it at court in his day: Yes, we have tried to frighten our own population. Yes, we have killed and blamed our enemies for it. Yes, we called it the “strategy of tension”, we wanted to make our population call for a strong state, we wanted to bomb them into submission, yes, we have implemented “false flag” operations – but we were in good company: All NATO states had their own secret armies, all were led by NATO, partly by the American CIA, partly by the British MI6. Yes, also the Socialist Government of France had its US-led secret army and, yes, also Germany, etc. etc. In Franco's Spain, the secret army was the Government itself.

Gulf War lies

And what about the Gulf War of 1991/1992? It all started with a lie, with tricks and fraud. After *Saddam Hussein* had received the West's support for his eight-year war against Iran and had been all but invited by US diplomacy to intervene against Kuwait's horizontal drillings into his own oil fields, the battue against the model state Iraq was triggered with the fabricated nurse story: a nurse was infiltrated by the PR firm *Hill&Knowlton* under a false identity to convince the public that murderers of premature babies can only be stopped by war.

Bombs and color revolutions

Or take the smashing of the model state Yugoslavia: The highly respected Third Way between capitalism and socialist planned econ-

omy had to be bombed away to establish a beachhead on the geo-strategically important oil and gas route into the Caucasus. Again lies over lies: The “Bread Queue Massacre” in Sarajevo, the alleged “Operation Horseshow” in Kosovo, the re-labeling of the Serbs, who had rescued numerous Jews in World War II, as the new Nazis, again managed by a PR agency, this time it was *Ruder&Finn*, whose Jewish boss *James Harff* has even publicly boasted of this coup.

And then there was the 3rd class stage play in Rambouillet. With the secret supplementary protocol, Annex B, Serbia was confronted with conditions which no sovereign state could have accepted. Serbia had to decline and NATO finally had a pretext for an attack – which nevertheless violated international law, of course.

And in case a war of aggression like the one against Serbia was not successful, they resorted to organizing groups within the country, which were paid, dressed in appropriate colors and sent off against the seats of government. Marketed as a democracy movement, under the cameras of the global media, these remote-controlled color revolutions brought down the governments in Belgrade, then in Kiev and in Georgia, but they had a hard time with Belarus and Russia itself – which earned the latter countries a reputation of being backward-oriented – simply because they would not subject themselves to the imperative of the Chicago Boys with their privatization ideology.

“Patriot Act” – today's Ermächtigungsgesetz (Enabling Act)

After the false flag operation of 9/11, the democratic states of the West were gradually transformed through elimination of all opposition, surveillance and monitoring in “Patriot Act” style into crypto-totalitarian entities to enable them to subjugate other countries without interference of any opposition. Afghanistan and Iraq were openly flattened with bombs and then handed over to multinational groups for looting. Warfare against Iran, Syria and Lebanon was more clandestine. At the same time, many Latin American states succeeded in liberating themselves

from the grip of the IMF and the World Bank and making a joint stand against the dominating power. The fact that this power reactivated its 4th fleet demonstrates only too well that the states' independence and sovereignty are not accepted in Washington's power circles.

The war alliance will have a hard time with Switzerland

And now, in the 19th year of the war, the Anglo-American war alliance is facing bankruptcy. What is more natural in this situation than extorting the money from healthy economies which have not yet given in to the dominating imperative?

The current attacks against the neutral and direct democratic Switzerland, the custodian of the Geneva Conventions and home to the International Red Cross, a successful model for a social market economy, follow the pattern described earlier – although currently without bloodshed and yet in the early phases of implementation.

With lies, distortions and undisguised threats, Switzerland is to be made ripe for attack. We can expect attempts to instigate one part of the population against another, to create and to finance radical groups and then to start howling in the media. There have been several attempts, hitherto without success. But the Swiss population is too well educated and too strongly rooted in the traditions of direct democracy, of upright and honest carriage, to be taken in by clandestine actions, manipulation and threats. It will expose them as what they are: criminal machinations of criminal elites attempting to collect money for a continuing subjugation of the world and creation of a “New World Order”.

Propagated by *George Bush* in 1990, a “New World Order” will meet the tough resistance of the Swiss population, just as the Nazis' attempt to erect a “New World Order” in the 1930s met determined resistance of the neutral and protective Switzerland. Then, the motto of the watchful democracy ran “Against red and brown fists”. In 2009, the order of the day is “All for one, one for all, against US smart power, London City chutzpah and Merkelgermany's arrogance”. •

The World has other tasks to accomplish and the Swiss citizens know about that.



This map shows the food consumption of all countries. More than 920 million people go hungry. Change the Proportions!

Six years of war in Iraq

Special Rapporteur for Iraq

Urgent request of the President of the United Nations General Assembly
before the Human Rights Council



Let the Iraqis go their own way without foreign interference, and the wounds of destruction may heal. (photo Reuters)

Six years ago, on 20 March, the USA invaded Iraq. This war was a breach of international law with terrible results: Reliable sources assess over a million dead among the Iraqi civilian population since the beginning of the invasion. At least 4'300 US-soldiers died, and more than 31'000 soldiers were wounded. Over 300 soldiers from states allied to the US were killed. More than two million Iraqis had to leave their country. According to calculations made by the US-Congress the war cost 657 billion dollars up to now. And the war goes on.

On the occasion of the 10th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva from 2 to 27 March 2009, Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the General Assembly, requested the Human Rights Council to finally appoint a special rapporteur for Iraq. This

post had been eliminated when the US invaded Iraq in 2003.

Below, the President will take the floor with an excerpt of his speech:

"25. [...] I urge the Council to focus on the profound problems that have been created by the massive violations of human rights in Iraq. Even as the world absorbs the inhumanity of the recent invasion of Gaza, we see Iraq as contemporary and ongoing example of how the illegal use of force leads inexorably to human suffering and disregard for human rights. It has set a number of precedents that we cannot allow to stand. The illegality of the use of force against Iraq cannot be doubted as its runs contrary to the prohibition of the use of force in article 2(4) of the UN Charter. All pretended justifications

notwithstanding, the aggressions against Iraq and Afghanistan and their occupations, constitute atrocities that must be condemned and repudiated by all who believe in the rule of law in international relations.

26. Reliable and independent experts estimate that over one million Iraqis have lost their lives as a direct result of the illegal invasion of their country. The various UN human rights monitors have prepared report after report documenting the unending litany of violations, of crimes of war, rights of children and women, social rights, collective punishment and treatment of prisoners of war and illegal detention of civilians. These must be addressed to bring an end to the scandalous present impunity.

27. What can the Council do? I urge you to put the questions of the situation of human

How the wounds of destruction in Iraq may heal

Zeitfragen: The media, namely many mass media, claim that the situation in Iraq has improved. Is that right?

Hans Christof von Sponeck*: I do not think that a healing process for the people or the country of Iraq has begun. Pacification in the streets constitutes a good development, but it does not indicate that the patient is recovering. The wounds of destruction are too deep, the pain of loss and humiliation is too great. This will only change, when the conqueror has left, when talk about the future is talk by Iraqis and when the string pullers have been made accountable.

What would actually be needed to improve the situation for the people of Iraq?

At the moment, national reconstruction is an important challenge. Up to now, this has been commenced but within narrow bounds. The much more important development of national reconciliation will be furthered by non-intervention into the inter-Iraqi dialogue. This dialogue must be promoted by the Iraqis themselves. This will be a very difficult process because in fact over the past six years the wounds of the contrasts between the ethnic groups, especially between the Kurdish and the Arab parts of the population, have been torn open again, and this can only be changed by letting the people of Iraq manage their own affairs without foreign meddling.

*Hans Christof von Sponeck,
former Assistant UN General Secretary
of the United Nations

rights in Iraq on your agenda. You might discuss the appointment of a special mechanism to report on the situation of human rights there. You also might consider the reports of the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights that are prepared by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI). It is ironic that for almost 20 years before the U.S led invasion and occupation, there was a Special Rapporteur on Iraq. Yet precisely when the largest human catastrophe on earth began to unfold in Iraq in 2003, this post was eliminated. Reliable sources estimate there are over one million civilian deaths in Iraq as a direct result of the U.S led aggression and occupation, and still there is no Special Rapporteur. This is a serious omission that should be corrected. [...]"

Source: Extract from an address by H. Ex. Mr. Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the UN General Assembly; The High Level Segment of the 10 Session of the Human Rights Council, Geneva 4 March 2009

10 years after the war against Yugoslavia

It is High Time to Oppose the Arrogance of the West

by Karl Mueller, Germany

More than 8 years ago, on 8 February 2001, the German ARD program broadcast a documentary of the West German Broadcasting Corporation (WDR), entitled "Es begann mit einer Lüge" (It began with a lie). For the first time after NATO's 78-days-war of aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, had started on 24 May 1999, a broader public in the German-speaking countries realized that this war of aggression had been justified with gross lies, and that obviously there had been quite other motives for this war, completely different from the ones officially proclaimed.

Expectations, however, that now the truth would gradually come to light, were not fulfilled. Even prior to 9/11, NATO and the West aligned themselves with the US war power, banking ever more exclusively on war propaganda and actual censorship.

The situation today is that the West confronts the rest of the world with the intolerable arrogance of warlords and colonial rulers and at the same time is deceiving their own

people daily; with arrogance and a rhetoric of lies, which unfortunately culminates in the behavior of the new US-American President.

The larger rest of the world, however, is no longer ready to accept this behaviour. Therefore, there is great danger that the West, striving to maintain its past supremacy in the world at any cost, is no longer willing to pursue an honest compromise. It strives for the "final victory", and thus resorts to ever tougher means to exercise its power. So the worldwide conflicts continue to escalate and political solutions are becoming ever more difficult. What is to be done?

Since 1999, the states and governments of the West have totally failed. They could have corrected the serious mistake of 1999, if they had really wanted to. Instead, oppression and discrimination of the Serbian people continue until this very day, and the West is spreading its wars all over the world.

What has to be done now is to confront lies and wars with the truth. This will happen with the full conviction that even the people

in the western states will no longer tacitly accept the havoc their political classes as well as their economic and social "elite" are causing all over the world, as soon as these people are really informed and feel addressed. In one of the coming issues, *Current Concerns* will publish a detailed supplement on this topic.

Today we have every reason to kneel down before a European people, that for more than 20 years has resisted the attempt to be forced to their knees with all malicious means of power – brutally and without consideration for the victims.

Last not least a warning must be addressed to Germany and German policy. In the 1990s, Germany was one of the main warmongers against Yugoslavia. Since 1990, a dangerous hubris has seized the German "elite", leading again to Germany's pestering and molesting other countries and peoples. That too, may end in a disaster one day, if no countermeasures are taken – for the world and for Germany as well.

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Measurement of Radioactivity of Soil Samples from Serbia, Part 2

A court in Florence has sentenced the Italian Ministry of Defence to pay a veteran to compensate for his health problems caused by exposure to uranium ammunition during his military service in Somalia. The judges based their decision on a legal-medical opinion. This in turn took into account material provided to the court by socialist member of parliament Falco Accame. He is president of the organisation "Anavafaf", which represents soldiers on active duty with high efficiency. Falco Accame refused from the beginning to accept the official lies about the alleged harmlessness of NATO uranium ammunition. Already after Israel's Lebanon war of 1982 he had experienced the health problems of Italian soldiers after their contact with similar shells in Lebanon.

The decisive argument for the positive verdict in this trial – before a civil court – was the fact that the Italian ministry of de-

fence failed to provide sufficient ABC protection gear to their soldiers, neither in Somalia 1993 nor during the Balkan war, although being aware of US directives about proper handling of uranium.

From Documents:

"The main hazard associated with depleted uranium is the harmful effect the material could have if it enters the body. If particles are inhaled or digested they can be chemically toxic and cause a significant and long lasting irradiation of internal tissue."

Source: Document as of 20.12.1984, AWS 330, signed by Robert Beard, States assistant secretary general for defense support 1984 -87.

In a research paper about the use of uranium containing weapons from 1977/78, performed by the Airforce Armament Laboratory, Eglin Air Force Base Florida, it is

promised that their results will be provided to military personnel involved in testing or handling such weapons on the battlefield for their protection.

In a memorandum from 1993 it is clearly pointed out that "when soldiers inhale or ingest DU dust, they incur a potential increase in cancer risk".

Source: Department of the Army, Office of the Surgeon General, 5109 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church VA. Memorandum for headquarters U.S. Army Chemical School. ATTN: ATZN-CM-N, Fort McClellan, AL 36205. Subject: depleted uranium (DU) safety training, 16.8.1993

These documents prove that Italy and all other NATO states probably as well were fully aware of the consequences when they bombarded Serbia with tons and tons of these substances during the Balkan wars.

Current Concerns had asked two experts in the beginning of last year to conduct thor-

ough investigations of soil samples from Serbia. The results were published in Current Concerns in June 2008. They are frightening. Now it became apparent from the investigation of additional factors that the term "depleted uranium" may well be deliberately misleading. On 9.2.2009 Zeit-Fragen reported under the title "Little Hiroshima..." about the research of the Serbian expert Mirjana Andjelkovic-Lukic – about the bombardment of Serbia in 1999. The hypothesis that the damage was caused by "little Hiroshima Bombs" is now backed by results of measurements performed by these two German nuclear physics experts. After several years of work they were able to find "hard" measuring methods for the detection of small remnants left behind by such little nuclear explosions.

The editorial staff of Current Concerns

Part 2: gamma ray spectrometry, energy of beta radiation sources, study of changes in the natural isotope proportions

In Current Concerns No 6 2008 we reported about the results of measurements of radioactivity of two soil samples from Serbia.

In the meantime the changes in the natural isotope proportions could be established with gamma ray spectrometry and chemical engineering analysis of special elements in four more samples. With one sample with high beta activity it was possible to establish the maximum range of beta radiation in aluminium and the maximum energy and the classification of isotopes respectively.

1. Gamma ray spectrometry

The findings in the four new samples (NS-15, NS-40, Pa-290g, Av-370g) are summarized in table 1.

Peculiar is the sample Av-370g:

- The relationship of uranium 238 / 235 points to "enriched uranium".
- The concentrations of uranium, thorium and potassium 40 are high in comparison to other samples.
- 2976 Bq/kg of potassium 40 correspond (in a natural proportion of isotopes) with an unusually high content of potassium of 9,5 percentage per weight.

2. Changes in the natural isotope proportions

The high concentration in the activity of potassium 40 arises the suspicion of a change in the natural isotope proportions due to radiation. Natural potassium: K 39/93,94%, K 40/0,0117%, K 41/6,73%.

The change can be established by determining the overall concentration of potassium with the method of chemical engineering and by determining the proportion of potassium 40 with gamma ray spectrometry.

Table 2 shows the respective results of three samples from Serbia and one matching sample from a far away country: The samples from Serbia show an increase of the concentration of potassium 40 by significant factors between 7 and 132.

Alterations like this, for example in the nuclear reaction Ca 40 (n,p) K 40, only happen in a neutron fluence like in nuclear explosions.

3. The maximum energy of the beta radiation sources

The maximum energy of the unknown pure beta radiation sources has been determined by measuring the maximum range of electrons in aluminium. Peculiar drops in the absorption curves are found in the area of 30 mg/cm² (0,156 MeV) and 180 mg/cm² (0,55 MeV). These energies can be assigned to carbon 14 and beryllium 10. Both isotopes originate for example in (n,p) reactions from nitrogen and boron 10 respectively.

Beta radiation with energies above 0,15 MeV can cause monochromatic (blue) Cerenkov-radiation in water. Radiation like that has been observed in bodies of water in Ser-

bia in 1999. The level of radiation in case of the occurrence of effects like these is considerable.

4. Conclusions from the perspective of radiation protection

The level of the inner exposure to radiation in a human being is up to now predominantly determined by potassium 40. It is about 0,2 mSv/a.

The increase of the concentration of potassium 40 by the factor 100 leads to a very critical level of contamination (20 mSv/a !!). Potassium has very important physiological functions in the human body.

In the "carbon" there must also have happened a shifting in the isotope proportions towards the radioactive isotope carbon 14. An increase of the level of radiation in this respect can only be estimated if specific C 14

measurements have been done, for example in the annual growth rings of trees.

Annex
table 1: gamma ray spectrometry, 2nd series, Serbia
table 2: changes in the proportions of isotopes of potassium in soil samples

February 17th, 2009
Dipl. Ing. H.W. Gabriel
Dr. D. Schalch

Table 1: Gamma ray spectrometry, 2nd series, Serbia

Nuclide	Energy keV	NS-15 570g		NS-40 470g		Pa 290g		Av 370g	
		Bq	Bq/kg	Bq	Bq/kg	Bq	Bq/kg	Bq	Bq/kg
<i>U-238-chain</i>									
Th 234	63,3	14,5	25,4	29,0	61,7	22,0	75,9	55,0	148,6
	92,6	23,4	41,1	31,0	66,0	33,3	114,8	66,0	178,4
Pa 234m	1001,0	27,0	47,4	32,0	68,1	23,0	79,3	44,0	118,9
Pb 214	351,9	17,0	29,8	28,0	59,6	27,0	93,1	49,0	132,4
Bi 214	1120,3	16,4	28,8	25,7	54,7	23,4	80,7	44,0	118,9
	1764,5	18,0	31,6	29,4	62,6	27,0	93,1	52,0	140,5
U 235	143,8			1,7	3,6	1,3	4,5	4,7	12,7
	185,7 corr.	1,3	2,28	2	4,3	3	10,3	6,1	16,5
<i>Th-232-chain</i>									
Ac 228	911,2	18,0	31,6	31,6	67,2	30,5	105,2	101,0	273,0
	1588,2	18,4	32,3	25,0	53,2	28,4	97,9	105,0	283,8
Pb 212	238,5	15,6	27,4	29,2	62,1	31,7	109,3	107,0	289,2
	300,1	17,7	31,1	32,2	68,5	33,1	114,1	107,0	289,2
Bi 212	727,3	19,0	33,3	33,0	70,2	34,8	120,0	107,0	289,2
	1620,5	50 ?		32,9	70,0	31,6	109,0	94,0	254,1
Tl 208	583,2	6,0	10,5	11,0	23,4	10,0	34,5	35,0	94,6
K 40	1460,8	367	644	489	1040	490	1690	1101	2976
Cs 137	661,7	1,5	2,6	1,7	3,6	7,7	26,6	11,3	30,5
	511 lps/kg		0,043		0,062		0,100		0,180

measurement error < ± 20%

Table 2: changes in the proportions of isotopes of potassium in soil samples from Serbia: Av 1, NS 1, Pa 1, matching sample: G 2/1206

Sample	Av 1	NS 1	Pa 1	G 2	Basis of calculation - Proportion of isotopes K 39: 93,258%, K 40: 0,0117%, K 41: 6,730% - Specific activity of potassium: 31 200 Bq/kg potassium 2976 Bq K 40 correspond with 11,1 mg K 40 - Effective cross section of the reaction Ca 40 (n,p) K 40: 0,2b Resulting fluence in a change of K 40 by the factor 100: 10 e 20 nvt
Overall potassium (mg/kg)	720	1500	1400	387	
Potassium 40 (Bq/kg)	2976	465	327	17	
Normal level K 40 (mg/kg)	0,084	0,175	0,163	0,045	
Found level K 40 (mg/kg)	11,1	1,7	1,2	0,06	
Change K 40 (comparison found level with normal level)	132	10	7	1,2	

Swiss Society Despises Power and Violence

Address of Nicolas G. Hayek, Chairman of the Board of Directors of The Swatch Group Ltd,
at the Head of Missions Lunch Meeting of His Excellency Boris Lazar, Ambassador of the Czech Republic, in Kursaal, Bern, on March 16, 2009

Why do the majority of Swiss citizens – the most genuine and typical Europeans – not want to join the European Union? Should we join or not?

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr.
Ambassador Lazar,

When Ambassador Boris Lazar asked me to address you to try to explain “why the majority of the Swiss citizens do not wish to join the European Union”, I decided to follow his invitation in the spirit of contributing to a better understanding between the European Union and the average and constructive Swiss citizen that I will try to represent today. Please consider what I say not as a scientific research presentation but as the views and positions of one Swiss belonging to the majority I mentioned.

When it was created in 1957, and for a long time afterwards, I considered what has now become the European Union a magnificent and wonderful achievement. I was at that time a relatively young man. Much later, the then European Commissioner Jacques Delors, who was a passionate European, invited me regularly to his office in Brussels. I discussed first with him alone and then together with many Europeans, at that time mainly German and French industrialists and entrepreneurs. The discussion was about how they could overcome competition from Japan, then called Japan Incorporated, without financial government aid or the help of the European Union, as we did in Switzerland with the Swiss watch industry that had been severely under pressure from the Japanese watch industry. Jacques Delors always called my appearances “L’histoire de la montre” – the story of the watch.

He also repeated at many of those meetings that I, the Swiss, was for him the most typical and true European because of my language capabilities and because of the deep cultural understanding for the various European entrepreneurs during such meetings. The most memorable of these meetings took place in Evian, with the heads of the top industries of Germany and France. It was an unforgettable experience for me.

My dream: Europe modelled on Switzerland

At that time we dreamed - at least I know I did – that Europe’s aim was to become a big Switzerland. Not so much because I believed that Switzerland was the ideal version of paradise, but because I was convinced that this was, despite many weaknesses, the best of all possible alternatives for Europe to achieve a wonderful common future at the same time as keeping its rich diversity and overwhelming cultures. It should be a common future not only for its own people, but also a strong example for a democratic and peaceful development for all people on our planet. In fact at the start, Jean Monnet and Robert Schumann declared that Switzerland was a model for a future EU: “La Suisse représente un modèle pour l’Europe” – Switzerland represents a model for Europe. Joschka Fischer, Jaques Chirac, Göran Persson and also Václav Havel have been repeating this in the last years. By the way – what a coincidence that Monnet, this highly respected European, died exactly thirty years ago on March 16.

My connection with the EU in Brussels was maintained later on for example with Romano Prodi, who I knew and who also asked my opinion in some committees. The harmonization and improvement of the economic and partly financial sectors in Europe has not disappointed me up to now, even though it is far from being perfect. The fact that wars between these great nations, France, Germany and Britain which had devastated Europe and shocked the rest of the world were resolved once and for all is no doubt one of the most magnificent and great achievements of the European community.

EU today: clumsy, bureaucratic, chaotic

But the progress in the shaping of structure suddenly stopped. The EU did not continue



Freedom and personal freedom for each and everyone have been rooted in the Swiss soul since the beginnings in the 13th century (photo ev)

the process of creating a strong, democratic and peaceful community, involving in every important segment of our life and society the emotional participation and commitment of every one or at least a majority of its citizens. At that time the number of member countries was limited and would then have permitted these few nations to create a federal state similar to that of Switzerland or the United States. This development stopped because the questions and problems it brought along were not easy to solve among politicians and nations who did not want to give up a significant part of their sovereignty and certainly not their privileges.

Instead of working in depth on the important problems to develop and shape future structures, they decided to act on the surface and add as many countries as could be found ... and this without asking the people of the countries who created the first phase of Europe whether they agreed or not. It was apparently very important for the political establishment to involve as many millions and millions of people and countries as possible in a Europe that was not even defined, except in some very limited areas of the political systems. The most important incentive for these new countries was the possibility to cash in on economic and financial rewards. This enlargement would have been more than welcome after finalizing the structure of a more or less federal Europe. It was then that my hopes were dashed for a strong, powerful, democratic and peaceful Europe in the near future... a Europe that would help improve the quality of life for this whole world, for all of us.

It appeared to us then as a heavy, bureaucratic more or less chaotic and isolated mixture of ideological, social, economic and partly financial concepts, while everything else seemed to be left to chance, God and future generations. This, however, does not exclude at all the possibility that the EU, like most extraordinary human constructions, will be a fantastic achievement in the 22nd or the 23rd century, but I hope this will happen much sooner, in this century.

Submission to the US-military

The euro as a currency is a strong example of another very good achievement that was efficiently but not completely put into practice. Britain, for example, refused to adopt the

euro, but it was in a position to do so, while many other countries were not in an economic situation to join the currency system. So the European Union has a strong currency for some countries, but not for all. The financially weaker countries adopting the Euro in the present financial crisis might become a liability to support. Nevertheless, the euro is in itself so far one of the best achievements of the EU and can be considered a success.

But how about harmonizing very important decisions regarding foreign policy, defense and war? For a Swiss citizen it is absolutely inconceivable that part of Europe supported without any hesitation the policy of the Bush administration and joined the United States in the war against Iraq. Britain, Spain and other European countries sent troops under the US military fighting contingent, while France, Germany and others absolutely refused to join. For us, it was an example of a weak common foreign policy.

In addition and against the wishes of Germany and France, other EU countries for example, signed an agreement with the US government permitting US or Nato radar and rockets systems to be installed in their countries, directed officially against Iran. Russia considered these installations a threat against its territory. Also on this important point, the members of the European Union failed to agree. The foreign policy of Europe is not visible, anywhere. It’s everything and nothing, and the impact regretfully for all of us, is weak.

Votes on EU: in Switzerland more than anywhere

The European Union with so many unique democratic and strong countries might, however, have consolidated the whole system by achieving a consensus, clearly defining and agreeing about the direction it wanted to go in Europe and in the rest of the world, and identifying the targets to strive for in all important functions, needs and wishes of our human society and our political systems.

Yet before all that, the European Union decided to enlarge this incompletely defined system as much as possible, inviting several countries to join and possibly also partly in the Near East. It would mean expanding, after the eventual Turkish adherence, to the borders of Syria, Iraq and Iran. Is the goal of the EU to open the door to a future maybe stronger and more viable European and Middle East Union? Re-

member that Cyprus is only a few miles from Lebanon where lots of European crusaders had once taken refuge. If we take this a step further, you might include and bring peace to the entire Middle East with Israelis and Palestinians as part of the EU. What a miraculous achievement this would be for the whole world. Is there any valid reason to stop this development? Not only some Swiss but many Europeans, too, have been asking themselves the same question.

But in the meantime let us come down to Earth again. According to the information I have, the Swiss are among the people best informed about role and activities of the European Union. I am quoting Andreas Gross, a member of our House of Representatives and a Swiss citizen, who published an interesting article in the Swiss newspaper NZZ (Neue Zürcher Zeitung) on February 6, 2009, just two days before the Swiss people voted in favor of various contracts (among them the freedom of movement of new EU citizens) with the European Union, thus confirming the will of the Swiss people to continue along the bilateral way rather than enter the EU. Switzerland has had more referendums or votes about Europe than any other European country.

Peoples where not allowed to vote

Many votes, more than 50, about the European Union were held in several European countries during these last decades. The six founding members of the European Union or Community created in 1957, however, never asked their people for their agreement about shaping the European Union, except Britain successfully eighteen years later in 1975. In 2005, 48 years later, France asked its citizens if they wished to accept the European constitution. They refused, as did later Dutch citizens in 2006, and finally the Irish in 2008. Based on their direct democracy system Swiss voters like those in Denmark, are the people that are best informed about EU issues in Europe. Now let’s find out why the majority of the Swiss voters refuse to enter this EU.

A society – peace-loving and opposed to any form of violence

Besides the facts already mentioned, no clear vision of Europe’s future is apparent in all the

"Swiss Society Despises Power ..."

continued from page 6

declarations, contracts and developments we have seen so far. The Swiss have no social, political, economic or financial incentive to join – on the contrary, they are and will be required to contribute heavily into the EU coffers. Chancellor Helmut Kohl for whom I worked as a member of his strategic industrial committee for Germany, honored me with a private visit in Switzerland.

During this visit he said "Nicolas Hayek, you have some credibility with the people of Switzerland. Why don't you help convince them to join the EU?" I answered "Chancellor, why is it so important for the EU to have tiny – seven and half million – Switzerland on board?" And his answer came without hesitation and faster than a bullet "because you have a hell of a lot of money that we plan to put to good use".

Swiss culture, mentality and education play a very big role in the natural reaction about the EU as we experience it today. Swiss society is one that completely despises power and violence, and violence through power. It is a society that loves peace and is absolutely against all physical violence. A concentration of too much power in one person or political party, for example, is not tolerated. Christoph Blocher of the Swiss People's Party might be a typical and probably the most obvious recent example. His political party has the largest number of voters in Switzerland. It was widely agreed that he was an efficient minister but in an attempt to accumulate too much individual power he was voted off and stopped in his tracks by our House of Representatives and the Senate.

Personal freedom of the citizens – more important than that of the state

Freedom and individual liberty for everyone have been imprinted in the Swiss soul since the country's beginnings in the 13th century, long before the French revolution brought them to the fore. Individual freedom of the citizen is often more important than the state. To express it more clearly: the state has to serve the citizen, and not the citizen the state. They are part of the basic fundamentals cherished by the Swiss. It is no coincidence that Voltaire and many others fled to Switzerland to be free to write and speak. This is probably at the basis of the very rich tradition of political and financial shelter (such as banking secrecy), a right that the Swiss hold in such high regard.

Don't forget also that it was a Swiss who created the Red Cross movement. Henri Dun-

ant could not accept what he had seen on the European battlefields of Solferino in the late 19th century. The Red Cross is a typical Swiss creation, and it can only have the impact it has because the Swiss are considered and accepted worldwide as really neutral. What is more they are regarded as totally democratic and respectful of human rights.

May I also remind you that tiny Switzerland is a sizable industrial power with one of the strongest currencies in the world. It is also a financial power, and this will most probably also stay so in the near future, even if banking secrecy laws may be substantially modified or in the improbable worst case even abolished. The strong currency and political stability together with a deeply democratic and neutral environment will consolidate the safe haven message of a Switzerland with an honest financial industry cleaned of illegal criminal excesses.

In addition, the country never had the tendency to invade foreign countries in Africa, Asia, South America or elsewhere to create colonies, unlike many other but not all European countries. Not only Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal, but also the Netherlands and Belgium were involved in creating colonies and occupied distant countries for many years. The Swiss have never considered having colonies desirable also because the Swiss mentality and society genuinely and fundamentally respect human rights and the integrity and sovereignty of each person and community in the world to a very high degree. Countries which previously had colonies did indeed also respect human rights but considered, at that time, colonies under a different aspect.

That is why Switzerland's popularity and reputation in this respect are positive among the new emerging countries. This brings us to our neutrality. Even if our culture is really very similar if not the same as that of our neighbors and relatives in France, Germany, Austria and Italy (there is hardly a Swiss who does not have close relatives in Europe), Switzerland has been neutral since 1815; it does not belong to Nato or any other military union.

Taxes are fixed or accepted by the taxpayer

Switzerland has been one of the very few countries that have been able to integrate minorities without restriction or compromise with exactly the same rights and possibilities. If you take Ticino, the Italian speaking part of Switzerland and look back at how many cabinet ministers of Switzerland have originated from that part of our country, you will be amazed at the impressive number. Without any exaggeration

we could probably claim that in Switzerland, the minorities actually often have more rights than the majority. We are inclined to call it positive discrimination.

Another characteristic of Swiss society is that the Swiss have no desire for creating a personality cult around any individual or worshipping a politician, a minister superwoman or superman. Dominant personalities make the Swiss suspicious. They accept and vote for intelligent, experienced, efficient citizens who can carry out their duties as honestly as possible, who are careful spenders and users of taxpayers' money. That is why our taxes are generally lower than in many of our neighbor countries even though the investments into our social institutions and infrastructures are higher than or at least as high as those of our neighbors. The Swiss use their democratic referendums and voting rights every time important decisions have to be taken at the level of community, towns, cantons and the confederation. This is direct democracy. Taxes have to be fixed or accepted by the tax payer. When it comes to budgets for example, we have a control system that is working quite well, even though we cannot claim that everything is under control nor that waste does not exist. We have our share of problems in this regard, too.

A Swiss government member trusts the taxpayer's money like his own

All my professional life I have openly criticized some destructive and / or illegal aspects of banking and financial systems. I also regularly criticized these issues in speeches and interviews in Switzerland and abroad. I am one of those Swiss citizens who over the years have kept a healthy suspicion about a large part of the financial economy worldwide in general and also naturally more specifically in Switzerland, in the USA and the United Kingdom.

However, many Swiss do not have a highly-developed sense of crime when it comes to declaring every bit of tax income. They rather tend to consider it a minor illegal offense (or as we say "Kavaliersdelikt"). The average Swiss government member, I repeat it, treats and manages the money of the tax payer as if it were his own, in a thrifty way. The Swiss didn't appreciate the hypocritical excesses of the bailiffs and provincial governors from centuries ago who insisted on getting as much tax money from their subjects as they could, if necessary with brutal force of arms, often using this money against the interest of their subjects. I'm thinking now for example of the Swiss national hero, William

Tell, in the play written by Germany's Friedrich Schiller.

That's why – let us call it a "forgotten" – income declaration was viewed as a rather minor illegal action without suspecting that it could be a serious criminal activity, as allegedly practiced lately by at least one very important Swiss bank. However, Switzerland or at least some officials claims to have the citizens with the lowest tax evasion percentage of all industrial nations.

The Swiss government – one of the steadiest in the world

For each Swiss it is natural that every case of tax evasion, even "conveniently" forgotten, should be punished. On the other hand the punishment should be consistent and proportionate to the "crime" that is committed and not exaggerated and blown up to a dimension it does not deserve. As we all know, this kind of situation is gathering strong controversial momentum at this very moment. The protection of the personal sphere against the unlimited curiosity of the governments if legitimate is still considered of major importance by the Swiss, but not only by them. Other European countries lately joined battle with Switzerland over this issue.

Not only the personality cult around a superwoman or superman could not exist in Switzerland, but the government of Switzerland has absolutely no medals or decorations to honor citizens for outstanding performance. Yet, some Swiss citizens are proud of receiving decorations from foreign governments.

The Swiss government is one of the most stable in the world. Practically all the important political parties are involved, thus resulting in a large acceptance by the people of Switzerland.

They all work together even in conflict situations and despite differing ideas, it is remarkable that they achieve an agreement, a compromise. We call it "concordance". It does not always work as some people would like, but in the end, a solution is always democratically accepted by all, even though sometimes rather reluctantly. The people's decisions are respected by all, I repeat by all, even by the most conceited minister or president.

The Swiss have a remarkably strong currency. Switzerland keeps a monetary discipline that makes the Swiss Franc one of the two or three most stable currencies in the world. It is even the currency that has been stable for the longest period in modern times.

We also have an amazing capacity for negotiating and finding compromises. It is one of the very central reasons for the stability of our political and social system that we always find acceptable compromises for everybody without having to fight an internal war. This is evident as I mentioned before, in the "concordance". Or in the relations with our labor unions with whom we have found an agreement whereby strikes - destructive for both the economy and the work force and disturbing for the public – are almost non-existent. It is an amazing experience to be involved in tough negotiations which at the beginning show that the positions are miles away from each other, and yet after a few weeks or months of talks, everybody more or less happily agrees.

We all feel rather equal

The result is for all a better and higher income than in most other countries, and a high standard of living for practically all. This creates a bridge between the practically non-existing levels of Swiss society that amazingly has no proletariat with big social differences between its people, no matter how big or low our income is, we feel all very equal and consider ourselves as full members of society. It might be dull for many young citizens, but for the stability and the health of a nation it is good to know that at the end no violence is necessary to come to an acceptable solution.

The Swiss are more global than most nationals of this world. Based on their education, the culture of Switzerland and the multilingual knowledge of many citizens as well as the small size of the country, a big majority of the Swiss travel extensively and know the rest of the world very well. They are highly respected for their behavior, for their men-



Switzerland - one of the world regions richest in water. (photo avoe)

continued on page 8

Ireland

The Irish Say “No” Despite Juggernaut Propaganda

EU triggers off a second campaign against Ireland’s “No”

by Titine Kriesi

Litmus test for the EU: “Now tell me, what do you think about democracy?”

Answer: “And if thou art unwilling, my dear Ireland, then force I’ll employ.”

On 18 March there were discussions in Brussels, how by means of a second propaganda roller worth 2 million pound, a “Yes” in favour of the Lisbon Treaty could be squeezed off the Irish. They also discussed how the economic crisis situation in Ireland could be made use of for the same purpose. Ireland is the only one of the 27 European Union member states that is obliged to ask its voters when a change of the integration treaty is ahead. The Irish voted “No” on the EU reform treaty, called Lisbon Treaty, on 12 June 2008, thus making use of their democratic right (whereas about 500 million European Union citizen were not asked for their consent by their own governments). The Irish “No” meant for the remaining European Union member states as a consequence that the treaty was not ratified. The Irish government who had expected a “Yes” at that time now wants its population to vote “Yes” in a second vote next October about exactly the same treaty.

The recent encroachments in connection with the Lisbon Treaty have not been forgotten and new ones are already on the way. Remember, Hans-Gert Pötering, CDU, who wants to correct the Irish “No” by exerting pressure on the Irish bishops and asking the clergy to support the Lisbon Treaty. Or Jo Leinen, SPD, who called Ireland’s “No” choleric. Or the German Ambassador, Christian Pauls, claiming on 24 March that a “no” would have “terrible con-

sequences” and that Irish voters would have to have a more positive attitude towards the EU treaty, if they wanted money from Germany and the European Union. Or Axel Schäfer, Social Democratic Party MP and spokesman for European affairs who said that Ireland would have to show more modesty, if it wanted to be a full member of the European Union. Why is Germany so interested in gaining a “Yes” vote? Because Germany’s vote would weigh more than double than it weighed before whereas Ireland’s vote would weigh less than half.

The EU correspondent of the *Irish Times* reports that only recently, on 18 March, a meeting between the entire EU Commission and Mr Martin Territt, Head of EU Commission Representation in Ireland took place in Brussels. They discussed how the Commission could influence Irish opinion in the lead-in to Ireland’s re-run of the Lisbon Treaty next October. For this purpose, the European Commission wants to spend approximately 2 million on an advertising campaign – money from the pockets of EU taxpayers (!).

On behalf of the EU Commission Representation, the *Irish Times* carried an advertisement. Therein Ireland was seeking for tenders for an advertising campaign aiming at securing a “Yes” vote for the government during the second vote on the Lisbon Treaty. In this campaign, the people were to become “better informed” about the European Union, the advantages of an EU membership and the Treaty. The advertisements contain highly loaded and tendentious statements about how much money Ireland had received from the EU over the years, or how EU laws had made phone calls and airplane flights cheaper. The campaign, which is to be

launched soon, is specially targeted at women and young voters, as these are the groups that – according to opinion polls – predominantly voted “No” on the Lisbon Treaty. The European Commission expects that Brussels will agree to invite high-ranking European Union Commissioners such as Javier Solana or EU-President José Manuel Barroso to Ireland so that this can coat Ireland with their propaganda speeches. The European Commission and the European Parliament have learned an important lesson with the first vote: Proponents of the Lisbon Treaty ought to be present in the public debates. At that time, the three most important representatives of EU institutions took a backseat in the discussion on the government’s recommendation. This time the European Union executive must be in the front row. Brussels was more determined this time, to “help” the unpopular Irish government change the opinion of their voters. They would have to be convinced of the important role of Europe and the European Union in their everyday life.

Martin Territt would inform the European Union Commissioners about the current conditions i.e. about the potential of the “No” campaign. Especially about the rise of ‘Libertas’ (a party, which stands for a democratic and transparent European Union and critically opposes an undemocratic and non-transparent EU, as it is today). Territt also wants to talk about the changed ecological situation and how this situation could be used in order to affect the result of the vote towards a “Yes”.

The Lisbon Treaty, which was rejected by France and Holland in 2005/06, has been slightly polished up in the meantime. If it met with approval, it would increase the power

and functions of the European Commission substantially and equip the Commission with exclusive rights with regard to the introduction of new European laws. Already far ahead of the last vote at the end of 2007, politicians had filed a suit with the Irish Broadcasting Complaints Commission against the office of the EU Commission in Dublin, because at that time it had promoted the Lisbon Treaty with political advertising campaigns for hundreds of thousands of pound in Irish TV-programmes and local radio stations. The institution upheld the complaint and ruled, that the EU Commission’s advertisements were indeed “political” and as such were effectively encouraging Irish broadcasters to breach the statutory ban on political advertising in Ireland and thus to act illegally.

In addition to all these infuriating undemocratic activities, the European Commission had begun – before the ratification of the treaty (!) – to train an EU diplomat corps and therefore had quasi anticipated the adoption of the treaty. If it is true that – according to EUobserver.com of 19 March 2009 – 55% of the English would rather leave the European Union, it would not be surprising, that they are not the only European Union citizens, who no longer accept the undemocratic behaviour of Brussels. If the measures of the European Union, which give a premonition of dictatorship, are meant to tenderise Ireland for the Lisbon Treaty, then we should support the Irish to stick to their „No“.

¹ The Lisbon Treaty would mean de-democratization of Europe, discrimination against smaller states, militarization of Europe and the introduction of death penalty with “risings”, “riots”, in war and immediate danger of war.

“Swiss Society Despises Power ...”

continued from page 7

tality and for the quality of their work and products.

A very solid apprenticeship education, in addition to the universities, engineering and training schools based on the solidarity of industry with the people and between the generations, the excellent know-how of craftsmanship enriched with modern technology and the sense of beauty and for high quality are unique.

Social security on all levels

Only few countries can claim a similar system. In Switzerland, these structures have been honed almost to perfection over many years in all sectors of the economy, from the locksmith, the plumber, from the carpenter to the cook and the “patissier” – all have an enhanced reputation of good Swiss work. Switzerland’s universities are among the best in the world: the Federal Institutes of Technology in Zurich and Lausanne, as well as the universities located in Berne, Basel, Geneva, Lausanne (where a Jean Monnet foundation for Europe has its home) Neuchâtel, Fribourg, Lugano, Zurich and so on. Switzerland also has one of the largest Nobel Prize winners’ list in the world compared with the size of its population.

Furthermore, Switzerland uses the militia system for its army and adopts the principle also to politics – in some smaller cantons an official has a part-time job, carried out in the spare time of the appointed minister. And amazingly – every army member can keep his or her weapon at home. This encourages the feeling of security and the nearness of the Swiss people to the army. However, the storage issue is presently under discussion and the system might change soon. We shall see.

Switzerland is a very modern community, and in practically every corner of its mountainous terrain the same modern infrastructures are developed as in all other areas. Social security at all levels, and health and invalidity insurance are among the most efficient in the world.

When talking about Swiss infrastructure I have to mention also the highly-acclaimed hospitals, the railroads that almost always

run on time, and the high-quality research and development centers, genuine temples of knowledge. Let me add that the clean environment is another proof that the Swiss have the greatest respect for ecology, the beauty of the landscape and Mother Nature.

Switzerland has one of the highest shares of foreign citizens

For all these reasons, and because of the absolute neutrality of Switzerland, the United Nations and many international organizations have set up a base in Switzerland. The International Olympic Committee, FIFA, the International Rowing Federation, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the nuclear research center Cern – and many others have chosen the neutral and secure ground of Switzerland for their headquarters, as well as some 1.6 million foreigners living happily and peacefully here. Switzerland has one of the highest if not the highest percentages of foreign citizens in the world. More than one person out of five is a foreigner mainly from the EU. This percentage is always increasing not least because of the life quality and high standard of living. And in this count the many “frontaliers”, the daily frontier commuters from France, Italy, Austria and Germany are not included.

Switzerland was created in the 13th century by three cantons and over time these states were complemented by 23 other cantons. Over hundreds of years, they have maintained a very strong sovereignty at the canton level. The Swiss government, as you all may know, is not very powerful compared with other countries, even though it has the power to decide and put into practice foreign policy, infrastructure and defense matters and many other important sectors of our life. But the Swiss don’t appreciate a strong central power, and even less so if it should be in a Brussels that is perceived as constantly seeking more power and influence.

Finding a workable compromise

We Swiss, like all human beings, also have lots of shortcomings, disadvantages and weaknesses, and yes, we make our fair share of mistakes. But we don’t have the need or the

time today to talk about them because they are irrelevant in our decision-making process about Europe. In addition, they could not destroy the dynamic message of Switzerland. It is considered a pearl.

Entering the EU with our heart and soul might destroy a big part of this pearl. And this would neither be in the interest of the Swiss, nor in the interest of the people of Europe, let alone the interest of the rest of the world. Switzerland is no doubt European, it is in the heart of Europe, and nobody, not even the Swiss themselves, can cut us out of this wonderful and beautiful European map and landscape. That is why trade between Switzerland and Europe is paramount. We buy more from Europe than we sell to Europe, but both exports and imports are very substantial and absolute-

ly vital as you all know. It would be a very big mistake if one of the two partners would try to blackmail the other on the issue of this very positive economic exchange.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, these are the frankly presented, and I have to admit one-sided and perhaps overly positive views of an average Swiss and motivated European.

Now tell me, please, if you were Swiss, would you want to join this EU now? I even suspect very strongly that after listening to my speech, you would probably refuse to accept Switzerland in the EU should it wish to become a full member. But let’s keep the dialog open. Remember we can always find a constructive compromise

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