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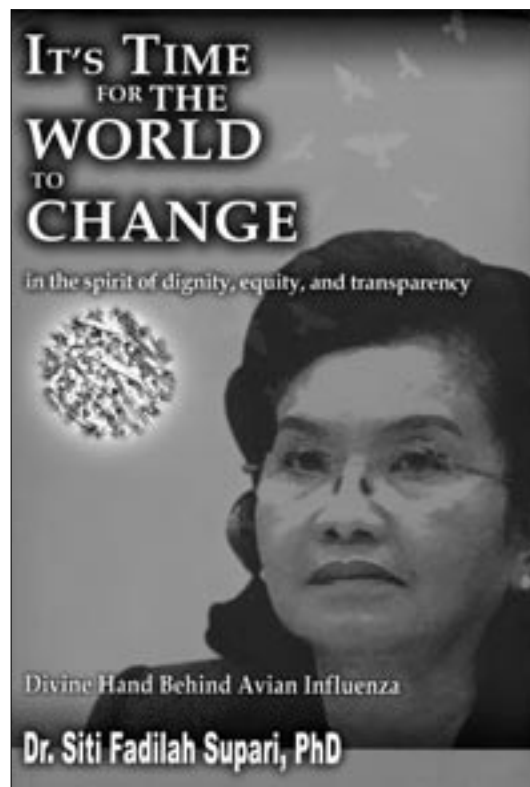
Current Concerns

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

Indonesian Minister of Health Demands Dignity, Equality and Transparency for all Countries in the World

by Eva-Maria Föllmer-Müller and Stefan Keller



Dr Siti Fadilah Supari, PhD: *It's Time for the World to Change – In the spirit of dignity, equity and transparency – Divine Hand Behind Avian Influenza*, ISBN 978-979-17357-0-4; the book is best obtainable with the publishing house: PT. Sulaksana Watinsa Indonesia (SWI), Tel./Fax: +62 21 86614125, Mobile phone: +62 818813154, Email: swi_ptina@yahoo.com

In her book, *Siti Fadilah Supari* describes her fight against the WHO and the neo-colonial efforts to deprive her country – as well as all other developing countries – of their sovereignty, their rights and their dignity. She accuses the rich industrial countries to treat the developing countries unequally and calls for transparency with respect to the passing on and processing of viruses.

She describes how the Indonesian government and the Indonesian society careful-

Avian Flu in Indonesia

Indonesia was hit the hardest by the avian flu epidemic. Since 2005 avian flu has become a serious health problem. Meanwhile there are 141 confirmed cases of avian flu in humans. 115 of the affected have died up to now.

ly handled the consequences of the avian flu in their own country and how they undertook the necessary steps to stop its spreading.

Untiring efforts in fighting the unequal treatment of developing countries

As the Minister of Health of her country she at first precisely abided by the WHO-regulations on handling the avian flu. Thereby she noticed the rich countries gross unequal treatment of the developing countries', which becomes obvious in the following examples:

The WHO requested the Indonesian Government to provide for a sufficient quantity of the substance Tamiflu for virus inhibition. It took a great effort to come up with the necessary sum of money. But still she could not acquire the medicine since the provisions had been completely bought up by the rich countries using them as their reserves. (90 percent of the vaccine trade is handled by 10 percent of the world population)

These experiences led her to the conclusion that her country had to stand on its own feet. In the introduction of her book she wrote: "The case of avian influenza furthermore needs our firm commitment to always

Indonesia

Indonesia with its population of about 237,5 million is the fourth largest country with regard to its population. It comprises 13,000 to 17,000 islands, 33 provinces, 21 of them were affected by the avian flu.

Poultry is Indonesia's most important meat supplier. According to FAO (18 March 2008) 20 percent of the poultry population (14 million) are distributed on over 30 million backyards. That is why the situation is critical even today. Since the outbreak of the avian flu in 2005 more than 9,5 million poultry (ducks, geese, chicken, quail) had to be killed.

keep the Sovereignty of the Nation and the Republic of Indonesia. And beyond the acknowledgment of the majority of people, the WHO *Collaborating Centers* (WHO-CCs), in fact, has been forwarding the samples of Indonesian strain (and other strains) of avian influenza viruses to companies in the developed countries. The latter are in turn developing the viruses into vaccines, but then sell them commercially and expensively, also to the poor and the developing countries affected by the viruses." (authors note, p. xi)

Indonesian initiative against the western research monopoly

By tenacious efforts she finally succeeded to initiate a process of restructuring, aiming at more equality, fair treatment of all countries and more transparency. Because of her initiative other poor countries and developing countries summoned the courage to join the Indonesian initiative. "In expectation for healthier and more equitable world, all the countries have been in an agreement that there will be no more exploitation of one nation by others (exploitation de l'homme par l'homme) in the health aspect of the world. There will be no more system of disclaiming the right for the viruses from the poor countries affected by the pandemic, and then raising capital through deliberately commercializing the vaccines developed from the viruses, including to the poor and the developing countries." (p. xii)

She goes on: "The world knows that this is not a matter of win or loss in the arena of diplomacy. The fight against avian influenza is the fight to sustain the authentic humanity. The bet in this fight is that we can loose our lives in the pandemic, but the eradication of human race is ensured by the greediness and the mismanagement of the system of world health." (p. xxi)

When it turned out that the Indonesian avian flu virus was a particularly aggressive specimen, Dr Supari became aware of a certain mechanism: Her country was made to hand over the virus to the *Global Influenza Surveillance Network* (GISN); they would pass it on to the *WHO Collaborating Centers* (WHO-CCs); that would produce a seed virus and vaccines in one of their laboratories and then sell the vaccine expensively to the rich countries. WHO-CCs are laboratories that cooperate with the WHO and who are acknowledged as reference laboratories by Australia, Japan, Great Britain and the USA.

When renouncing the virus the country loses any title and the virus disappears in a "black hole". In the case of a pandemic those countries that made the virus avail-

able would have to queue, together with other poor countries, since the rich countries were treated preferentially. That exactly had been Vietnam's fate. After having sent its virus to the WHO-CCs Vietnam never again heard anything about what had happened with its viruses.

"Since 1952, 110 countries in the world that had had cases of common influenza (seasonal flu) have had an obligation to share the virus specimen willingly, without any encumbrance. The viruses accepted by the GISN were called wild viruses and the sample became the property of the GISN. The experts processed it for the purpose of risk assessment and research. But part of the sample was also developed into seed viruses. And it was the very seed viruses that later could be developed into vaccine. The problem for me was, after it went into commercial production, the vaccines were distributed globally, including to the affected countries who owned the wild viruses, with price which only determined by the developers, most of whom belong to the industrial and rich countries. And of course, they put the very high price for the products, with only economical reasons as determinant, disregarding the social or moral aspect. Those are characteristic of capitalism." (p. 11)

Dr Supari started to oppose this unequal treatment: "Each time I looked into the past, I saw the shadow of imperialism that had taken the most resources of my country because we had no technology to take the benefit from the resources. It seemed that I could watch they pumped out the most of our crude oil only because we did not have the technology and the money to process them." (p. 10)

Premature fallacy of the WHO

With respect to the so-called "cluster-cases" she describes another case of unequal treatment that affected her country. Indonesia has the largest cluster cases, that means the greatest incidence of avian flu within one family. In *Tanah Karo* seven of eight family members had become infected by the virus. The experts drew the conclusion – prematurely and without any further inquiry that the familial clustering was a case of man-to-man transmission of the virus.

With this conclusion they arrogantly published a press release locally and internationally meaning for the world public that the terrible avian flu pandemic had finally begun. That would have had disastrous consequences for Indonesia and the country would have become isolated.

Supari describes how she started to defend her country: "Firstly, I sent a serious notice to WHO Indonesia for releasing an uncertain statement, which will cause very severe consequences to Indonesia. [...] Secondly, I asked about the DNA sequence of the virus from Tanah Karo which had been shared with the WHO-CCs. [...] Thirdly I instructed the WHO Indonesia to correct the news of CNN, or I would sue them to the United Nations."

Next she organized a press conference and corrected the premature fallacy herself.

Even when the result of the DNA-analysis from a laboratory of her choice (without WHO acknowledgement) proved that the H5N1 virus of Tanah Karo actually was a more aggressive form of the same virus and so the man-to man transmission was not confirmed, this new information was ignored and was hushed up by scientists and the WHO.

NAMRU2

On 24 April of this year the "Jakarta Post" published an article that just this laboratory had requested immunity for all its employees. Although *Michael Leavitt* travelled to Indonesia himself, the Indonesian Government only partly acceded to this request. Instead Indonesian Secretary of Foreign Affairs *Eddy Pratomo* demanded full transparency. Indonesia was to have full access to all research projects and their results, for it was suspected that this laboratory was working by order of some secret agency. NAMRU laboratories are above all serving the US military personal that had been stationed there. In April 2008 *Siti Sapore* had stopped the virus transfer to the NAMRU2 laboratory until they would be willing to share their research findings with Indonesia and other countries so that these countries would become able to develop and produce their own vaccines.

Viruses for Los Alamos ...

Although the professional training of Indonesia's scientists was very good or even better they were not treated equally compared to their colleagues from the industrial countries. Indonesia was e.g. promised a donation of 3 million dollar by Health Minister *Michael Leavitt*, but the country did never see anything of it. When US Secretary of Foreign Affairs *Condoleezza Rice* once visited, Dr Supari learned that the money had been given to the *NAMRU2* (*US Naval Medical Research Unit 2*) with the argument that this laboratory did H5N1-research in cooperation with the Indonesian Health Ministry. NAMRU2 is a great research unit outside the USA and gives jobs to 175 employees, 19 of them are US-Americans.

An important chapter in her book deals with the secret laboratory of Los Alamos. When investigating into the whereabouts of the DNA sequence of the H5N1 virus she learned that the genetic material had been

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Biological Weapons from Los Alamos

"A senior bio defense researcher at the Defense Ministry, *Isro Samiharjo*, told the audience the U.S. government used Los Alamos to develop biological weapons. Isro supported Siti's claims, saying the samples could be used to develop weapons, added that a similar scenario had taken place in the U.S. in the 1980s, when plant-hoppers had attacked a wide range of paddy fields and turned Indonesia into an importer of paddy seeds until now. Isro said biological weapons could be used to make one country dependent on another, a condition he referred to as "covered imperialism". "There is evidently a conspiracy," he said, discussing the United States' involvement in the development of biological weapons. With the inevitable development of such weapons, Isro said, Indonesia's Defense Ministry, through its directorate for defense potential, had begun to focus on biodefense."

"Jakarta Post", 16.3.2008

The Global Food Crisis and the Right to Food

UN conference demands change of paradigm in agricultural policy

Two declarations by Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann, President of the 63. General Assembly of the United Nations on 6 April 2009

CC. On 6 April the General Assembly's so called "Interactive Thematic Dialog" dealt with the global food crisis and the right to food. The invitation came from the President of the UN General Assembly, Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann. In his opening speech he pointed out that one billion people still go hungry in today's world. He insisted that it was high time the right to food issue returned onto the international agenda. Even if many maintain the opposite, the food crisis is far from being abated. Instead it is spreading around the world. There is a clear connection between the worldwide financial crisis and the food crisis. A complete change

of thinking is needed, turning away from the "dominance of the industrialized food corporations" to a production of food on local regional and international level that really serves mankind.

The whole-day event assembled economists, agrarian ecologists, human right experts. The Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Olivier de Schutter, was present just as David Andrews, senior advisor on food policy and sustainable development to the President of the General Assembly.

Among the debaters were also representatives of the IAASTD (International Assessment of Agricultural Knowl-

edge, Science and Technology for Development), that had participated in editing the "World Agriculture Report" in 2008. (cf. *Zeit-Fragen* No 44/2008). The demand for a change of paradigm in agricultural policy has since then been to turn away from the industrialized food production and to strive for agricultural operating methods that are oriented towards small scale farming structures and a food production that secures the right to food for all humanity and has been adopted on UN-level.

In the following we publish the opening speech of Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann and his final remarks.

Opening Speech of the President of the General Assembly



Miguel d'Escoto Brockmann
(UN photo/Eskinder Debebe)

Excellencies,
High Representative of the Least Developed States,
Colleague and friend, Special Rapporteur Olivier de Schutter,
Representatives of the Rome agencies and of the United Nations System,
Brothers and Sisters All,
I am very pleased to open this informal dialogue of the General Assembly on the global food crisis. Today's discussion will bring to our Membership not only a diversity of views, but also of disciplines and knowledge. It is most appropriate that the General Assembly avail itself of various sources of knowledge and expertise, for indeed, the crisis we are examining in depth today, the Global Food Crisis and the Right to Food, is not independent or separate from the converging crises that are confronting us as an international community: climate change, the financial and

economic crisis, the energy crisis, and the food crisis. Rather these crises converge, interact, fuel and aggravate each other.

To better grasp the magnitude, complexity and interrelationships of the World Food Crisis we will need to apply multiple tools. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, Professor Olivier de Schutter, and my senior advisor for food policy and sustainable development, David Andrews, with assistance from the Rome agencies, have brought together a pool of qualified and outstanding speakers. They will analyze and discuss policy options for responding to the food crisis drawing upon four key instruments or dimensions: international law, emerging human rights law, the ethical and moral dilemmas, and science and technology. Together, these tools will afford us all a more comprehensive analysis, one that I am certain can contribute to the better formulation of solutions.

But I am particularly happy to be joined today by knowledge holders that bring to bear the concerns, worldviews and knowledge that all too often are underrepresented in our international policy forums. And here I am referring to our Third World scientists, our agroecologists, and our small-scale family farmers, and to our indigenous brothers and sisters. You are stakeholders and we are glad to welcome you here in this body, and learn together, through a dialogue of wisdoms. Not only do you constitute 50 per cent of the world's food producers, you also constitute a large percentage of the world's hungry.

This high-level gathering of economists, agroecologists, human rights specialists and other experts builds on the longstanding concerns of the General Assembly and other intergovernmental bodies regarding these issues. I think we all recognize the seriousness and the persistence of the food crisis that continues to unfold around the world and the need to keep it high on the international agenda.

Today we will attempt to find answers to difficult questions. Why do we continue to tolerate hunger and malnutrition now affecting a billion people in a world of abundance? What international policies are needed to assure the right to food? How can we change agricultural production to meet the challenge of food security in the future? Beyond the needed increases in food productions, how can we guarantee universal, sustained access to food – a problem that is more serious as millions more are tipped into abject poverty each day.

We build on the excellent analysis and reports of a range of UN bodies – the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP) and other agencies and funds as well as the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food and the high-level initiatives on food security organized by the Secretary-General. We also have received scientific guidance from the International Assessment of Agriculture Science and Technology in Development

(IAASTD) and other intergovernmental bodies. All of them tell us that we face an ongoing and deepening crisis that requires the establishment of a new global architecture for agriculture and food.

The United Nations has assumed a central role in addressing the pervasive challenges of food insecurity and access to food. We must support the call to strengthen our global response by relying on tools specifically based on the recognition of the right to food as a human right, specified in international law. This requires inclusive policies that recognize the needs and enable the participation of all sectors of society.

I agree with the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter, that we have a unique opportunity to profoundly reorient our food policies which currently leave a billion people on the verge of starvation. The ongoing food crisis is a symptom of a broader breakdown of selfish models of governance and production that have failed us and betrayed the trust of people around the world. These models are unsustainable and we must find alternatives both internationally and locally. It is also important to see the food crisis as directly linked to our financial crisis, the energy crisis and the overarching problems associated with climate change.

With the global downturn it is even more urgent to promote a rights-based approach to food policy. This will also address the needs of the billion small-scale farmers around the

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"Indonesian Minister of ..."

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passed on from the WHO and WHO-CCs directly to the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico. There were only very few scientists who were allowed to do research on the DNA-sequences.

Vaccines for biological weapons?

Los Alamos is the laboratory in which research is done on biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. "It shocked me very hard. I knew that the Los Alamos laboratory is under the control of the US Department of Energy. It was in the same laboratory that designed the atomic bomb to destroy Hiroshima in 1945. It is likely that they utilize the same facility to research and to develop chemical weapons. What a terrifying fact! The DNA sequence data of H5N1 virus had been the privilege for the scientists in Los Alamos. Whether they used it to make vaccine or develop chemical weapon, would depend on the need and the interest of the US government. It is indeed a very dangerous situation for the destiny of the entire human beings." (p. 19)

Supari's suspicion was justified that one of the Indonesian virus strains that had been sent to the WHO, might have been passed on to Los Alamos – for the development and production of biological weapons. "...the sender never knew the fate of their specimen. Was it sent to a nonprofit institution to develop vaccine needed by the affected countries? Or was it sent to a commercial enterprise, or even to some place to be processed into biological weapon?" (p. 13)

When she asked for the data of the Tanah-Karo-Virus that she had sent via the WHO-

CCs she learned from the Internet that the Los Alamos Laboratory had been closed. But where had her virus strains ended up? Part of the data had been given to the *Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data* (GISN) and the rest had gone to *Bio Health Security* (BHS). She learned that many researchers had also been transferred from Los Alamos to the BHS. She wondered whether the BHS was a research institution to develop biological weapons under supervision of the Pentagon. "If this was the case, it meant, that the game was continued with different name and location." (p. 21)

Before the negotiations with the WHO started her assumption was confirmed by WHO CEO Dr Margret Chan. At a meeting she told her: "What you said in your speech is definitely true. There was a criminal in the WHO who sent the seed virus or the data to Los Alamos. But now he has been terminated, Madame Minister," she said. "Please help me and David Heymann, we got the system from our predecessors. And I hope I can transform it, Madame," she continued. (p. 129)

Early in December 2006 the Indonesian Government decided to no longer hand over their viruses to the WHO and the WHO laboratories, as long as they followed the GISN's obscure mechanisms. Instead she demanded transparency, so that those countries that had been severely affected by the avian flu, would be able to profit from the surrender of the viruses.

A tough wrestling started on international level. Supari realized that the WHO secretariat had arbitrarily cancelled a passage from the guidelines for the exchange of virus material from 2005 to 2007. This passage ruled the correct exchange of virus material in such

a way that the virus strains would remain the property of their country of origin. (*Material Transfer Agreement, MTA*) [...]). "In my opinion this was an extreme violation if it could not be called a crime of an organization that should operate under the principle of clean governance." (p. 61)

It was right to denounce that gross injustice.

Criminal machinations at the WHO?

On 28 March Dr Supari organized two high-level meetings together with similar thinking countries. In her introductory speech she raised her demands.

On the day before she had already come to a consensus at a high-level-meeting that a new mechanism was necessary for the exchange of viruses. "We cannot proceed further without expressing the expectation that any programs concerning virus sample sharing must, as agreed with the WHO, be responsibly used for risk assessment purposes only and will not be used for a production of vaccine for commercial purposes, without the knowledge of the sample originating countries. I must take this point because it is important to stress that developing countries must be assured of equitable access to the H5N1 influenza vaccine. To date, while only 10% of the world is concentrated in Europe and North America, that part of the world holds 90% of the production capacity for the influenza vaccine. Meanwhile, in the event of a crisis, the majority of developing countries would have no access to vaccines during and possibly after the first wave of pandemic. We must therefore consolidate our efforts on seeking effective methodologies for the production and distribution of pandemic vaccines that also take into consider-

ation the technical, economic, and humanitarian concerns in a manner that effectively, ensures global preparedness." (p. 180)

Present at the high-level meeting were ministers of health, high representatives and other official representatives from 12 concerned countries and 23 other countries, including emerging countries and industrial countries, countries producing vaccines and further important concerned countries and the WHO. The meeting ended with the "Jakarta Declaration on Responsible Practices for Sharing Avian Influenza Viruses and Resulting Benefits". The declaration demanded to discuss the whole issue with all member states at the WHA.

On 14 May 2007 the sixtieth meeting of the WHA took place in Geneva, the result of which was laid down in the *Resolution 60.28*.

At an important government meeting on 20 November 2007 all countries agreed that there is no place for a GISN in the WHO.

Dr Supari's book shows impressively and emphatically that a woman is able to open a way and achieve a dignified and equal treatment of her country, if she is able to assume a determined standpoint and to persistently demand equality in all respects, even if she has to break through undemocratic, oppressive and neo-colonial structures. She had to assert herself against all attempts of the western world and the super power USA to finally achieve the change of paradigm by persistent negotiations: from the old paradigm that meant a great danger for humanity to a new paradigm that means welfare for the majority of the world's people.

In May 2009 the 62nd session of the WHA will take place in Geneva. Just enough time to read her important book. •

"The Global Food Crisis and ..."

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world, many of whom, astonishingly, do not have enough to eat. It will address the rights and needs of impoverished consumers – especially women and children – as well who face hunger in the midst of abundance.

Without innovative and broad changes in our food policies, we will see hunger once again spread across the world like a medieval plague. The shameful reality is that, despite the fact that we have the knowledge, the financial and technological means to prevent it, half of the human population subsists at levels of malnutrition and poverty completely incompatible with their inherent dignity and rights. This is not only shameful – it is, to use religious terminology – down right sinful, as I have often pointed out.

There is evidence that the dominant global and industrial food system has entered a process of decline. The meltdown of our financial markets and the growing calls for the overhaul of the deeply flawed Bretton Woods institutions have also initiated a process of dramatic change in the international financial architecture. We can only hope that the days of the dominance by the monoculture of industrialized food corporations are numbered as well.

UNEP, for example, recently released a report indicating that organic, small-scale farming can deliver the increased yields that were thought to be the preserve of industrial farming, without the environmental and social damage caused by industrial agriculture. Other reports point to the ecological damage and extraordinary costs related to meat production. The International Assessment of Agriculture Science and Technology in Development released its exhaustive report last year, reflecting the work of many United Nations offices, which emphasized that current methods of food production are no longer sustainable. It argued that we must change from industrial to agro-ecological methods.

Again, we are at a moment of dramatic change, perhaps a turning point. The voices for change are multiplying and, as old systems collapse in exhaustion, finally are being heard. It is time for a new politics of food, one that starts from the bottom up, not the top down. We need to have an approach to food production that is multi-functional, that has a concern for the poor and their right to food; a concern for the earth and its right to life; a concern for communities and their right to



The hungry cannot wait until tomorrow.

The change of paradigm in agricultural policy has been adopted on UN-level. (photo Reuters)

self-governance, what is referred to as food sovereignty.

At the United Nations, I have made democratization of the Organization my number one priority. So too, in food politics, I would advocate food democracy. We can move our food provisioning away from dominance by a few very large corporations to the control of people-oriented food systems that respect communities and their right to food sovereignty, and localized and regionalized food systems at the local and regional levels.

There is a growing awareness that we must face up to the fact that the "haves" of this world must change their way of life and the patterns of consumption that show little or no regard for the disastrous impact of their lifestyle on the wellbeing of their neighbors, our brothers and sisters, and our shared home, the planet Earth. We can learn from those who are moving in the direction of a new food

politics, toward food democracy. We have to move ahead in this direction. With the looming calamity of global warming, we cannot hesitate to take action.

People are calling for an end to this culture of indifference to the welfare of others. We are seeing how these economic policies have accelerated global warming and the plunder of natural resources. We see the madness of converting crops into fuel to sustain gluttonous energy appetites. To perpetuate this culture is to continue to betray our most sacred values and principles and lead us to the most terrible consequences for people and our fragile planet.

Solutions proposed within the existing economic crisis are worsening the problems. In fact, the climatic crisis obeys the same logic as the food, energy and financial crises: the logic of policies based on short-term profits and speculation for maximum accumulation

of wealth. These crises cannot be fixed one by one by technology alone. They require cross-cutting, global solutions.

Most of us here today are convinced that the confluence of crises we face do not have to provoke wider human tragedy. But we must overcome the moral mediocrity that keeps us from making the heroic sacrifices that the magnitude of the problems requires. We must address the underlying patterns of consumptions that are clearly unsustainable. We must reinforce the fundamental right to food. Realism, if not our conscience, should tell us that all humanity is in the same boat and that we will all sink or sail together. I am sure that our panel discussions today will move us in the right direction.

Thank you. •

Source: <http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/statements/foodcrisis60409.shtml>

Closing Remarks of the President of the General Assembly

*Excellencies,
Representatives of the United Nations System,
Representatives of Civil Society,
Brothers and Sisters All,*

As we come to the close of this Thematic Dialogue on the Global Food Crisis and the Right to Food, I want to thank all of the panelists and moderators and especially the Delegates who participated so constructively in this timely exchange. I am grateful to Mr *Cheick Sidi Diarra*, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Least Developed Countries, for highlighting the importance of this issue for the most vulnerable populations affected by the ongoing challenges of assuring access to adequate food supplies.

And I thank *Olivier de Schutter*, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food, for his arguments that reminded us of the logic and the moral imperative of addressing food security from rights-based perspective.

To achieve long-term solutions to the intractable but unjustifiable problems of hunger and the lack of access to food due to poverty, we must dramatically change our production models and consumption patterns. This is a profound but inescapable challenge.

Both expert panels made it clear that we must move quickly away from monoculture and return to polyculture of food production; that we must challenge the shortsightedness of producing food for cattle and cars; that we can and must end the harm that profit-driven production is doing to the quality of our food and our very lives; and we must tap the enormous potential that resides with the efficiencies and synergies of small-scale food

producers, often in stark contrast to agro-industrial production.

This meeting has demonstrated once again that the Assembly, the UN system and partners from the private sector, civil society and academia can come together to identify problems and explore solutions that reflect the concerns of all Member States. This is, of course, the role of the General Assembly mandated by the United Nations Charter.

But what is most striking about today's presentations is the wealth and diversity of views of our panelists. We have heard compelling arguments based in the solid science of the International Assessment of Agriculture Science and Technology in Development and the practical experience of our Rome-based members of the United Nations system.

We have heard from the experts and practitioners of non-governmental organizations from around the world, including the invaluable perspectives of representatives of our indigenous peoples. This is the scope of knowledge and depth of concern that will help us to reset our collective compass in the direction of true and sustainable food security for all.

One week ago we gathered in this same chamber to discuss the international financial and monetary crisis and its impact on development with the world's leading economists, trade and labor specialists. A few days later, leaders of the world's most developed economies met in London to address the challenges of the world's economic crisis.

Glaringly absent in the G20 discussions was the global food crisis, not to mention the right to food. As compelling as the economic crisis is, the food crisis strikes the most vul-

nerable of all our societies in the most immediate and uncompromising manner. The hungry cannot wait till tomorrow. This is a discussion that must be high on the international agenda and you have contributed to making this possible.

I must say a few words regarding food as a fundamental human right. There are numerous reasons to support a rights-based approach to the food crisis. Guaranteeing the right to food turns the world's hungry, recipients of our food aid, into 'rights-holders'. This constitutes a radical shift in our current paradigm.

Rather than speak for the world's hungry or on their behalf, we as an international community must join our voices with theirs and speak in defense of their rights. This will, no doubt, bring into question a series of complex issues, many of which have no single or easy answers. They bring into play the role of non-food agriculture, subsidies and unjust trade regimes. If we are serious in our intent, these difficult and often contentious issues will be part of discussion.

The right to food forms part of United Nations law. As such, UN international organizations, including its financial organizations, have an obligation to take into account as part of their decision-making process, the likely impact policy options will have on the right to food.

I am convinced we must break the tendency to examine the crisis from a single perspective. I urge us all to take into account international legal obligations, emerging human rights law, the ethical and moral dilemmas intrinsic in choosing policy options, and how emerging knowledge and technologies can be

used to assist developing countries and their peoples to better meet their fundamental right to food.

Let us look ahead. The UN calendar contains a series of processes and dates of great relevance to many of the issues raised here today. The Commission on Sustainable Development will meet next month to discuss agricultural policy, water, desertification and other relevant themes; in June this body will discuss the international financial and monetary crisis and its impact on development; later in the year we will examine progress on the Millennium Development Goals; towards the end of year there is likely to be a Summit on the Food Crisis, and finally, the important negotiations on Climate Change.

I urge all Member States when examining food, trade and agricultural policy issues in this array of forums, to give serious consideration and discussion, and to bring to bear in your analysis and responses, a rights-based approach, one grounded in the right to food. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, numerous General Assembly resolutions and other legal instruments recognize the right to adequate and nutritious food.

In closing, I would like to thank my senior advisor for food policy and sustainable development, Brother *David Andrews*, for working with our larger community to bring together this pool of qualified and outstanding speakers. Let us continue this dialogue and press at every level for the changes that will have such a profound impact on all of us and our dear Planet.

Thank you. •

Source: <http://www.un.org/ga/president/63/statements/closingfoodcrisis60409.shtml>

There is Enough for Everybody – But not of Everything

by Gabriela Neuhaus

With its demand for sustainable, small farm agriculture, the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development Report of April 2008 caused quite a stir. Hans Herren*, Deputy Chairman to the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development, has since then been travelling around the globe to propagate badly needed changes in attitude – for example in agricultural policies, but also with the consumers.

One World: How many people can the world feed sustainably?

Hans Herren: Many people say that there is no limit – particularly as one reckons that we will be 2.5 billion more in 50 years and that the population will decline again afterwards. Already today we can produce enough – also for an additional 2.5 billion people, if one didn't allow half of what is being produced to go to waste – and it has to be added, – what already today is being used up by cars. We can produce enough – but the question is how, where and at what price.

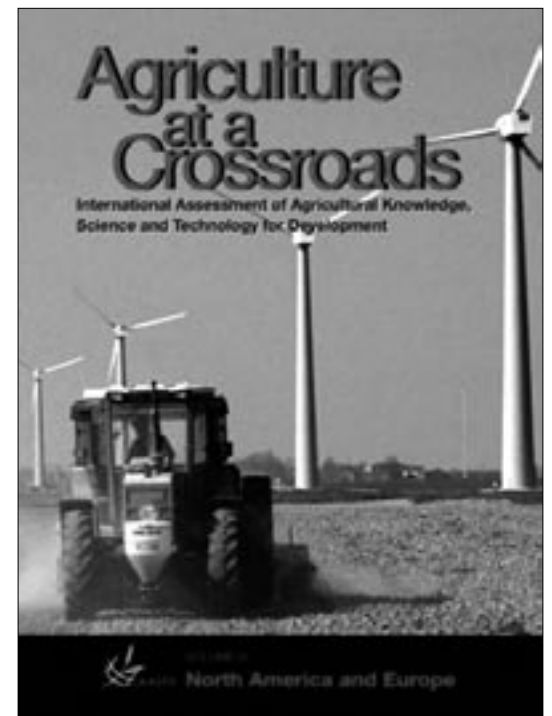
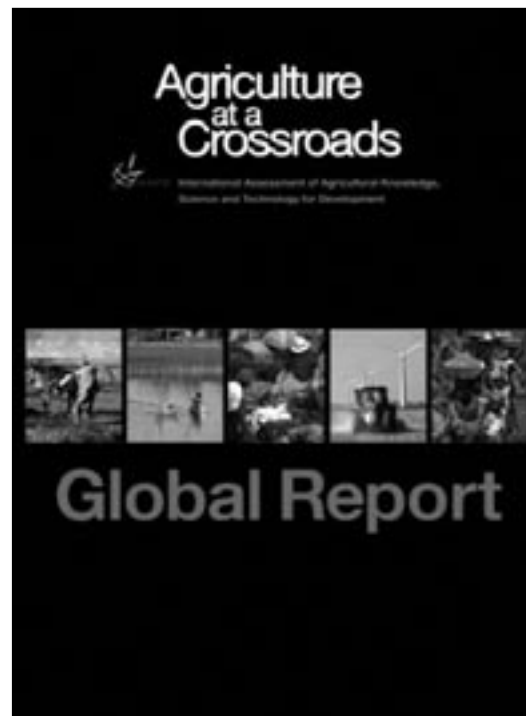
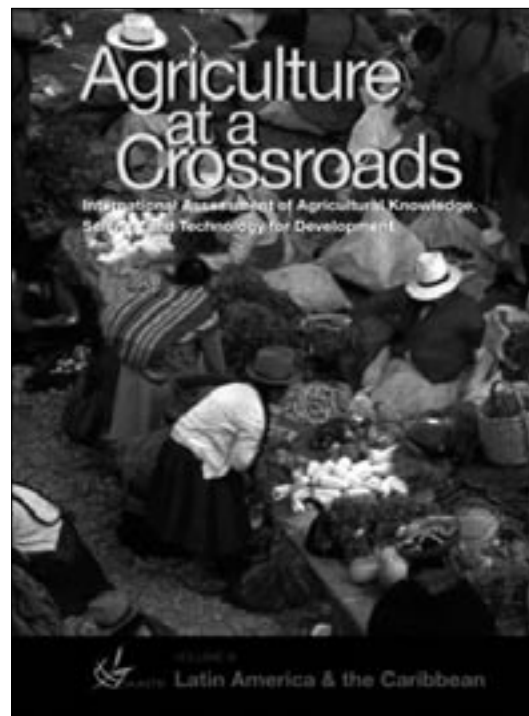
Which are the three most important points for securing sustainable global nourishment?

First, agriculture is important for the survival of humans, not only because of the food. Water, air, our entire environment needs agriculture, because it secures the ecological system services. Second, we have to preserve a living area, in which people can be happy. That means, one wants a beautiful, diverse environment and not only large corn or soy fields in a deserted countryside. And third, we need an agriculture, which helps developing countries to overcome poverty. This means, that we in the northern hemisphere should not produce surpluses with the help of direct subsidy payments, which flow into the southern hemisphere and destroy the farmers' existence there. Particularly in countries, where the infrastructure is missing, it is extremely difficult to bring agricultural goods to the market – and also the inputs don't come from the market to the fields. Here, the whole cycle doesn't work. All this is a question of investment.

What should one focus on?

Farmers must be paid for their provision of services to the ecological system. With investments in the improvement of the earth, for example with the storage of carbon dioxide, the production could be increased enormously – with this the farmers would even double the yield. Such measures can start to be taken immediately. It is not necessary to do more research.

When the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development Report (IAASTD) was released in April 2008, it met with great interest. In the



«Agriculture at a Crossroads, The Global Report.» IAASTD, Islandpress, ISBN 978 1 597 239 3

meantime it is no longer in the headlines – how do you judge its effect from today's point of view?

The interest has even increased: Today there are attempts to continue the work of the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development and to institutionalise reporting about the development in agriculture. In April 2008 the pressure to act immediately was immense, in view of the acute hunger crisis. Unfortunately non-sustainable methods to achieve food security still have a very significant impact, such as the supply of fertilizer and food aid. Particularly the industry is once more propagating genetic engineering as the solution for future hunger problems. At the same time we know today, also from the experiences of the green revolution, that such hunger cycles return over and again, if one does not work sustainably.

You plea for a small-scale farming, which works with the resources of nature. How can enough be produced with this?

Important is that the farmers can make a living with their products, that the price is acceptable for them. People have to get used to the fact that high quality nourishment costs a little more. In the North we can well afford it, in the south this is different. Nevertheless it would be wrong to keep food produce cheap there, because the farmers will remain poor. We must invest in the developing countries so that the consumers will find work and have more money at their disposal: build streets, railways and industries, which will transform agricultural products. Today most of it is being sold and exported as raw material. In Kenya for example, mangoes rot under the trees, while the mango juice con-

centrate which is sold in the supermarkets of Nairobi, comes from Pakistan. The costs for transport are too cheap; this is why it isn't worth to construct such a factory in Kenya or Sudan. This is a further problem: free trade doesn't boost local economics.

Do we have to take our leave from world trade?

Global trade only works with cheap oil. Of course, it is nice to eat strawberries during winter. But if one calculates the real costs, one cannot afford this. Moreover, the resources wouldn't last, if everybody liked to consume like we do. If we want to help those in the South to have a better life, we have to be consequent and curtail our consumption.

What does that mean precisely?

We have to live differently, for example to eat less or no meat at all. With this a lot of land could be saved. Furthermore there should be more local production. However, one should consider exactly, what is reasonable, as some local products cost more energy than products from further away. Maybe we also need a new label, which indicates how much a calorie costs in a certain product. It is certain that we have to act. Since if we continue as we acted up to now, it may perhaps go on for 10 or 15 years – our children will pay the price for this.

Source: The article appeared in "One World", No. 1/2009, magazine of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, SDC.

* The Swiss Agronomist Hans Herren belongs to the worldwide leading scientists in the field of biological plant protection. For his groundbreaking work in Africa, he was awarded the famous World Food price in 1995. Herren was among others Director of the In-

ternational Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) in Kenya for many years, where he developed integrated Programs for the Health of Humans, Animals, Plants and Environment. Since 2005, as Director of the Millennium-Institute he has been committed to working out programs and instruments to reach the millennium goals in developing countries. Together with Judi Wakhungu from the African Center for Technology Studies, Hans Herren has also headed the Institute of Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science & Technology (IAASTD) during the last four years, which laid the basis for the International Assessment of Agricultural Science and Technology for Development Report.

Global Report

The Global Report or IAASTD-Report was originally initiated by the World Bank to have – similar to the climate report – a comprehensive analysis of the situation as a basis for future developments in agriculture. During the four year process for the further development of the study, representatives of interest groups participated from all affected areas, among others farmers, consumers and environment organizations, private industry, as well as various UN organizations. The publication of the report in April 2008, caused headlines: On the one side because at that time the wheat price was at its maximum at the international stock exchanges and at the same time acute hunger crises were imminent in various regions, but most of all because in its recommendations the report rejected industrial agriculture and the green genetic engineering, and concluded that an agriculture based on small-scale farming would guarantee a sustainable food security best.

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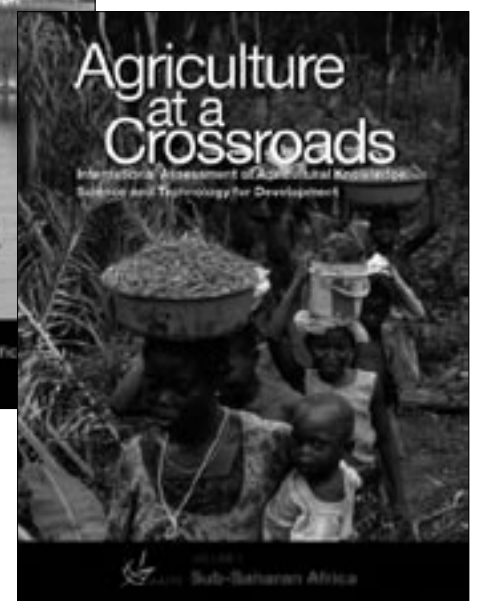
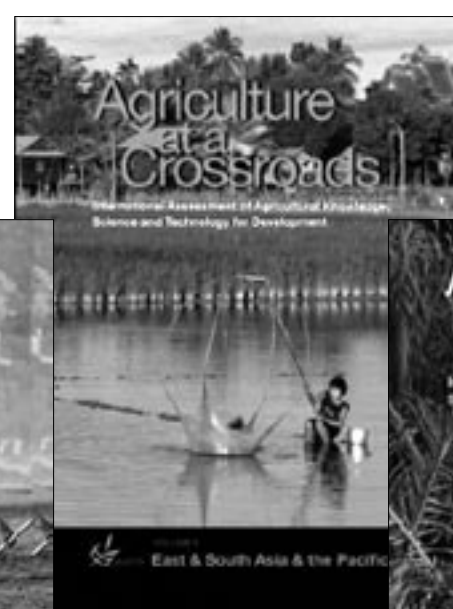
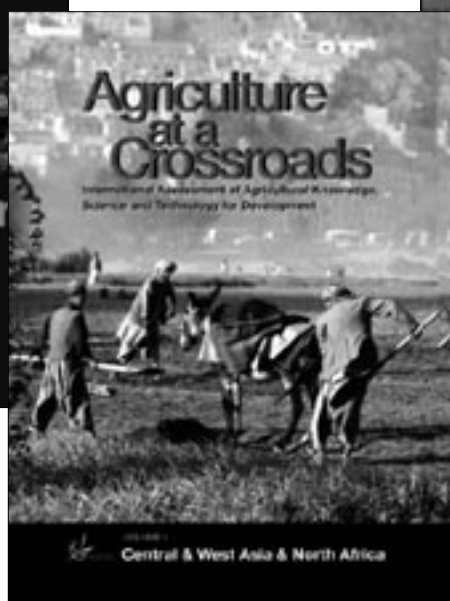
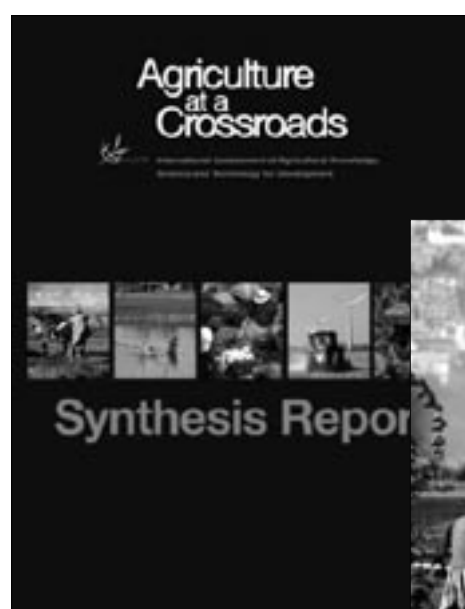
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Accusations With Regard to Israeli War Crimes Must be Investigated

by Richard Falk, UN Special Rapporteur on Palestine and Other Occupied Territories

On 23 March Richard Falk, the American Professor of International Law and UN Special Rapporteur on Palestine and Other Occupied Territories, gave his eagerly awaited oral statement to the Human Rights Council in Geneva on the human rights situation in the Gaza strip during the last war lasting from Dec 27, 2008 to 18 January 2009. In this report he blatantly expounded the gross violation of law by the Israeli Army during the war in Gaza, which had lasted for 22 days. Thereby he questioned the Israeli reasoning that this had been a legitimate war of self defense and he demanded an investigation into the question, whether the assault on Gaza, one of the most densely populated areas in the world, had to be assessed as a war crime, for which Israel would be accountable. It is not the first time that an Israeli assault on the Palestinians was entirely disproportional and not at all in accordance with the international law. After Richard Falk's clear statement the community of states have to ask themselves for how long they want to look on without taking any action against Israel's mistreatment of Palestinians.

Mr President, Distinguished Members of the Human Rights Council, Honoured Representatives of Civil Society Organizations, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In my previous statement to the Council, I spoke about the desperate situation confronting occupied Gaza. Here, I will not repeat what I already said concerning Gaza, except to take note of two important aspects of the situation not covered in my main report.

First of all, the continuation of the blockade of Gaza, despite its previous impact on the civilian population since the cease-fire was established in January 2009, and despite calls by many prominent international leaders, including by Tony Blair, Special Envoy of the Quartet for the opening of the crossings and the President of the United States. Second, to take note of recent testimonies of Israeli soldiers that add credible confirmation to the allegations of Israeli war crimes associated with the 27 December and 18 January attacks.

An unfortunate effect of recent preoccupations with the desperate humanitarian plight of Gaza has been to neglect developments adverse to the human rights of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. These developments appear to have a serious, and perhaps, a decisive negative bearing on the prospects of achieving peace between the Palestinians and Israelis, and deliberately obstruct the exercise of the right of self-deter-

mination on the part of the Palestinian people.

Since I was denied entry into Israel in December 2008, in addressing these issues, I have had to rely on reports by other sources concerning the situation in the West Bank.

The Israeli NGO *Peace Now*, issued a report in March 2009 that details official plans for the extensive expansion of existing settlements including 73,302 housing units of which 5,722 are in East Jerusalem, and the rest in the West Bank.

On the basis of calculating four persons per house, this expansion plan would add as many as 300,000 to the settler population, which is now estimated to be between 450,000 and 475,000.

It is revealing that the maps showing the expansion indicate accelerated settlement construction on both sides of Israel's security wall unlawfully constructed on West Bank territory.

As is well known, all settlement activity is in violation of Article 49 (6) of the Fourth Geneva Convention. Such activity is also inconsistent with pledges made by the Israel Government to the Quartet, and at the Annapolis meeting of December 2007. The outcome of the recent Israeli elections accentuates these concerns.

Given this background, the trends with respect to the settlements are deeply disturbing. In 2008 the settler population (not including East/Jerusalem) increased by 4.7% (three times faster than the Israeli population increase inside Israel), with the number of new structures in West Bank settlements increasing 69% beyond the rate of settlement growth in 2007, disclosing a pattern of not only expansion, but accelerated expansion.

This pattern raises the fundamental question as to how possibly could a viable independent Palestinian sovereign state be established on the currently occupied Palestinian territories, which have by now been so substantially transformed by the occupying Power. Should not the United Nations express in strong terms its opposition to the settlement process?

The settlement expansion also has negative effects on the freedom of movement of Palestinians. Currently, about one third of the West Bank, including occupied East Jerusalem is inaccessible to Palestinians without a permit issued by the Israeli Security Forces. These permits are increasingly difficult to obtain. In addition, the movement of most Palestinians is excluded on 340 km of roads inside the West Bank, a road network on which Israeli settlers are allowed free movement. Furthermore, OCHA reports that 630 obstacles block internal Palestinian movement, includ-

ing checkpoints, concrete blocks and fences etc.

The combination of the construction of the Wall, the settlement road network and the settlements themselves greatly diminishes the land available to the Palestinians and make a viable Palestinian state much more difficult to establish.

Also of concern are reports of increasing settler violence directed at the Palestinian population and their property in the West Bank. According to the Israeli human rights organization *BTselem*, there were 429 incidents of settler violence in 2008, which represents a 75% increase over 2007.

There is also continuing concern about the use of excessive force by Israeli Occupying Forces in the West Bank, especially in response to non-violent demonstrations against the construction of the Wall. *BTselem* reports that 42 Palestinian residents of the West Bank were killed during 2008 by Israeli security forces. Despite suspicious circumstances surrounding many of these deaths, almost none of these incidents were investigated, there have been generally very few prosecutions for abuse, and almost no convictions.

There are also a variety of concerns about the Palestinian future in East Jerusalem, and allegations that Israel is engaged in a subtle, but cumulatively very efficient, process to ensure Jewish demographic dominance of the whole of Jerusalem. Independent observers have reported on the near completion of the Wall which cuts through East Jerusalem (and also runs far inside Occupied Palestine if measured from the Green Line); the demolition of Palestinian homes on the grounds of the absence of a building permits that are virtually impossible to obtain; discriminatory taxing provisions; reduced issuance of working permits; and stricter enforcement of residence requirements that separate families living partly in the West Bank.

Particular concern, leading to protests and demonstrations, has been expressed in relation to the proposed demolition of 88 Palestinian homes in the Silwan neighborhood of East Jerusalem scheduled for later in 2009.

The overall effect of these measures, as applied over a period of years, if not halted and reversed, will effectively isolate East Jerusalem from the West Bank. If continued, these steps will lead to the further de-Palestinization of the city and should arouse the concern of the United Nations, and especially the Human Rights Council.

Finally, I would like to express the hope that I will be able to conduct a field mission to the occupied Palestinian territory before drafting my next report. Field visits are necessary for all Special Rapporteurs to be able

to assess adequately the human rights situation in any given country or area, and especially where policies of occupation are under scrutiny from the perspective of international humanitarian law and human rights generally. The precedent that was set in December, when I was denied entry to Israel, should be seriously challenged for the sake of both this mandate and more broadly, to ensure that in future Member States accord appropriate respect and cooperation with special procedures of the Human Rights Council as well as with other official United Nations missions and activities.

Greece's Actions Differ From UN and NATO

An interview with Argyris Sfountouris

Current Concerns: Greece is a member of NATO and EU. Nevertheless, it has its own point of view concerning the Palestine question. Its government denied a German ship carrying US weapons that berthed in a Greek harbour permission to transfer its freight to smaller ships. The ship was made to leave the port. How is this firm attitude to be explained?

Argyris Sfountouris: In this question, the Greek government is greatly influenced by the public opinion. And the Greek population has had a positive attitude towards the Arab world for decades now. You have to be aware of the fact that Greece has always maintained a good relationship and cultivated interrelations with the Arab countries. There were close trade connections, and till the Nasser coup, hundreds of thousands of Greeks lived in Egypt and among other things dominated the cotton trade. Those are old traditions that continue to have an effect. This fact became apparent on the occasion of the Iraq War, as well. Greece was not willing to send troops to Iraq. Only a hospital ship was provided and nothing else. Of course, this also had to do with the war that offended international law, with the UN not having given a mandate. Greece did not want to get its fingers burned here as, due to its own history, Greece is opposed to wars of occupation. Greece has first-hand experience of the havoc an invading army can wreak. As to these armament supplies, Greece absolutely does not want the Palestinians to get the impression that we support Israel.

Also since the dictatorial regime (1967-74) in Greece, the Greek have little faith in the US. The archives were opened 35 years after the coup, and they confirmed what many had suspected: that certain CIA officers had been in direct contact with the colonels who led the coup d'état, at the same time bypassing the official CIA channels and the other secret services. There was a secret plan for a coup concocted by the Johnson Government. All of this at that time surely had a connection with the six Days' War, which started only a few days after the coup. The government had to be checked so that nothing uncontrolled would happen. After that, the dictatorial regime ruled Greece for seven years, although the US stood up for human rights and democracy everywhere else. That was clearly a plan concocted by the NATO and it was imposed on Greece as a NATO member. This explains the Greeks' reservation against the US. And the weaker the government, the more allowance it has to make for public opinion. The last few governments were very weak regarding foreign policy, because they had great problems on the domestic front.

Argyris Sfountouris, born 1940 in Greece, came to Switzerland as a war orphan in 1949. After his graduation as a physicist, he worked at first as a teacher and later in the Relief Organization for Emergency Aid. A. Sfountouris is an expert on Greek politics.



The Wall, which cuts through East Jerusalem (and also runs far inside Occupied Palestine) is one measure that will lead to further de-Palestinization of East Jerusalem. (photo ap)

“My banker told me ...”

The American Revenue Authorities: Expansion of the Combat Area (on to Switzerland)

Discussion with Luis Suarez-Villa, professor for economy at the University of California, Irvine

Luis Suarez-Villa made his doctorate in international policy at the University of Cornell. He is a professor at the University of California, Irvine, whose member he has been since 1982. He specialized in innovative technology and its connections with social changes, economic development and regional analysis. For a longer period of time, Luis Suarez-Villa studied, taught and did research abroad, in particular in Europe, Asia and Latin America. He also often co-operates with the University of New York, the United Nations as well as Spanish and Brazilian universities.

In the following long discussion, Luis Suarez-Villa explains and criticizes the American tax system, which seems to be intended to do harm to Swiss banks. With respect to certain Swiss banks and their expansionist strategies, based on maximum risks without any foresight, his criticism is not less moderate. Luis Suarez-Villa also explains his theory of technocapitalism¹ which will enable the reader to understand the latest changes in traditional capitalism.

Daniel Laufer: You invented the term of “technocapitalism” which considers “inviolable values” to be crucial. Could you briefly explain what you mean?

Luis Suarez Villa: Technocapitalism refers to the meaning of inviolable values such as creativity and knowledge. Technocapitalism directs its activity particularly toward the understanding of research and its importance for the new areas of interest for which the 21st century will be symbolic. These areas include nanotechnology, genomics, bio-computer science, genetic engineering, the proteomics, bio-pharmacy, bio-robotics and molecular computer science, just to name a few. The importance of technocapitalism for inviolable resources also covers services with highly increasing value, which require good knowledge; they include for example the financial world, medical supplies, education and computer science. These services will be very strongly bound to the new areas. Medical treatments, for example, are increasingly connected with bio-pharmaceutics, nanotechnology and genomics. As a consequence, a new kind of medicine is developing. Perhaps we could call it bio-medicine, supported by genetics.

Although the prospect on these new areas is very promising, it contains severely terrible aspects. These aspects concern the unexpected negative consequences, which are inherent in many of these new technologies. However, the aspect of these new areas connecting them with the activities of multinational companies is particularly crucial and frightening. Large-scale enterprises have captured these areas and their absolute priority – before any other consideration – is usually oriented towards the greatest possible profit and the strengthening of their position. Therefore, they tend to place profit over all human needs and thus often damage our health, nature and the environment, destroy cultural values and corrupt politicians. This is shown quite plainly by the astronomically high number of disputes and by the distrust of the population towards many genetically manipulated pharmaceutical products. Thus, technocapitalism concentrates on the power of large companies and on their crushing control of technology in the 21st century.

Due to its high educational level and the good quality of its human resources, Switzerland represents a nation whose potential for the generation of creativity and new knowledge is enormous. This potential does not only concern the new areas that will be typical for the 21st century, but also the well-established services such as financing, medical support and education. Switzerland is therefore very well positioned in order to be a very important basis for all services that have to do with knowledge.

Swiss tradition of peace and respect

Hardly any other nation in the world with a population equal in size possesses a potential comparable to Switzerland, as it is a predominant world center for activities based on knowledge and creativity.

On the other hand, the Swiss understanding of government with its referendums and other mechanisms seems to be much more democratic than any other state system so far. The Swiss tradition of peace and respect for the other peoples is likewise crucial in this context. Peace and democratic government are crucial elements, in order to develop a healthy basis of inviolable resources, such as creativity and new knowledge, which serve human needs, respect nature and help to create a better world in general.

Due to its own history, Switzerland depends strongly on service professions, in particular on financial services. Do we have to fear that, in view of the explosion of service occupations all over the world, the financial center Switzerland will lose part of its attraction? And how can it maintain its advantages, although confidence into the banks strongly suffered due to the current crisis?

The banking center Switzerland is in danger if it neglects its roots and its Swiss cultural values. One of these fundamental values is the respect for personal privacy, which includes the financial privacy. Caution with regard to financial questions, which should be accompanied by the utmost understanding of any risk in all its dimensions, is a typical feature of the Swiss. This means that they never do anything they do not understand with regard to the tools and investment schemes. The recent losses by some of the largest Swiss banks, including the loss of some thousand jobs and the destruction of the privacy of their customers which they will be blamed for from now on, seem to point to a substantial negligence of certain Swiss values.

Financial problems of Swiss banks originate from the USA

Large parts of the financial problems, which Swiss banks are confronted with at present, and the prestige damage done to them – as enterprises dependent on the customers' confidence – originate from the USA. The US megabanks' strategies – and now also those of UBS and *Credit Suisse* (CS) – were based on certain conceptions and certain strategic models, which the US commercial banks monopolized about 40 years ago. These concepts spread in the American commercial think tanks.

They relied on the neoclassical economy, in particular on tools, which can be described as models and hypotheses of the “general equilibrium”. These models, which became known in business circles at the beginning of the 1950s (in the USA), are very unsatisfactory, not only because of their inability to measure or understand risks, but also because of their unreal hypotheses regarding behavior and the decision making process of people.

These models and the functions derived from them are at the core of economic science training in the USA and are a central component of the study programs of professional schools, including the area of finance. They were taught to generations of commercial school graduates and are now an integrating component of business practice within many areas, including finances. They are also taught worldwide, since the American kind of management has spread all over the world during the last two decades. These models served as templates for those concepts which determined the operational framework within nearly all areas of banking and finance. Their broad application in the banking world contributed much to today's worldwide financial crisis.



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“Mon banquier m’a dit ...” (My banker told me ...)

Who wants to destroy the banking center Switzerland?

Discussions on the future of the banking center Switzerland about the worldwide financial crisis, presented by David Laufer, with:

- Alain Berset, Member of the Swiss Council of States, Fribourg, (Socialist Party)
- Georges Blum, former CEO of the Union Bank of Switzerland (SBG)
- Michel Dérobert, Secretary General of the Association of Private Bankers
- Matthias-Leonhard Lang, Director of a branch of the Swiss Credit Bank Ltd.
- Christophe Reymond, Director of the Center Patronal Vaudois
- Luis Suarez-Villa, Professor for Economics at the University of California

This book has so far only been published in French

Maximizing profit by all means

These concepts and models, which I cannot describe here in sufficient detail, which must however meet our entire attention, were taken over by the major Swiss banks UBS and CS, when they established their associated companies abroad, particularly in the USA. In practice and with respect to their consequences these models, their frameworks and templates have led to a new strategic and management culture in the banking world. This new operational culture is based particularly on the crushing, almost coercive devotion to the maximization of profits by all means, including the most speculative ones. Thus, risks were substantially underestimated and the financial privacy of the customers was endangered.

The operational frameworks, based on these narrow and insufficient models, were thought up by the academic gurus of the American professional schools, often sold for millions of dollars, and then legitimized. Some of these gurus have made big money out of this, by hawking around new variants of these models and propagating them by calling the respective approaches “best practice”. But they completely neglected the fact that these practices included high risks. We have now become acquainted with these models' unreal hypotheses and their results as well as with the resulting strategies. They led to immense losses, which the American megabanks and the Swiss banks copying them, had to suffer as a consequence. It is not necessary to specify that those, who propagated, sold or defended these risky models, have lost all credibility as the worldwide financial system is now sinking into crisis.

Deregulation was the origin of an enormous wave of financial speculation

The broad application of these models, their work environment and the operational templates derived from them are closely connected with the process of financial deregulation, which began in the 1980s in the USA. This financial deregulation was – when the avalanche of the bank mergers and takeovers began – mainly responsible for the establishment of the American megabanks, while existing adjustments were reduced. This deregulation was also the trigger of an enormous wave of financial speculation, when new unregulated and extremely risky tools became objects of speculation without any restraint and without considering the consequences. Among these tools were secured debts, credit swaps, guaranteed debt bonds and others. At the beginning of the current crisis, the global value of credit derivatives alone was an estimated 520 trillion dollars. The heads of the megabank *Citibank* estimated that within the next years probably they will have to write off 400 billion dollars. En clair, this means that several banks have

given themselves to unlimited speculation for many years, without any prudence and understanding of the risks. In doing so, the banks have been gaining record profits for years, and the directors of these banks were among the best paid of all sectors. The compensation for these banks' managers have amazingly increased and often reached a six-hundredfold of the wages of an employee in the management of these banks.

One of the results of this long lasting and wildly speculative insanity is the dramatic increase of indebtedness on all levels: for the consumer, for the enterprises, for the governments and for virtually all kinds of activities. Speculating with debts seems to have therefore been one of the principal reasons for the economic growth in the United States during the last 20 years. This enormous amount of debt now threatens both the American economy as well as the American financial system. Today, the USA is the country in the world which is deepest in debt, a situation which is in complete contrast to that of the 1950s. From a financial point of view, the US is a bankrupt state. It need not be emphasized that the financial deregulation of the USA was copied by the remainder of the world and now many other states (and in fact the worldwide financial system) are threatened by the same problems, which are at present threatening the American economy and also its financial system.

This pile of debt, linked with the current financial crisis, caused a sudden collapse of the US Dollar's value. The collapse of the dollar supported the worldwide inflation. When the prices for food and gasoline increased dramatically, more than a billion people were driven into even greater poverty. The American megabanks are jointly responsible for this unprecedented wave of speculation, which triggered off the current worldwide crisis. They began to create innumerable new investment tools in order to securitize debts, integrate rating agencies – which guaranteed good evaluations for the tools they had created – and in certain cases, by bribing control boards, so that they turned a blind eye on the most shocking bank practices. They also spread financial deregulation all over the world modeling on the US example by encouraging the governments to take over the American kind of deregulation. Moreover, they financed think tanks and made them publish reports and studies, which backed the megabanks' methods, without any consideration for the containing risks. While the American financial deregulation continued to increase, important Swiss banks looked across the Atlantic and tried to imitate the developing American megabanks. They (for example UBS and CS) became megabanks themselves, by imitating the American mega-

continued on page 7

Politics Is Largely Responsible for the Financial Crisis

The German Finance Minister Steinbrück has been facing criticism for a long time

by Karl Müller, Germany



Three big Germans financial institutions that have backed the wrong horse with billions of euros in the last few years. The current German Finance Minister Peer Steinbrück was always involved. His involvement urgently requires clarification. (photos zvg)

The *Hypo Real Estate* (HRE) is a German investment bank financing real estate business and the public sector which has lost billions in speculations and, according to a recent investigation report, now has worthless paper assets at a nominal value of 235 billion euros appearing in its official balance sheet – this is 60% of its total balance sheet. So far, this bank has been kept alive with state guarantees amounting to double-digit billions of euro, that is by the tax payer's money.

But on the afternoon of March 26, the parliamentary group of the *SPD* in the *German Bundestag* has told the groups of the *FDP*, the *Green Party* and the *Left Party* that it is not yet willing to consent to the motion of the three parties to institute an investigating committee regarding the financial conduct of the HRE. This maneuver resulted in the adjourn-

ment of the resolution until the parliament's post-Easter session. And there are only a few months left before the parliamentary elections when the report is due.

SPD delays investigating committee on Hypo Real Estate

The conduct of the *SPD* contradicts the letter of the law on investigating committees ("if one quarter of the members of parliament have applied for the institution, it has to be decided without delay") and *FDP* politicians have rightly brandished it as delaying tactics.

According to the March 26 motion, the committee requested by the three party groups is to investigate not only the financial conduct of the HRE, but also the question "if decrees, instructions, misjudgments, public comments, omissions or other acts within the

realm of the Federal Ministry of Finance [...] or the *Bundesbank* (Federal Bank) have contributed to the deplorable state of the *Hypo Real Estate Holding AG* (HRE), have aggravated it or have led to an avoidable excess financial burden on citizens in the form of the acceptance of risks in connection with the federal guarantee of now 87 billion euro or in the form of probable excess burdens of the federal budget."

What did the government and Peer Steinbrück know?

In detail: the committee is to investigate "if, to what extent and when the federal government, especially Minister *Steinbrück*, was informed about the HRE's liquidity problems and, in connection with this, since when and to what extent the Ministry of Finance has been informed by the *BaFin* [an authority for supervision of the financial market] about the need to refinance the HRE or its daughters which had been detected by the *BaFin* itself or in inquiries performed by the *Bundesbank*, [...] since when does the Federal Government, especially the Ministry of Finance, know that the claims originating from HRE's hiving off [from the *HypoVereinsbank*] have expired on September 28, 2008 [...]".

These wordings are based on reports that as early as 2007 the bank supervision has urged to include the HRE holding *Depfa*, a daughter of HRE residing in Ireland which came in trouble while speculating mainly with financial certificates, in the German finance supervision. In mid-January 2008, the bank supervision requested a finance and risk report from HRE and found "indications for

a liquidity-side vulnerability" – as the Ministry of Finance stated in a convoluted manner in response to an inquiry by the *FDP* group on February 11, 2009.

Facts are not to become public until after the elections

Yet, Federal Minister of Finance Peer *Steinbrück* claims to have been informed about the dramatic situation at the HRE as late as September 22, 2008. It is interesting that on September 25 he was still on the high horse, as *Zeit Online* reported on September 29, calling out in front of party colleagues: "The crisis of the financial market is mainly an American problem."

This was just a few days before the elections in Bavaria, so the truth about the *SPD* politics and its Minister of Finance could not be the issue.

Only on the day after the elections, on September 29, it became public that 35 billion euros in guarantees had to be provided for the HRE, 27 of which are taken from the federal budget or from the tax payers. But if it is true that HRE's claims in its former owner, the *HypoVereinsbank* which is now Italian-owned, have expired on September 28, then the date September 29 requires special attention – at least according to applicants for the investigative committee.

The *FDP* group has long hesitated to join the initiative for an investigative committee. Its change of opinion is justified with the above-mentioned response to the *FDP* group's inquiry. On March 25, the leader of

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"The American Revenue ..."

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banks' firm purchases and control takeovers. This also meant that the privacy of the customers was impaired and in certain cases was completely abolished. In order to get straight access to the American market with the purchase of American investment banks such as *Paine Webber* by the *UBS* and *First Boston* by the *CS*, the Swiss banks had to submit to the American requirements and sacrifice the financial privacy of their customers even in Switzerland. In 2003, the *UBS* and the *CS* had to reveal the data of their American customers, in the framework of what the American authorities today consider to be a tacit exchange of friendly gestures – and the American authorities agreed with the access of these banks to the American market. Thus, Swiss banks to a certain extent transformed into an outpost of the American treasury in Switzerland according to the requirements of American authorities.

Playing the part of the world police seems to be a very expensive venture

Why do the American authorities place such demands? Contrary to nearly every other state of the world, the USA has an extra-territorial tax system. This means that persons residing in the USA, whether US citizen or not, are assessable to the American government, wherever in the world they are. Thus, it seems to be one of the principal purposes of the US authorities to receive from all states and their banks the financial data of each individual, who is in any way connected with the USA, even if the US must then violate these countries' national legislation. Why do the USA want to push through this excessive and boundless control system and continue using it? Part of the answer is connected with the military expenditure. The economist and Nobel Laureate *Joseph Stiglitz* recently estimated the costs of the US administration's Iraq war 3 trillion dollars². Moreover, the US military budget, wasting unbelievable sums, swallows at least as many national resources nowadays as it did during the years of the cold war. Playing the world police and enforcing its interests where and whenever possible by the use of force seems to be a very expensive venture. All these American military adventures, the prisons and the white-

washed "repatriation" operations which are nothing but kidnappings, including torture or even murder, are very expensive and must be paid. The American tax system is the main means to facilitate such procedures.

The Swiss commitment is in complete contrast to the US military machinery

It is to hardly necessary to state that the traditional Swiss commitment for peace and respect for other peoples and cultures is in complete contrast to this enormous military machinery and its expensive adventures. Nevertheless, Swiss banks are applying US tax laws on Swiss ground.

Perhaps this helps us to understand better why the American revenue offices use methods similar to those of the intelligence agencies. Arresting, interrogating or bribing bank employees and systematically evaluating the data of all bank transactions all over the world – are considered to be normal practices, nowadays. The American revenue offices believe that without exception all methods are permissible in order to procure ever more tax revenues. We must not forget that the American people have never been directly asked for their opinion on any war, taxes or other important government decisions. This seems to make a government like the US administration a very anti-democratic system of government compared with the Swiss state system which draws on referendums for every important decision. It is hardly necessary to state that the lies, the covering up and cheatings, which were used in order to lie the American people into the Iraq war would have hardly been possible or would have been denounced, if the Americans had been asked directly. Just like the Swiss people who are regularly asked for their opinion on every important decision that is taken by the government. [...]

Do you think that the increasing complexity of the financial world and its mechanisms is understood correctly by the political decision makers? Don't we risk that dabblers take important decisions in this financial crisis on things they do not understand?

The bank bosses constantly complain that politicians do not listen to them sufficiently. Politicians must listen, but above all they must keep the common welfare in mind,

which often opposes the interests of the banks. The bank bosses' highest priority is to make profits but the politicians must prioritize common welfare and national interests. Politicians must be careful and support the cultural values, if these are threatened by commercial interests. The common welfare and commercial interests may sometimes concur, but this is seldom the case. The problem is the balance of power, and none of the two parties feels well with regard to the other.

Sometimes, if the banks concentrate on their major task, i.e. the profits, they can endanger cultural values. When for example the Swiss banks, which are active in the USA, became informants and applied the American tax laws on Swiss ground, it affected privacy as a Swiss value. And why did Swiss politicians accept this kind of taxation? Did they play the tune of profit, which the banks had hoped for, in this case for their business in the USA?

You recently wrote in the "Tribune de Genève" that in your opinion the unspeakable problems, affecting Swiss economics are mainly to be attributed to the fact that those, who caused them relied on "non-Swiss" principles. Could you clarify this term?

It is difficult to synthesize the cultural values. Usually they are embodied in the laws and customs of a nation, sometimes very clearly but often in a completely subtle way. I am willing to regard the respecting of privacy as a very important Swiss value. This is a value with many facets, which – among other things – are at the same time intellectual, financial and political. Be aware that I regard privacy as being multidimensional and not limited to financial affairs. In the financial sector, privacy is probable the most important value, which supports the long-term vitality of the Swiss financial system, not only with external transactions, but also with internal transactions for the Swiss people. In the political arena, this is a value representing the Helvetian approach of democracy, which includes the direct questioning of the constituency, very often by questioning them. It includes furthermore the right to one's own opinions and political options, also in the private sphere – which again has to do with the personal dignity and identity – without seeking an official agreement before.

Refusal of war and aggression

Another value is Switzerland's traditional commitment to peace. This value includes the refusal of war and aggression. Conquest, defeat and demands to other nations are blatantly antithetic to this value. Supporting war-leading nations, which conquer and impose their will upon other peoples, are equally antithetic. Such a support can be prevented not only in diplomatic, political and cultural regard, but also in financial regard. It would be important, for example, that Swiss banks do not contribute to the support of those nations and tax systems which invest in aggression, conquest or the persecution of other peoples.

The respect for other nations and their cultures can also be regarded as a Swiss cultural value. This is strongly connected with the commitment of Switzerland for peace as mentioned above. Such a respect is multidimensional. This includes for example that differences in languages, history and traditions are respected. This value becomes obvious in the multilingual context of Switzerland and in the tribute to the different cultures, to its history and its national identity.

A further value is the adherence to standards necessary for the human existence. These include medical supply, education and public security. The rights of employees are also counted among these standards. These standards are usually provided by a general accessibility. Supporting them also means not to copy or imitate the models of other nations, especially of those, who do not grant access to these facilities to entire parts of their population, deport or discriminate against them. The models pretending to deregulate or liberate do very often destroy facilities for a large part of the population or in the end prevent access to them. These prerequisites are closely connected with social justice, which includes integration and poetic justice in social and legal affairs, as well as the possibility to support the human existence in a dignified manner. •

Source: *Mon banquier m'a dit ...* Chapter 1; (Translation *Current Concerns*)

¹ Cf www.technocapitalism.com

² This estimation was taken up widely by the media and is reason for strong arguments in the USA.

³ Letter to the editor of 18 April 2008

The New US Budget: No Money for the People, but Trillions for the Banks and the War

by Professor Dr Michel Chossudovsky, Canada

cc. The following text contains essential parts of a larger article written by the Canadian economist Michel Chossudovsky. The complete text "America's fiscal collapse" was published on 2 March 2009 on www.global-research.ca.

The stated priorities of the Obama economic package are health, education, renewable energy, investment in infrastructure and transportation. "Quality education" is at the forefront. [...] At first sight, the budget proposal has all the appearances of an expansionary program, a demand oriented "Second New Deal" geared towards creating employment, rebuilding shattered social programs and reviving the real economy.[...]

To reach these stated objectives, a significant hike in public spending on social programs (health, education, housing, social security) would be required as well as the implementation of a large scale public investment program. Major shifts in the composition of public expenditure would also be required: i.e. a move out of a war economy, requiring a movement out of military related spending in favour of civilian programs.

In actuality, what we are dealing with is the most drastic curtailment in public spending in American history, leading to social havoc and the potential impoverishment of millions of people.

The Obama promise largely serves the interests of Wall Street, the defence contractors and the oil conglomerates. In turn, the Bush-Obama bank "bailouts" are leading America into a spiralling public debt crisis. The economic and social dislocations are potentially devastating.

Obama's budget submitted to Congress on February 26, 2009 envisages outlays for the 2010 fiscal year (commencing October 1st

Defence including Supplementary allocations (FY 2010)	534,0 bn	739,5 bn
billion supplemental (FY 2010)	130,0 bn	
billion emergency funding (FY2009)	75,5 bn	
Bank bailout (TARP plus Obama)*		1450,0 bn
Net Interest		164,0 bn
Total		2353,5 bn
Total Individual (Federal) Income Tax Revenues (FY 2010)		1061,0 bn
Total Federal Government Revenue (FY 2010)		2381,0 bn

TABLE 1 Budgetary allocations to Defence (FY 2009 and 2010), the Bank Bailout and Net Interests on the Public Debt (FY 2010) in \$ Billions

Source: Bureau of the Budget and official statements. See a new era of Responsibility: The 2010 Budget. See also Office of Management and Budget (www.whitehouse.gov/omb und www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/)

* The officially announced bank bailouts to be financed from Treasury Funds. The timing of disbursements could take place over more than one fiscal year. The actual value of bank bailout cash injections is substantially higher.

2009) of \$3.94 trillion, an increase of 32 percent. Total government revenues for the 2010 fiscal year, according to preliminary estimates by the Bureau of Budget, are of the order of \$2.381 trillion.

The predicted budget deficit (according to the President's speech) is of the order of \$1.75 trillion, almost 12 percent of the U.S. Gross Domestic Product. [...]

Both the Bush and Obama bank bailouts are hand outs to major financial institutions. They do not constitute a positive spending injection into the real economy. Quite the op-

posite. The bailouts contribute to financing the restructuring of the banking system leading to a massive concentration of wealth and centralization of banking power. [...]

The financial elites will use these large amounts of liquid assets (paper wealth), together with the hundreds of billions acquired through speculative trade, to buy out real economy corporations (airlines, the automobile industry, Telecoms, media, etc.), whose quoted value on the stock markets has tumbled.

In essence, a budget deficit (combined with massive cuts in social programs) is re-

quired to fund the handouts to the banks as well as finance defence spending and the military surge in the Middle East war.

Obama's budget envisages:

1. defence spending of \$534 billion for 2010, a supplemental 130 billion dollar appropriation for fiscal 2010 for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and a supplemental \$75.5 billion emergency war funding for the rest of the 2009 fiscal year. Defence spending and the Middle East war, with

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"Politics Is Largely ..."

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the FDP group in the Bundestag declared: "The covering-up tactics of the federal government compels us."

Covering-up tactics and embarrassing self-praise

Indeed, reading the Finance Minister's response to the FDP group inquiry, one finds little substance apart from embarrassing self-praise like: "The support measures have successfully stabilized the financial system in Germany."

There is, however, the treacherous phrase that, according to the ministry, it was as late as September 15 that the collapse of *Lehman Brothers* created a "tangible threat situation". As if everything had been just fine before September 15! And it is surprising that the current deputy head of the supervisory board of the HypoVereinsbank, the bank which – if the opposition parties are right – had no obligations towards the HRE after September 29, took part in the negotiations regarding the HRE bailout.

A press declaration from the FDP group dated March 26 reads: "Thanks to state guarantees of 87 billion euros, the HRE is being kept alive. The opposition blames the government also for having overlooked payment deadlines, with detrimental effect for the tax payer. In addition, the question arises if Minister of Finance Peer Steinbrück (SPD) has known earlier about the bank's liquidity issues?" End of September, Steinbrück had also weakened the chances of the bank to obtain new credits to pay off its current debts with his wording that the HRE would be liquidated.

Wrong decisions, neglect, subterfuges – Steinbrück is costing the tax payer billions of euros

It is unlikely that the allegations of the opposition parties are entirely unfounded. One has to keep in mind that the same Peer Steinbrück has been confronted with allegations of severe neglect in connections with supervising the *Westdeutsche Landesbank* and the *Deut-*

sche Industriebank IKB, originally a bank for credits to medium-sized firms. In both cases, the tax payer has to account for drastically wrong decisions with billions of euros. Two citations may serve to underline this: Back in November 2007, Steinbrück had announced that the rescuing of the IKB will be free of charge for German tax payers (*Handelsblatt*, November 29, 2007) – a downright lie. On February 21, 2008, *Ekkehard Wenger*, professor for business economics, banking and credit services in Würzburg, appeared on *N24* and accused the German Minister of Finance of "extreme hypocrisy" and demanded his resignation from his position as member of the administrative board of the national *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)* which holds a majority of IKB shares. Steinbrück had to account for IKB's failed speculations, Wenger said. And *Ulrich Maurer*, manager of the *Left Party* group in the Bundestag, said on April 4, 2008: "Steinbrück's efforts to present himself as innocent in the IKB affair is an impudent deception of the public." And: "The federal government has used the state-owned KfW as its main lever to push the trade in credit certificates. There is every indication that it used its dominance in the IKB towards this goal. The KfW was the lever, the IKB was the spearhead; *Assmussen* was responsible for this project in the ministry."

Investigation reports not wanted

Meanwhile, 90 percent of the IKB shares have been sold dirt cheap to the US-American finance investor *Lone Star*. As the *ARD* reported on March 26 (<http://boerse.ard.de>), with its voting majority in the shareholder meeting and against the wishes of the small shareholders, *Lone Star* has now stopped any further investigation into the causes and responsibilities for the IKB disaster. It is said that the current investigation was stopped short just as tangible results were imminent...

Spiegel Online reported on March 27 that the state-owned KfW, after a loss of 6.2 billion euros in 2007, had also closed the fiscal year of 2008 with a minus of 2.7 billions, of

which 2 billions are financial write-offs due to speculation losses with "securities and derivatives". We see that German politics is not as innocent as it pretends to be!

Free movement of capital – to the extreme

Which is not surprising in view of the dominant ideology and practice: as reported by *Zeit-Fragen* on March 23, the undersecretary in the Ministry of Finance, Jörg Assmussen ("Steinbrück's silent power broker") has revealed in October 2006 in an article what he thinks about financial speculations: A lot! In the *Zeitschrift für das gesamte Kreditwesen*, he declared it would be meaningful if "the German market for Asset Backed Securities would develop stronger." The Minister of Finance should take care that "the banks are not burdened with unnecessary duties for examinations and documentation if they invest in current ABS products with good ratings." Asset Backed Securities – also these with good ratings – are highly speculative financial products and have contributed significantly to the current disaster.

And if we think back even further: It was the EU which was the worldwide vanguard with its regulations for a radical free movement of capital, one of the roots of the current malaise. And it was the SPD/Green Party government *Schröder/Fischer* who lifted all barriers for financial speculations which were effective until then.

The Democratic US government under *Bill Clinton* did the same. The present Secretary of the Treasury, *Timothy Geithner*, as well as the director of the White House National Economic Council under *Obama*, *Lawrence Summers* were active in this sense under Clinton. *Michel Chossudovsky* has drawn attention to this in an article "Who are the Architects of Economic Collapse?" in *Current Concerns* (No. 13/14, November 2008).

SPD trails Obama – whereto?

Actually the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) demonstrates a high level of

readiness to assimilate to the new US government. SPD General Secretary *Heil* wants the party to run an election campaign with the trivial Obama slogan "Yes, we can." In the beginning of January the party's chancellor candidate and current Federal Foreign Minister *Steinmeier* wrote an open letter to the newly elected President, which contains excessive hymns of praise: "You rekindled the American dream for which countless people over the world have admired your country for more than 200 years [...]. I am now 53 years of age, and never before to my recollection has there been such a feeling of hope and confidence about the inauguration of a US president [...]. You gave people, in the US and beyond, enthusiasm for a new start towards a common future. [...] Together we can continue to shape the 21st century world [...]. Let us together set out a 'New Transatlantic Agenda' and bring it to life. [...]"

2009 is the year of the parliamentary elections (for the Bundestag). It can be assumed that the SPD wishes for moral support when pitting on Obama. However, what are Obama's aims? For what US American aims the SPD should be roped in? For the irresponsible spending policy, which is first and foremost for the benefit of the financial community and the military industrial complex (see *Current Concerns*, 30 March) For future wars? For keeping up the supremacy of the USA? With the SPD as the leader of a German vassal superpower.

Against many votes in her own party and her political camp, *Angela Merkel* fully supported her Finance Minister. At the same time she attacked the FDP, which probably led to the FDP's decision to support the installation of an investigative commission in the German parliament.

Does *Angela Merkel* want to remain in power in a renewed grand coalition as an accomplice of US policy? There are a lot of questions which are worth thinking about. •

La ministra indonesia de salud exige dignidad, equidad y transparencia para todos los países del mundo

por Eva-Maria Föllmer-Müller y Stefan Keller



Dr. Siti Fadilah Supari, PhD: *It's time for the World to Change – In the spirit of dignity, equity and transparency – Divine Hand Behind Avian Influenza*, ISBN 978-979-17357-0-4; la forma más rápida de obtener el libro es directamente de la editorial: PT. Sulaksana Watinsa Indonesia (SWI), Tel./fax: +62 21 866 141 25, Mobile Phone: +62 81 881 31 54, email: swi_ptina@yahoo.com

La ministra indonesia de salud Dr. Siti Fadilah Supari* publicó su importante libro en 2007, en Indonesia; desde el año pasado hay una edición en inglés.

En su libro Siti Fadilah Supari describe la lucha contra la OMS, y los empeños neocolo-

Indonesia

Indonesia con 237,5 millones de habitantes es, por su población, una de las cuatro naciones más grandes del mundo. Está formada por 13 hasta 17 mil islas y 33 provincias; 21 de ellas estuvieron atacadas por la gripe aviar en 2005. Para Indonesia, las aves son la fuente principal de proteínas. Según datos de la FAO (18.3.08), 20% de las aves (14 mil millones) están repartidas en más de 30 millones de gallineros. La situación es crítica aún hoy. Desde el comienzo de la gripe aviar, se tuvieron que matar 9,5 millones de aves (patos, gansos, pollos, codornizas).

nialistas de privar a su país, y también a otros países en desarrollo, de su soberanía, sus derechos y su dignidad. Ella denuncia, que los países industrializados tratan a los países en desarrollo de manera desigual, y exige transparencia para la entrega y la posterior elaboración de los virus.

Ella describe cómo el gobierno indonesio, conjuntamente con la sociedad, encararon con mucho cuidado todo lo referente a la gripe aviar en su país, y tomaron las medidas necesarias para frenar su propagación.

Incansable contra el trato desigual de los países en desarrollo

Como ministra de salud de su país, al comienzo se atuó exactamente a las instrucciones de la OMS con respecto a la gripe aviar. Pero a la vez, al ocuparse de la gripe, se fue dando cuenta del tratamiento desigual de los

países en desarrollo, por parte de los países occidentales.

Por ejemplo, la OMS exigió del gobierno indonesio, que para combatir el virus, hiciera posible que la población tenga acceso a una cantidad suficiente del medicamento *Tamiflu*. Con gran esfuerzo, el gobierno puso a disposición el dinero necesario. Pero, sin embargo, no se pudo comprar el medicamento, porque las existencias disponibles las habían comprado, en su totalidad, los países ricos como reserva (90% de la vacuna está en manos de un 10% de la población mundial).

Después de esa experiencia, Dr. Supari llegó a la conclusión de que su país debía tomar sus propias medidas. En el prólogo de su libro escribe Dr. Supari: «El caso de la gripe aviar necesita, además, nuestra firme resolución de defender la soberanía del país, y de la República de Indonesia. Pasando por alto la mayoría de la población, centros que trabajaban conjuntamente con la OMS, entregaron pruebas de virus de gripe, (y otros), provenientes de Indonesia, a firmas de los países industriales. Éstas por su lado, desarrollaron vacunas a partir de esos virus, para después venderlas nuevamente, a altos precios, a los países pobres y en desarrollo que estaban afectados por esos virus.»(Pag. xi).

Iniciativa indonesia contra el monopolio occidental de investigación

Después de una larga lucha, logró finalmente poner en marcha en la administración del sistema internacional de salud – patrocinado por la OMS y el World Health Assembly (WHA) – un proceso de reestructuración, para lograr mayor equidad, un tratamiento más leal con todos los países, y más transparencia.

NAMRU2

El 24/4/08 podía leerse en «Jakarta Post», que justamente ese laboratorio exigía la inmunidad para todos sus colaboradores. Si bien *Michael Leavitt* viajó personalmente a Indonesia, el gobierno de Indonesia dió su conformidad sólo limitadamente. En lugar de ello, el ministro del exterior indonesio, *Eddy Pratomo*, exigió completa transparencia. Indonesia debía tener acceso a todas las investigaciones y a sus resultados. Se sospechaba que el laboratorio trabajaba para los servicios secretos. Los laboratorios NAMRU2 estaban sobre todo al servicio del personal militar de EE.UU. que estaba allí estacionado. En abril de 2008, *Siti Supari* suspendió la transferencia del virus al laboratorio NAMRU2, hasta que éste estuvo dispuesto a compartir sus resultados investigativos con Indonesia y los demás países, para que éstos pudieran producir sus propias vacunas.

A raíz de su iniciativa, muchos países aún más pobres y países en desarrollo, tomaron coraje y pudieron unirse a la iniciativa indonesia. «Con la esperanza de un mundo más sano y más justo, todos aceptaron un acuerdo, para que no haya una explotación de un país por el otro, (exploitation de l'homme par l'homme), cuando se trata de la salud en el mundo. No debe permitirse un sistema, que haga posible, que a los países pobres afectados por la epidemia, se les cuestione el dere-

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"Swiss Society Despises Power ..."

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various supplemental budgets, is (officially) of the order of 739.5 billion. Some estimates place aggregate defence and military related spending at \$1 trillion+.

2. A bank bailout of the order of \$750 billion announced by Obama, which is added on to the 700 billion dollar bailout money already allocated by the outgoing Bush administration under the Troubled Assets Relief Program (TARP). The total of both programs is a staggering 1.45 trillion dollars to be financed by the Treasury. It should be understood that the actual amount of cash financial "aid" to the banks is significantly larger than \$1.45 trillion. (See table 2 below).

3. Net Interest on the outstanding public debt is estimated by the Bureau of the Budget at \$164 billion in 2010. [...]

The Budget Deficit

These three categories of expenditure (Defence, Bank Bailout and Interest on the Public Debt) would virtually swallow up the entire 2010 federal government revenue of 2381.0 billion dollars. [...]

Moreover, as a basis of comparison, all the revenue accruing from individual federal income taxes (\$1.061 trillion), (FY 2010) namely all the money households across America pay annually in the form of federal taxes, will not suffice to finance the handouts to the banks, which officially are of the order of \$1.45 trillion. This amount includes the \$700 billion (granted during FY 2009) under the TARP program plus the proposed \$750 billion granted by the Obama administration. [...]

TARP is but the tip of the iceberg. A panoply of bailout allocations in addition to the \$700 billion were decided upon prior to Obama assuming office. In November, the federal government's bank rescue program was estimated at a staggering 8.5 trillion dollars, an amount equivalent to more than 60% of the US public debt estimated at 14 trillion (2007).

Meanwhile, under the Obama budget proposal, 634 billion dollars are allocated to a re-

serve fund to finance universal health care. At first sight, it appears to be a large amount. But it is to be spent over a ten year period, - i.e. a modest annual commitment of 63.4 billion.

Public spending will be slashed with a view to curtailing a spiralling budget deficit. Health and education programs will not only remain heavily underfunded, they will be slashed, revamped and privatized. The likely outcome is the outright privatization of public services and the sale of State assets including public infrastructure, urban services, highways, national parks, etc. Fiscal collapse leads to the privatization of the State.

The fiscal crisis is further exacerbated by the compression of tax revenues resulting from decline of the real economy. Unemployed workers do not pay taxes nor do bankrupt firms. The process is cumulative. The solution to the fiscal crisis becomes the cause of further collapse. [...]

Is the Treasury in a position to finance this mounting budget deficit officially tagged at 1.75 billion through the emission of Treasury bills and government bonds? The largest budget deficit in US history coupled with the lowest interest rates in US history: With the Fed's "near zero" percent discount rate, the markets for US dollar denominated government bonds and Treasury bills are in straightjacket. [...]

Who wants to invest in US government debt? What is the demand for Treasury bills at exceedingly low interest rates?

The market for US dollar denominated debt instruments is potentially at a standstill, which means that the Treasury lacks the ability to finance its mammoth budget deficit through public debt operations, leading the entire budgetary process into a quandary. [...]

The mainstream media suggests that the banks are being nationalized as a result of TARP. In fact, it is exactly the opposite: the State is being taken over by the banks, the State is being privatized. The establishment of a worldwide unipolar financial system is part of the broader project of the Wall Street financial elites to establish the contours of a world government. •

Source: www.globalresearch.ca, 2 March 2009

"My father's condition is worsening by the day"

An urgent call to help Tariq Aziz

cc. The following letter from Ziad Aziz, the son of the former foreign minister of Iraq, Tariq Aziz, to a British-Iraqi living in the United Kingdom was sent to us a few days ago:

Dear Sir,

In regard to your reply to our letter, it is my sad duty to inform you that your information are inaccurate or perhaps you are ill-informed on the matter.

My father, Mr. Tariq Aziz, has been held in U.S. custody in camp Cropper for more than 6 years till this date and he suffers several life threatening diseases that require constant, highly sophisticated and immediate medical attention.

Camp Cropper, as you may well know, is basically a holding facility, in which high-value prisoners are being held in the custody of the U.S. forces. It is highly inaccurate to say that a holding facility, i.e. a prison, of any kind can provide "state of the art medical care" for any sort of condition or disease.

For example, my father fell during taking a shower 2 years ago, and fearing that he had suffered a stroke, the moved him to the air base in Balad (200 kilometers north of Baghdad) to perform a C.T. scan.

I am sure, even to a layman, that it is obvious that if someone had suffered a stroke, he or she cannot wait to be transported into a hospital 200 kilometers away. My father, a 72 year-old man, is in danger of having a stroke plus having several other diseases.

The medical care you are referring to is nothing but a doctor who visits the detainees every once in a while and performs basic check-up, like testing blood

sugar, measuring blood pressure, and administering drugs, which brings me to the fact that my father has lost a lot of weight during his imprisonment, which means that the dose of the drugs he is taking should be changed regularly due to his weight change, which never happened.

As for legal and family visitation rights, the U.S. forces have asked the all the lawyers, my father's lawyer among them, to leave the green zone in which they were residing, which made it virtually impossible for the lawyer to visit my father or even to attend the trial for fear on his life. As you may well know that the lives of the lawyers who defend high ranking officials like my father are constantly threatened, and indeed many of them were killed, some even in their offices, under U.S. protection, so I would like you to try and imagine the situation now without U.S. protection and outside the safety of the green zone.

As for the trial, I invite you to watch the proceedings as it is shown on Iraqi TV. I invite you to watch this mockery of justice where impartial judges show and admit unequivocally that they have grudges against the defendants. In any civilized and truly democratic country, and in any court that abides itself to the law, these judges would be immediately removed from the case and disciplined before an ethics committee. Add to that frequent verbal and physical abuse and denying the defendants their legal right of challenging their accuser and the evidence presented to the court.

I apologize for the lengthy reply but we are facing desperate times, and my father's condition is worsening by the day.

Ziad Aziz

«La ministra indonesia ...»

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cho sobre sus propios virus con el fin de sacar ganancias: a través de una comercialización muy bien pensada, con los virus de los países pobres se elaboran la vacunas. (Pag. xii)

Ella agrega: «El mundo sabe que no se trata de ganar o perder diplomáticamente. La lucha contra la gripe aviar es la lucha por mantener la dignidad humana. El compromiso en la lucha contra esa epidemia, nos puede llevar a perder nuestra vida; pero la avaricia y la mala administración del sistema mundial de salud, llevan con seguridad, al exterminio de la raza humana.» (Pag. xxi)

Cuando se llegó a la conclusión de que el virus de la gripe en Indonesia es un virus muy agresivo, para Sra. Supari fue claro el mecanismo: Su país debía entregar el virus al *Global Influenza Surveillance Network* (GISN); éstos se lo entregaban a uno de los *WHO Collaborating Centers* (WHO-CCs) quienes, en sus laboratorios, elaboraban a partir del virus una vacuna, que luego vendían por altos precios en los países ricos. WHO-CCs son laboratorios que trabajan conjuntamente con la OMS, y en Australia, Japón, Gran Bretaña y EE.UU. son reconocidos como laboratorios de referencia.

Con la entrega del virus, el país pierde todos sus derechos de posesión y el virus desaparece de su control. En caso de una epidemia, los países que han entregado el virus, estarían, junto con los otros países pobres, en inferioridad de condiciones, ya que los países ricos son los favorecidos. Esta experiencia la vivió Vietnam: Después de haber enviado su virus H5N1 a la WHO-CCs no supo más qué pasó con él.

«Desde 1952, los 110 países en el mundo en los que la gripe corriente, típica de una estación del año, estaban obligados a entregar pruebas de virus incondicionalmente. Los virus tomados por GISN se denominaban virus salvajes, y las pruebas pasaban a ser propiedad de GISN. Los expertos trabajaban con ellos para la investigación y evaluación de riesgos. Pero parte de ellos, se utilizaban para elaborar virus de cultivo (seeds virus); de esos virus de cultivo, se desarrollaba después una vacuna. El problema era, que esas vacunas producidas comercialmente, se vendían por todo el mundo - también en los países de los que provenían esos virus salvajes; pero los precios, eran fijados en los países industrializados. Por supuesto que esos altos precios tenían solo el objetivo económico, sin considerar el aspecto social y moral. Las típicas características del capitalismo.» (Pag. 11)

Dr. Supari comenzó a defenderse contra ese tratamiento desigual: «Cada vez que miro hacia el pasado, veo las sombras del imperialismo, que había robado una parte de nuestras reservas, porque no tenemos la tecnología necesaria para explotarlas nosotros mismos. Era como si tuviera que presenciar cómo extraían gran parte de nuestro petróleo, porque

¿Armas biológicas de Los Alamos?

Uno de los jefes investigadores del ministerio de defensa, *Isro Samiharjo*, informó que el gobierno de EE.UU. utiliza Los Alamos para el desarrollo de armas biológicas. *Isro* apoyó las afirmaciones de Supari y dijo, que las mismas pruebas pueden utilizarse para el desarrollo de armas. Agregó además, que en los años 80 hubo una situación similar cuando parásitos atacaron numerosos campos de arroz, e Indonesia - hasta hoy - debe importar semillas de arroz. *Isro* dijo, que las armas biológicas pueden utilizarse para que un país pase a ser dependiente de otro - una situación que se denomina «imperialismo cubierto». «Existe claramente una conspiración» agregó, y argumentó después sobre la participación de los Estados Unidos en el desarrollo de armas biológicas. Según *Isro*, con el desarrollo inevitable de esas armas, el ministerio de defensa de Indonesia y su sección para potencial de defensa, se concentró en la defensa biológica.

Fuente: «*Jakarta Post*» del 16/3/08

Dr Siti Fadilah Supari on the opening of the High Level Meeting in Jakarta.

nos faltaba la tecnología y el dinero para hacerlo.» (Pag. 10)

Decisiones apresuradas y erróneas de OMS

Otro tratamiento desigual de su país por parte de la OMS, lo describe en relación con los llamados «cluster cases». Indonesia tiene la mayor cantidad de casos de gripe (cluster cases) dentro de una familia en todo el mundo. En Tanah Karo, 7 de 8 miembros en las familias, estaban infectados con el virus. Los expertos de la OMS, sobre todo epidemiólogos, llegaron a la conclusión, apresurada y sin consulta, que la acumulación de los casos de gripe en Tanah Karo, era provocada por el contagio de persona a persona.

Así se presentaron con un arrogante statement en la prensa local e internacional, lo cual, para la opinión pública en el mundo, significaba que la terrible epidemia de gripe aviar había comenzado. Ésto hubiera tenido devastadoras consecuencias para la nación Indonesia, y el país hubiera quedado aislado.

Supari describe cómo comenzó a defenderse: «Primero envié una indicación bien clara a la OMS en Indonesia, porque ésta había dado un informe inseguro, que para Indonesia podía tener terribles consecuencias. [...] Segundo, pregunté sobre la secuencia de DNS del virus proveniente de Tanah Karo, que fue entregado al WHO-CCs. [...] Tercero, exigí de la OMS Indonesia, que corrigiera las noticias en CNN, de lo contrario presentaría demanda en las Naciones Unidas.» Después, Supari realizó una conferencia de prensa, en la que ella misma corrigió este informe apresurado.

Con el resultado del análisis de la DNA de un laboratorio escogido por Supari - el *Eijkman Institut* in Indonesia, dirigido por el Prof. *Sangkot Marzuki* (no reconocido por la OMS), ella tuvo la prueba de que el virus H5N1 de Tanah Karo era sólo una variante más agresiva, y que el contagio de persona a persona no podía ser confirmado; a pesar de ello, esa información fue ignorada y mantenida en secreto por los científicos y la OMS.

Virus para Los Alamos ...

Si bien los científicos en su país están muy bien, o incluso mejor formados profesionalmente, no son tratados igual que los de los países industrializados: así, el ministro de salud de EE.UU. *Michael Leavitt* le había prometido a Indonesia una donación de 3 millones de dólares, pero el país no vio ni un solo dólar. Durante una visita de la ministra del exterior, *Condoleezza Rice*, Supari se enteró de que el dinero fue entregado a *NAMRU2* (*US naval medical research unit 2*) con la justificación de que ese laboratorio, conjuntamente con el ministerio de salud de Indonesia, investigaba sobre el virus H5N1. El *NAMRU2* en Indonesia, es una unidad de un laboratorio fuera de EE.UU. y tiene 175 colaboradores, entre ellos 19 norteamericanos.

Un capítulo importante en su libro trata de un laboratorio secreto en Los Alamos. En sus investigaciones sobre el destino de las secuencias de DNA del virus H5N1, descubrió que el material genético, a través de la OMS y la

WHO-CCs, era enviado directamente a *Los Alamos National Laboratory* en New Mexico. Allí había pocos investigadores que podían investigar sobre las secuencias de DNA.

¿... para vacunas o armas biológicas?

Los Alamos es el laboratorio en el que se investiga sobre armas biológicas, químicas y atómicas. «Me escandalizó profundamente. Yo sabía que el laboratorio de Los Alamos está bajo el control del ministerio de energía. Fue justamente en ese laboratorio donde en 1945, se desarrolló la bomba atómica para destruir Hiroshima. Es de suponer que utilizan la misma instalación para investigar y producir armas químicas. Un hecho terrible.

Los datos sobre las secuencias de DNA del virus H5N1 estaban a disposición exclusiva de los científicos en Los Alamos. Si los utilizaron para desarrollar una vacuna o un arma química, eso depende de las necesidades y los intereses del gobierno de EE.UU. De hecho, es una situación muy peligrosa para el destino de toda la humanidad.» (Pag. 19)

Supari supone, con razón, que la cepa de virus enviada desde Indonesia a la OMS, también puede haber sido transferida a Los Alamos para producir armas biológicas. El remitente nunca se enteró del destino de sus pruebas. ¿Se enviaron a una institución comercial, para desarrollar una vacuna que necesitaban los países afectados? ¿Se enviaron a empresas comerciales, o a algún lugar donde se las elaboraba en armas biológicas?» (Pag. 13)

Cuando preguntó sobre los datos del virus de Tanah-Karo que había enviado por medio de la WHO-CCs, llegó a saber por internet que el laboratorio de Los Alamos había cerrado. ¿Pero adónde fueron a parar las cepas de virus? Una parte de los datos fue a la *Global Initiative on Sharing Avian Influenza Data* (GISAID) y el resto a la *Bio Health Security* (BHS). Supari también llegó a saber que muchos de los investigadores y del personal de Los Alamos ahora estaban en BHS. Ella se preguntó si BHS es un centro de investigación para desarrollar armas biológicas, bajo control del Pentágono. «Si fuera así, eso significaría que el juego se sigue jugando en otro lugar bajo otro nombre.» (Pag. 21)

Antes de las negociaciones con la OMS, Supari pudo comprobar su suposición por medio de la directora general de la OMS, *Margret Chan*: «Lo que usted dijo en su informe es realmente cierto. Había un criminal en la OMS, quien envió las cepas de virus o los datos sobre ellos a Los Alamos. Pero ahora se frenó, Sra. Ministra.» «Por favor ayúdeme a mí y a *David Heymann*. Nosotros tomamos el sistema de nuestros predecesores, y yo espero que lo pueda cambiar, Madame» agregó. (Pag. 129)

A principios de diciembre de 2006, el gobierno de Indonesia decidió interrumpir la entrega de sus virus a la OMS y a los laboratorios conectados con ella, mientras éstos siguieran los oscuros mecanismos de GISN. En lugar de eso exigió transparencia, para que los países gravemente afectados por la gripe aviar pudieran sacar provecho de la entrega de virus.

Comenzó una dura lucha a nivel internacional. Supari comprobó que el secretariado de la OMS, por cuenta propia, había tachado un pasaje en las normas para el intercambio de virus, desde 2005 hasta 2007. Este pasaje regulaba el intercambio del material de virus, de manera tal que las cepas quedaran en posesión del país de proveniencia (*Material Transfer Agreement*, MTA). [...] «Según mi opinión, ésto ha sido una transgresión extrema del derecho, o incluso un crimen, cometido por una organización que debería tener una administración impecable.» (Pag. 61) La OMS se puso por encima de WHA. Dra. Supari, con razón, llama la atención sobre esa injusticia.

¿Manejos criminales de la OMS?

El 28 de marzo de 2007, la Dra. Supari organizó dos High-Level-Meetings (HLM) con países que piensan de manera similar. En el discurso de apertura presentó sus exigencias.

El día anterior, en un High-Level-Technical-Meeting que ella había convocado, ya había logrado un consenso para hacer necesario un nuevo procedimiento para el intercambio de virus: «No podemos continuar, sin mostrar nuestra esperanza, que así como fue convenido con la OMS, un programa para la transmisión de virus sea utilizado con responsabilidad; es decir, exclusivamente para poder calcular riesgos, y no para una producción comercial de vacunas, sin saber de qué país provienen las pruebas. Debo tomar esta posición, porque es importante señalar que los países en desarrollo deben tener asegurado un acceso equitativo a la vacuna H5N1. Hasta ahora está en manos de un 10% de la población concentrada en Europa y Norteamérica, y esa parte del mundo tiene el 90% de la capacidad de producción para la vacuna contra la gripe. Quiere decir, que en caso de una crisis, la mayoría de los países en desarrollo no tendrían acceso a la vacuna durante y probablemente tampoco después de la primera fase de una epidemia. Por eso, debemos orientar nuestros esfuerzos hacia la búsqueda de métodos efectivos para la producción y repartición de vacunas contra epidemias; para ésto deben tenerse en consideración los aspectos técnicos, económicos y humanitarios, para que estemos realmente preparados mundialmente.» (Pag. 180)

Un primer paso para la protección de todos

En el encuentro a alto nivel, tomaron parte ministros de salud, altos representantes y funcionarios de 12 países afectados, otros 23 países industrializados y en desarrollo, así como países productores de vacunas y otros representantes de intereses, entre ellos la OMS. El encuentro finalizó con la «Jakarta Declaration on Responsible Practices for sharing Avian Influenza Viruses and Resulting Benefits». En ésta se exige que toda la problemática se discuta entre los países miembros de la WHA. El 14 de mayo de 2007, tuvo lugar en Ginebra el decimosexto encuentro de WHA, cuyos resultados fueron fijados en la *Resolution WHA 60.28*. En un encuentro importante del gobierno el 20 de noviembre de 2007, todos los países acordaron, que para GISN no hay cabida en la OMS.

El libro de la Dra. Supari muestra de forma sensible y patente, cómo una mujer, con su actitud consecuente de exigir equivalencia en todo sentido, encuentra el camino hacia la igualdad y dignidad para su país, atravesando estructuras antidemocráticas, neocolonialistas y de sumisión. Se tuvo que imponer frente a todos los intentos del mundo occidental y del potencia mundial EE.UU., para lograr finalmente, con duras negociaciones, el cambio de paradigma: Del viejo paradigma que puso a la humanidad en una situación peligrosa, hacia el nuevo paradigma que trajo bienestar para la mayoría de los seres humanos.

A mediados de mayo de 2009, se lleva a cabo la sesión No. 62 de WHA en Ginebra. Queda aún suficiente tiempo para leer el importante libro de la Dra. Supari. •

Medición de radiactividad en muestras de suelo de Serbia, Segunda parte

Un tribunal en Florencia condenó al Ministerio de Defensa italiano a una indemnización por daños y perjuicios a un soldado enfermo a causa del uso de municiones con uranio empobrecido en Somalia. Los jueces en Florencia dictaron sentencia según un peritaje médico judicial. Se basó en su totalidad en documentos que el diputado Falco Accame puso a disposición del jurado. Falco Accame es presidente de la asociación Anavafaf, que se ocupa eficientemente de los problemas de los soldados en servicio. Desde el comienzo, Falco Accame no estaba decidido a creer en las mentiras sobre la inocuidad de las armas con uranio empobrecido utilizadas por la OTAN. Ya después de la guerra Líbano/Israel en el año 1982, Accame fue testigo del sufrimiento de los soldados italianos que se enfermaron a causa del uso de esa munición en el Líbano.

El argumento decisivo para el resultado positivo de la demanda por daños y perjuicios – en proceso civil – fue el hecho de que el ministerio de defensa italiano no equipó a los soldados con suficientes ABC trajes de

protección, ni en Somalia en 1993, ni en la guerra de los Balcanes, siendo que estaban informados sobre los reglamentos norteamericanos sobre el manejo con problemas con uranio.

Está documentado:

«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.»

(«El peligro principal en relación con el uranio empobrecido es el efecto perjudicial que ese material puede tener cuando entra en el cuerpo. Si las partículas son inhaladas o tragadas, pueden ser químicamente tóxicas y provocar una irradiación importante por largo tiempo en los tejidos internos.»)

Fuente: documento del 20.12.1984, AWS 330, firmado por Robert Beard, States assistant secretary general for defense support 1984–87.

En un informe sobre investigación del uso de armas con uranio empobrecido de los años

1977/78 – llevado a cabo por el Airforce Armament Laboratory, Eglin Air Force Base Florida – se promete poner a disposición los resultados con respecto a la protección del personal militar que examina esas armas o que las usa en guerra.

En un memorando de 1933, se advierte expresamente que: «when soldiers inhale or ingest DU dust, they incur a potential increase in cancer risk». («Cuando los soldados inhalan o tragan polvo UE, aumentan el riesgo de contraer cáncer.»)

Fuente: Department of the Army, Office of the Surgeon General, 5109 Leeburg 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

Esos documentos prueban que Italia y probablemente todos los otros países miembros de la OTAN, operaron en total conocimiento de los hechos, cuando arrojaron toneladas y toneladas de esas municiones en las guerras de los Balcanes.

Horizons et débats, a comienzos del año pasado, encomendó a dos expertos para que examinen con profundidad pruebas del suelo en Serbia. Horizons et débats publicó los resultados en julio de 2008. Son espantosos. Y ahora a raíz de estudios de otros factores y nuevas pruebas de suelo, se llega a la conclusión que el concepto de uranio empobrecido es un concepto falso.

El 16.2.2009 Horizons et débats informó bajo el título «Pequeña Hiroshima – de la que nadie se interesa» sobre las investigaciones de la experta serbia Mirjana Andjelkovic-Lukic sobre el bombardeo en Serbia en 1999. La sospecha, que los perjuicios fueron causados por «pequeñas bombas-Hiroshima ha sido confirmado por los resultados de mediciones hechas por los dos expertos nucleares alemanes. Después de varios años de trabajo lograron encontrar métodos de medición más «sólidos» para detectar restos de pequeñas explosiones nucleares.

Redacción Horizons et débats

Gamaespectrometría, energía de rayos beta, exámen de modificaciones de la división de los isótopos naturales

En julio 2008, (Horizons et débats No. 25 del 23/6/08) presentamos los resultados de nuestras mediciones de radiactividad en dos pruebas de suelo provenientes de Serbia. Entre tanto, gracias a la gamaespectrometría y análisis químicos, pudimos constatar sobre 4 nuevas pruebas de suelo elementos particulares y la modificación de la división de isótopos naturales. En una prueba de fuerte radiac-

tividad beta, logramos además determinar el alcance máximo de las irradiaciones beta en el aluminio, es decir la energía maximal y la clasificación de isótopos.

1. Gamaespectrometría

Los resultados de las 4 pruebas (NS-15, NS-40, Pa-290g, Av-370g) están resumidos

en el *encuadre 1*. La prueba Av-370g llama la atención:

- La relación entre uranio 238/235 señala la presencia de uranio enriquecido.
- La concentración de Uran, Thorium y potasio 40 es – comparada con otras pruebas – muy alta.
- 2976 Bq/kg de potasio 40 corresponden (en condiciones naturales del isótopo) a un

contenido extremadamente elevado de potasio de 9,5% de peso.

2. Modificación de las condiciones naturales de los isótopos

La alta concentración de potasio 40, hace suponer una modificación de la composición isotópica natural, a causa la contaminación radiactiva. Potasio natural: K 39/93,94%, K 40/0,0117%, K 41/6,73%.

Se puede constatar el efecto de una modificación determinando la concentración total de potasio gracias a un método químico, y la proporción de potasio 40, por medio de la gamaespectrometría.

El *recuadro 2* presenta los resultados de la comparación de tres pruebas provenientes de Serbia con otra prueba proveniente de un país lejano. Las pruebas del suelo de Serbia muestran una concentración de potasio 40 mucho más elevada de un factor 7 a 132.

Tales modificaciones, por ejemplo, sobre la reacción nuclear Ca 40 (n,p) K 40 aparecen solo por una afluencia de neutrones como en las explosiones nucleares.

3. Maximal energía del rayo Beta

La energía maximal del desconocido rayo beta puro se determinó por medio de la extensión de los electrones en el aluminio. Las caídas extremas de la curvas de absorción, se encuentran en los dominios 30 mg/cm² (0,156 MeV) y 180 mg/cm² (0,55 MeV). Esas energías pueden ser atribuidas al carbono 14 y al berillium 10. Estos dos isótopos resultan de la reacción (n,p) de nitrógeno, es decir bor 10.

Un rayo beta con energía de más de 0.15 MeV, puede provocar en el agua radiaciones (azules) Cerekov. Una radiación tal se observó en el agua en Serbia, en 1999. Cuando aparecen esos efectos, significa que la contaminación radiactiva es considerable.

4. Conclusión desde el punto de vista de la protección radiológica

La carga admisible de radioactividad en la persona humana está determinada por la cantidad de potasio 40. Es de aproximadamente 0,2 mSv/a.

Con un aumento de la concentración de potasio 40 a un factor 100, la radiactividad llega a 20 mSv/a!! – un nivel muy elevado. El potasio tiene funciones importantes en el organismo.

Una modificación de las relaciones de los isótopos tiene que haber tenido lugar en el «carbono» a favor del isótopo radioactivo carbono 14. Un aumento de la radiactividad se puede evaluar cuando se tomen medidas del C-14, por ejemplo en los anillos anuales de los árboles.

Ingeniero nuclear H. W. Gabriel
D. Schalch, físico
17 de febrero 2009

Recuadro 1: gamespectrometría, 2 Serie Serbia

Nuclid	Energía keV	Actividades							
		NS-15 570 g		NS-40 470 g		Pa 290 g		Av 370 g	
		Bq	Bq/kg	Bq	Bq/kg	Bq	Bq/kg	Bq	Bq/kg
Serie U 238									
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
Serie Th 232									
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

Error < ± 20%

Recuadro 2: modificación de la composición de isótopos por potasio en pruebas del suelo de Serbia Av 1, NS 1, Pa1, comparación de pruebas G 2/1206

Pruebas	Av 1	NS 1	Pa 1	G 2	
Total potasio (mg/kg)	720	1500	1400	387	Bases del cálculo
Potasio 40 (Bq/kg)	2976	465	327	17	– Composición de isótopos: K 39: 93,258%, K 40: 0,0117%, K 41: 6,730%
Valor admisible K 40 (mg/kg)	0,084	0,175	0,163	0,045	– Actividad específica del potasio: 31200 Bq/kg de potassium 2976 Bq K 40 equivalente: 11,1 mg K 40
Valor existente K 40 (mg/kg)	11,1	1,7	1,2	0,06	– Promedio de efectos de la reacción Ca 40 (n,p) K 40: 0,2b
Modificaciones K 40 (valor real/valor prescrito)	132	10	7	1,2	Afluencia resultante en modificaciones K 40 al factor 100: 10 e 20 nvt

Send Back US-Army Killer Games to Where They Came From

by Renate and Rudi Hänsel

During the nineties the killing simulators, employed for hand to hand combat in the US army and police, were released by the Pentagon to be sold for private use on the public markets. As a consequence the computer and video game industry that had co-operated with the Pentagon from the very beginning, boomed. Since then the so-called killer games have wreaked havoc among children and youths.

"War toys definitely have a war promoting effect, the protection of the children constitutes a higher goal than the interests of the toy industry."

(Substantiation of the decision of the German Bundestag, 23. June 1950)

The US army's electronic training programs for killing people must be taken back to the US barracks, where they came from. They have to disappear from civil society altogether. They may be appropriate for the purpose of national defense or fight against crime; they have no place, however, in children's rooms or in living rooms.

In Germany after the Second World War, there was much more awareness of the danger arising from letting children play with war toys than today: Women from the German Christian Democratic Party (CDU) moved for the condemnation of any war toy in the German Bundestag (German Parliament). On 23 June 1950 the German Bundestag voted that "it was prohibited to produce and to sell war toys of any kind." This decision is still valid today. It was substantiated as follows: "War toys definitely have a war promoting effect, the protection of children constitutes a higher goal than the interests of the toy industry." (www.schleideringer.com)

The murderous influence of killer games has been proved in uncountable research studies up to now, most recently in a German longitudinal study (Hopf, Huber, Weiss, 2008); among all factors reinforcing the readiness to use violence and violent actions among children and youths (peer-group, school, personality, parents) the impact of violent electronic games and other violence containing media is the strongest. That means: Even if a youngster is not socially handicapped, media violence has an immediate impact on his emotions, and his readiness to behave aggressively and

"It is intolerable that hundreds of thousands of children and youths are using computer games for several hours daily that glorify violence".

(Press release of the Bavarian Minister of the Interior, Joachim Herrmann, CSU at the Munich Conference on Media Violence in November 2008)

violently. Playing computer games containing violence – and this was another result of the study – is also the highest risk factor for later violent crime. The addictive potential of computer games has also been shown over and over again, most recently in a study conducted by the *Kriminologisches Forschungsinstitut Niedersachsen (KFN) (Criminological Research Institute Lower Saxony)*, the greatest German youth study on the use of computer games from March 2009. Brain research as well confirmed these causal relations. ("Wie das Gehirn Bildschirmgewalt verarbeitet"; "Neue Zürcher Zeitung", 21 May 2008).

In an analysis of 30 school shootings since 1995 media psychologist *Rudolf Weiss* found that almost in all cases excessive use of violence containing electronic media had played a significant role. Also in those three cases where there had been evidence of psychotic disturbances, use of games containing violence had been one of the triggers.

All these facts lead to one conclusion, which common sense has long since come to: Electronic training programs for killing people have to be taken off the market and must be banned.

This claim is also raised by the families of the murdered students from Winnenden as well as by the German Bundespräsident (Federal President) *Horst Köhler* and by *Joachim Herrmann* (CSU), Bavarian Secretary of the Interior. German criminologists and neuro-biologists also advocate the ban and renowned media effects researchers from Germany and the USA have long since requested a ban.

In an open letter addressed to the Prime Minister of Baden Württemberg *Oettinger* the grieving parents from Winnenden write: "We want these killer games to be forbidden. Games, whether played on the Internet or on the PC, pursuing the goal of killing as many humans as possible, must be prohibited."

During the obsequies for the Winnenden victims Bundespräsident Köhler confirmed the parents' point of view: "Are we doing enough to protect our children? [...] We have known for a long time that in uncountable films and computer games extreme violence, the exhibition of destroyed bodies and the debasement of human beings constitute the main plot. Is it not common sense to say that these products harm, if consumed during a longer period of time? My view is this: Such market development must be stopped. Parents and relatives of the victims told me: 'We want these things to be changed!'" (*Spiegel Online*, 21. 3. 2009).

Following a move in the German Bundesrat (Federal Council of the German Parliament) in 2007 by *Günther Beckstein* (CSU), former Bavarian Secretary of the Interior, who had demanded the prohibition of production, trade and sale of killer games, today's Secretary of the Interior *Joachim Herrmann* also

demanding a ban: "There are killer games on the market which are absolutely intolerable and reduce young people's inhibition to use violence." (www.sueddeutsche.de)

The same demand is raised by one of the most renowned criminologists and President of the *Deutsche Stiftung für Verbrechensbekämpfung* (German Foundation for the Fight of Crime), Professor *Hans-Dieter Schwind* – Chairman of the *Anti-Violence Commission* of the German Bundestag and, since 2002, chair member of the *White Ring*, a relief organization for crime victims. After the Winnenden rampage he advocated a total ban of computer games containing violence as well as a tightening of the weapons legalization. (Interview with the "Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung", 12.3.2009)

Some years ago a group of media effect researchers – drew the conclusion that dangerous products of the video and computer game industry must not fall into the hands of children and youths. Recently they founded the association "Mediengewalt – Internationale Forschung und Beratung e.V." (Media Violence – International Research and Counselling). In their press release about the Winnenden case they write: "What we call for is a consensus of the whole society to ban media containing violence and degrading human beings." (www.mediengewalt.eu)

Media researcher Professor *Helmut Lukesch*, chair member of the association wants aggressive games to be banned. "It is no cultural loss, if this whole junk disappears and such computer games are taken off the market. [...] For the computer game industry it is high time to separate from aggressive games and not to spread this degrading stuff any longer. Somebody who makes money with such games should be ostracized by society." ("Aggressive games have to disappear", *Faznet*, 12.3.2009)

In Switzerland as well there was an effort from the political side. Canton Councillor *Roland Näf* advanced an initiative in Parliament about the ban of "killer games". The Federal Assembly is requested "to lay the grounds for

Parliamentary motion in the Swiss Ständerat (Council of Cantons) for the prohibition of "killer games"

Based on Article 1, paragraph 1 of the Bundesverfassung (Federal Constitution) as well as on Article 79, paragraph 1b of the Kantonsverfassung (Constitution of the canton) the Federal Assembly is requested, to lay the grounds for the following concern: To forbid the production and advertisement, the import and trade and the spreading of game programs that award cruel violence against humans and humanlike beings as an essential objective of the game.

Motion from *Roland Näf-Piera*, Muri (SP)

"The European Parliament calls for the creation, in the interests of the defence of children's rights, of an adequate, effective and proportionate regulation system in dialogue with providers, the media (public and private television companies, advertisers, the press, video games, mobile telephone operators and the Internet) and industry, aimed, among other things, at prohibiting the broadcasting of harmful images and content (including cyber bullying) and the marketing of violent video games, which, by encouraging violence and sexism, may cause harm to children's physical and psychological development; points with concern, moreover, to the growing problem of MMS exchanges of pornographic or child-abuse related images [...]"

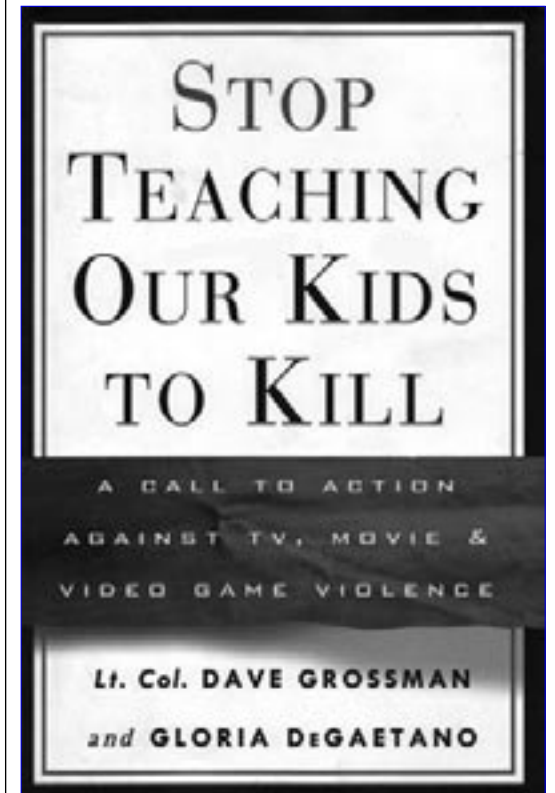
European Parliament resolution of 16 January 2008: Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child (2007/2093(INI))

the following concern: To forbid the production and advertisement, the import and trade and the spreading of game programs that award cruel violence against humans and humanlike beings as an essential objective of the game."

It is high time to unify these efforts of some singular countries to protect their youths and to come to an international ban of these "landmines for the soul", (koelner.aufwurf@gmx.de).

International organizations as the UN and UNESCO must lend a hand. That would mean a real change.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)



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Letter to the editor

Training of Violence Should be Banned

It is amazing that various commentators on recent acts of violence are of the unreflecting opinion that a prohibition of killer games would be useless. However, each trainer, coach, therapist and teacher knows quite well that practising situations with simulator is one of the most efficient learning methods. Pilots learn to fly with the help of a simulator, soldiers learn to drive a tank with the help of a simulator, and pupils learn languages with an interactive PC etc. So why should shooting and disinhibition training at the computer contradict all those long established experiences? Of course, only a tiny part of the violent video games' players puts their training into practice. However, who wants to exclude that the increasing inclination of young people to "banal" assaults could have something to do with the computer-assisted habituation to acts of violence?

Certainly, the potentially risky future offenders cannot be recognised in time even with the most elaborate psychological means.

Since there is no necessity to be entertained by violent games, the relatively "small" risk should nevertheless be reduced. Very easy and fast, this could be achieved with a prohibition of relevant games. Of course, violent games can also be downloaded from the internet. However, it is hard to understand that there should be a difference between the prohibition of killer games and the prohibition of websites representing violence or criminal pornography. Possible infringements never justify that we renounce necessary prohibition!

In addition, the reference to common representation of violence in films is not substantial. Concerning the learning effect there is an enormous difference whether something is passively consumed or actively trained. "Playful" training of violent behavior in order to satisfy primitive instincts should be banned in a civilized society – unconditionally.

Dr. med. M. Neuenschwander, Berne