

Current Concerns

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English Edition of Zeit-Fragen

Say No to the EU Death Penalty

The Lisbon Treaty Allows Death Penalty and Killing of People by the State.

An interview with Professor Karl Albrecht Schachtschneider

Oliver Janich, "Focus-Money": Professor Schachtschneider, according to your lawsuit against the EU Treaty of Lisbon at the Bundesverfassungsgericht (The German Federal Constitutional Court), the treaty allows the reintroduction of the death penalty and the killing of humanes. This sounds outrageous. What is the base of your argument?

Professor Karl Albrecht Schachtschneider: The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, in its "explanations" and "negative definitions" accompanying the fundamental rights, allows a reintroduction of the death penalty in case of war or imminent war, but also the killing of humans to suppress insurgency or riot. This is in contradiction to the abolishment of the death penalty in Germany (Article 102 of the German Constitution), in Austria and elsewhere which results from the principle of dignity.

But does not the Charter prohibit capital punishment?

The relevant text for this is not article 2, clause 2 of the Charter which prohibits condemning people to death or executing them, but the explanation of this article which was incorporated into the treaty, originating from the European Convention Human Rights of 1950.

According to article 6, clause 3 of the EU Treaty in the Lisbon Version, the rights, freedoms and principles of the charter are interpreted according to the general provisions of chapter VII of the Charter which defines the interpretation and application of this

Charter and under due consideration of the "explanations" listed in the Charter giving the sources of these provisions.

Why so long-winded?

Well, just to conceal this fact. The parliamentarians only get the text of the treaty which is difficult enough to understand and much too long.

But is it now unambiguous that the killing of people is allowed if the Treaty takes effect?

Yes, the Charter of Fundamental Rights was declared in Nice in 2000. But since it was not ratified by all countries, it was not binding under international law. If the Treaty takes effect, the Charter will become binding as well.

But this clause is only part of the explanations...

They are binding under article 52 clause 3 and 7 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. You can read the corresponding explanation of the comment in the Official Journal of the European Union. There is no room for divergent interpretations. And: why should it be written there if it is not meant to be there?

But has not the German Constitutional Court rejected your interpretation by acknowledging the Lisbon Treaty?

Not at all. It has not commented on this question.

Is that the usual procedure?

It is actually the normal case. If the Constitutional Court does not want to tackle an issue, it simply does not comment on it.

Is this legally possible?

Legally this is more than questionable, but it is being done.

According to the explanation, death penalty can be introduced in case of war or danger of war. This is a very theoretical case.

Really? Are not we at war in Afghanistan? Who is defining war? What is danger of war? What about the Yugoslavia war?

But is not it normal that deserters are executed in war or in times of war?

Yes, in dictatorships.

It is even more frightening that in case of insurgency or riot, killings are possible without law and without any approval by a judge. Who is defining this?

Exactly. I think that Monday demonstrations in Leipzig [which led to the overthrow of the communist Regime in East Germany in 1989] can be defined as riot, like virtually any non-authorized demonstration. Or take the turmoil in Greece or the demonstrations recently in Cologne and Hamburg. All you need is a few punks ["Autonome"] throwing stones.

There are politicians and jurists who argue that the fundamental rights of a country can only be improved by the EU treaty, but not reduced.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union does not contain any precedence or reservation of national fundamental rights or a principle of favorability with respect to these rights. Those who claim this prove their ignorance of the Union legislation.

How is this possible?

They argue with article 53 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights. But this article contains no such provision. It says: "Nothing in this Charter shall be interpreted as restricting or adversely affecting human rights and fundamental freedoms as recognized, in their respective fields of application, by Union law and international law and by international agreements to which the Union, the Community or all the Member States are party, including the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and by the Member States' constitutions." The crucial part is the clause "in their respective fields of application". It means that the EU fundamental rights are decisive if the Union's law is applicable and the national fundamental rights are decisive if national law is applicable. There is no case when both fundamental rights texts are decisive.

But could not the European Court of Justice declare that national law has precedence in this case?

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The EU's Satanic Plans: The Return of Death Penalty

The European Union has decided to reintroduce the death penalty for insurgents. Does this seem unbelievable to you? Have you heard nothing of it in the press? Then you better sit down first and take a deep breath.

All of the members states of the European Union have abolished the death penalty. The worst punishment that the head of an insurgent has to face at this time is a jail sentence. However, the Lisbon Treaty now allows the death penalty as punishment for insurgents. Against the background of the financial crisis the European Union is expecting major revolts in many of the member countries – and is therefore pushing for the Lisbon Treaty to come into force as soon as possible.

As a result of the Irish vote against the Lisbon Treaty in June of 2008 its enforcement was initially blocked. The Treaty seeks to extensively broaden the powers held by the 27 EU commissioners, to establish the office of a powerful EU president – which would practically transform the national laws of member states into historical relicts – and in some cases allow for capital punishment. In this context, once the EU reform treaty comes into force, the death penalty would be explicitly allowed, whenever necessary, for the purpose of "[lawfully] quelling a riot or insurrection." The death penalty can also be sentenced in the EU in the future for deeds "committed in time of war or on immediate danger of war." All this was published in small print in the the European Union's official newsletter's com-

mentary on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which would come into force with the Lisbon Treaty. It seems that no one has taken notice of this particular passage, since Article 2 of the new Fundamental Rights Charter also states:

"No one shall be condemned to the death penalty, or executed." That seemed explicit – only the small print includes these exceptions.

The small print to the Treaty of Lisbon reads as follows:

"(2) Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:

- (a) in defence of any person from unlawful violence;
- (b) in order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent escape of a person lawfully detained;
- (c) in action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.

The above was quoted in the official European Union's newsletter of 14 December 2007. In effect, the abolishment of the death penalty is immediately relativised and annulled by the small print in the commentary.

In the case that the capital punishment becomes necessary according to paragraph c) to "quell a riot or insurrection" then the death sentence will be possible in the EU in the future – despite its official prohibition. Did you know that? In April 2008 the German Bundestag voted with a 2/3 majority comprising of Christian

Democrats, Social Democrats, the Liberal and Green parties, for relinquishing German sovereignty in favour of the EU and the Lisbon Treaty and its provisions for reintroducing the death sentence for insurgents. During the debate, Chancellor Angela Merkel (CDU) praised the EU reform treaty as a "great project".

Once the Lisbon Treaty comes into force, the EU government will become transformed into a powerful central government – like the former Soviet Union. Individual republics will then become meaningless and be forced to serve the well-being of the EU empire instead of its own interests. The Irish, who in contrast to Germany were able to vote in a referendum on the EU reform and on Ireland's sovereignty, rejected the Treaty in June 2008, particularly also because of its implications of reintroducing the death penalty. In the autumn of 2009 Ireland will have to vote on the Treaty a second time.

In order for everything to function smoothly, on 18 March the 27 EU commissioners in Brussels secretly agreed to carry out a coup. This entailed breaking Irish law on several points. Before the vote and despite the current Irish law prohibiting political advertising, the EU carried out a political advertising campaign through the state media to influence the people's vote toward favouring the Lisbon Treaty. This was financed by the EU citizen's taxes. In order to ensure that the Irish vote go 'right' this time, the 27 EU states decided on 18 March in Brus-



sels to buy votes: Bishops preaching in favour of relinquishing Irish sovereignty to the Treaty of Lisbon in their churches should receive money from EU sources. At the fore of all of this stood the EU parliament which even proclaimed that it wanted to see the Irish 'No' corrected as soon as possible, and that to this end Irish Bishops should even be put under immediate pressure. Many EU commissioners apparently considered this move too drastic – and agreed to secretly buy votes instead.

Source: Udo Ulfkotte, *Vorsicht Bürgerkrieg!* p. 361–363, ISBN 978-3-938516-94-2 (Translation Current Concerns)

Reintroduction of Death Penalty Possible Due to Lisbon Treaty

Europe’s citizens demand wide discussion

Following a ruling of the Federal Constitution Court of Karlsruhe, democracy in general, states under the rule of law and welfare states remain at the mercy of the Brussels dictate. The supranationality of the EU is hardly debilitated. Not much change can be expected in terms of depriving national states of their power and nations of their rights. Yet only nations have the legitimate right to exercise legal power. Large or small scale politics requires a plebiscite free from manipulation. The Lisbon Treaty is a decision from the “top”, and not based on the knowledge of free people of their rights. So called “guarantees” and “side laws” do not help get over this fact. Similarly, the possibility of reintroducing death penalty on the basis of the Lisbon Treaty requires objective discussion and a plebiscite. Whoever wants to build a European Europe can still leave the Union (Art. a (50) EUC in order to force a treaty that is in the interest of nations and citizens and that takes the freedom of citizens and peoples into serious consideration.

Ireland is the only one out of 27 EU states that allows its citizens to vote on constitutional issues. On 2nd October the Irish people will be asked a second time to go to the polls for that same treaty, because those in power in the EU did not like the ‘No’ with which the treaty was rejected in a clear and well-founded fashion back in 2008. The remaining almost 500 million EU citizens will not even be asked! This starkly contradicts the ideal of democracy where, as the Greek suggests, it is the people that hold sway over the land, and not the governments.

Citizens not treated as citizens, but as immature beings

Which government has honestly informed its people of the contents of this treaty so that each citizen can form his or her own opinion? If anyone today does not know which fatal consequences, including long-term restrictions of citizen rights, the treaty entails, it is not because he or she does not understand it. The reason is rather that party deputies just follow their party heads without having read

the treaty for themselves. Ireland’s Prime Minister, Brian Cowen, is said to have bragged on television about not having read the treaty.¹ Is the treaty hushed up because they know exactly that the nations would reject it if they knew how many citizen rights it deprives them of?

No law of citizen rights and freedom

Nicolas Sarkozy seems to be aware of this in saying that if there were a referendum on the Lisbon Treaty, in every country where such a referendum would take place, it would be lost. Sarkozy added: “There is a cleavage between people and governments. A referendum now would bring [our] Europe into danger.”² Similarly the conservative British Shadow Foreign Secretary, William Hague: “Opinion polls carried out in 16 EU member states show that almost all persons entitled to vote would have rejected the Lisbon Treaty, had they had a chance to go to the polls.”³ The Irish EU commissioner for the home market, Charley McCreedy even thinks all political leaders are aware of the fact “that in case of a referendum 95% of the population of their respective countries would probably have said no as well.”⁴ “We [in Ireland] do it by referendum. That’s democracy.”⁵ However referendums do not take place in 26 EU states, including the UK, where “in breach of an election manifesto promise, the Labour government has denied British voters any say on the Lisbon Treaty at all, either in a referendum or at a general election.”⁶ In fact, no discussion whatsoever, or at least no honest discussion is taking place on part of the government in any of the 27 EU member states. How sheep-like are millions of people considered by them? In the case of treaties of such far-reaching consequences as the one in question, citizens surely expect politicians to enter into honest dialogue. Since this is not happening, everybody is asking rightfully: “How good can a treaty be if, after months of national debate, its merits cannot be comprehensibly explained?”⁷

Duty to arm and fight terrorism

The Irish government has expressed doubts about the Lisbon Treaty concerning, among

other things, its neutrality. In response to the Irish misgivings, Brussels answered in sheer contradiction of the truth that the treaty had never foreseen any restriction on neutrality.⁸

Any doubts were said to have been “abated once and for all”⁹ thanks to the “warranties” granted by the EU especially for Ireland. “The Lisbon treaty does not affect in any way Ireland’s traditional politics of military neutrality. [Neither is the Treaty said to pose any basis] for creating European armed forces or compulsory military service for any military formation.”¹⁰

Yet in the Lisbon Treaty it says that the member states of the Union (Par. 42, subpar. 3 2 TEU) not only commit themselves to “improve step by step their military abilities”, i.e. to arm, but the treaty assumes in Art. 43 Par. 1 TEU a right to wage war (ius ad bellum). And particularly so with the end of fighting global terrorism, including in one’s own country. Thus the explicit ban on wars of aggression is played down (art. 26 par. 1 GG), i.e. wars of aggression are tolerated even though they contravene the German Constitution (commitment to peace). Are we in for more wars because of the Lisbon treaty? The nations do not want that.

Evidence of EU collusion and confusion tactic

True, in the Treaty on the EU it says: “No person shall be sentenced to death, nobody should be executed.” (Art. 11-62 VV) But this is not the whole truth. For the Lisbon treaty also states that any explanations on the Charter of Fundamental Rights (ECHR) of the European Union which have been adopted from the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms “have the same liability as the basic text itself”¹¹ (ECHR). What does this mean?

Evidently the plain truth is only seen in the explanations given on the Charter of Fundamental Rights, and not in the Charter itself, claims Professor of law K. A. Schachtschneider: “The Charter of Fundamental Rights is based, at least as far as classical fundamental rights are concerned, on the ECHR of 1950. At that time it seemed inevitable to leave the

numerous member states of the European Council the possibility of the death penalty. Germany had only just abolished the death penalty in 1949, but France, Great Britain and many other states still had it. And a declaration of human rights would never have been reached had there been a general demand to abolish the death penalty.”¹²

This explanation dating back to 1950 was reintroduced deliberately in December 2007 as a binding explanation to the Charter of Fundamental Rights. It was not an accident. We should be able to read and understand this explanation, says Schachtschneider.¹³

Death penalty in times of war and perils of war and ...

The fact that, besides the duty of the member states to arm, it says in a comment on a footnote that the death penalty will be feasible again – and not just in times of war and perils of war (Germany and Austria are at war), but also in times of insurrection and upheaval, is a blatant scandal.

Brussels says: „Nothing in the EU Treaty of Lisbon (...) affects in any way the need for protecting the right to live (...) as foreseen in the Irish Constitution.”¹⁴

Yet in the Lisbon Treaty it says: Contrary to the right to live (Art. II-62 VV) the death penalty, killing and execution in the event of war or imminent threat of war in accordance with the detailed provisions of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights is to be introduced by Council decisions on the general rules of missions (Article 43 paragraph 2 P. I TEU. 43 Abs. 2 S. I EUV).¹⁵ In the explanation on Fundamental Rights it says: “A state may foresee the death penalty in its rule of law for deeds that are committed in times of war or imminent threat of war. This penalty may only be applied in those cases which are foreseen in the rule of law and are in accordance with its regulations.”¹⁶ In other words, the death penalty is possible in times of war or imminent threat of war, without there remaining any protection by Fundamental Rights. It is true that the death penalty is not listed in any law as yet,

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This is something that the ECJ has never done. It always holds itself authorized. Besides, the prohibition of death penalty is no fundamental right. Hence, the argument that the fundamental rights can never be reduced does not apply here.

Another argument from the vicinity of the EU commission is that the article is there to allow the admission of states like Turkey. But this is ridiculous. As a community, we have to say that we do not admit countries where people are killed, not vice versa.

Do the politicians know what they decide on?

Maybe not all of them. But definitely the CDU/CSU faction. I have distributed a five page summary of my lawsuit, so that the parliamentarians do not have to read too much. But the topic should also be known within the SPD because one of its parliamentarians, Professor Meyer, has tried to stop the ruling in Nice.

Can you imagine one reason why anything like this is passed?

Obviously, the governments expect riots. Skepticism towards the governments and the EU apparatus is growing and growing. The financial and economic crisis increases the pressure on the population.

So they want to be allowed to shoot them?

This is what it looks like.

What can we do against it?

I think that the EU Treaty permits resistance, because it undermines democracy.

What kind of resistance do you mean?

For example demonstrations and all forms of public dissent, the way of Gandhi.

...which then can be interpreted as a riot. This sounds like a dictatorship.

The word dictatorship is technically not correct. Since the Roman Republic, dictatorship is defined as a fixed-term emergency constitution. I would rather speak of despotism which can degenerate into tyranny. By the way: if in October the Irish approve of the Treaty of Lisbon, the abolishment of the death penalty is eliminated.

Source: Focus-Money 35/2009, 19 August 2009

Article 52 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights

Scope and interpretation of rights and principles

(...)

3. In so far as this Charter contains rights which correspond to rights guaranteed by the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the meaning and scope of those rights shall be the same as those laid down by the said Convention. This provision shall not prevent Union law providing more extensive protection.

(...)

7. The explanations drawn up as a way of providing guidance in the interpretation of this Charter shall be given due regard by the courts of the Union and of the Member States.

Article 2 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights – Right to life

- 1. Everyone has the right to life.
- 2. No one shall be condemned to the death penalty, or executed.

Source: Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, 14 December 2007, Official Journal C 303/1

Explanation on Article 2 – Right to life

1. Paragraph 1 of this Article is based on the first sentence of Article 2(1) of the ECHR, which reads as follows:

‘1. Everyone’s right to life shall be protected by law (...).’

2. The second sentence of the provision, which referred to the death penalty, was superseded by the entry into force of Article 1 of Protocol No 6 to the ECHR, which reads as follows:

‘The death penalty shall be abolished. No-one shall be condemned to such penalty or executed.’

Article 2(2) of the Charter is based on that provision.

3. The provisions of Article 2 of the Charter correspond to those of the above Articles of the ECHR and its Protocol. They have the same meaning and the same scope, in accordance with Article 52(3) of the Charter. Therefore, the ‘negative’ definitions appearing in the ECHR must be regarded as also forming part of the Charter:

(a) Article 2(2) of the ECHR:

‘Deprivation of life shall not be regarded as inflicted in contravention of this article when it results from the use of force which is no more than absolutely necessary:

- (a) in defence of any person from unlawful violence;
- (b) in order to effect a lawful arrest or to prevent the escape of a person lawfully detained;
- (c) in action lawfully taken for the purpose of quelling a riot or insurrection.’

(b) Article 2 of Protocol No 6 to the ECHR:

‘A State may make provision in its law for the death penalty in respect of acts committed in time of war or of imminent threat of war; such penalty shall be applied only in the instances laid down in the law and in accordance with its provisions (...).’

Source: Explanations relating to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, (2007/C 303/02)

Brave New EU: Hospitals and Schools are Closed Down in Latvia

by Dieter Sprock, Switzerland

Under the spell of the attacks against Switzerland – this time orchestrated around the banking secrecy and fiscal issues – the discussion about an EU membership of Switzerland received fresh impetus. Even in the Bundeshaus (seat of the Swiss government in Berne) some parliamentarians seem to have wondered out loud about an Anschluss of Switzerland, arguing that the attacks would perhaps have been less violent if Switzerland were a member of the European Union. However, these parliamentarians forget that the attacks are supposed to prepare Switzerland for a takeover, since “big brother” in Brussels does no longer want to tolerate the only free country in Europe, which is socially and economically better off than the EU’s vassals. They also forget what happened to other small countries which submitted to the Brussels’ headquarters. Latvia, which – only at the beginning of last year – was hotly tipped as a model country for the advantages of the EU membership, could serve as an example.

After Latvia’s EU membership five years ago, foreign investors sensed new sales markets and pumped money into the country, particularly into the building and real estate industry. The huge amounts of money boosted the consumption and forced up wages and prices. Especially Scandinavian banks served the new purchasing power and offered credits at low interest rates. Many Latvians seized the opportunity and bought a dwelling on tick. Farmers extended their stables and yards with the most modern technology using cheap credits into the millions. The thoughtless granting of credits by the banks promoted real estate sales on speculation, thus bestowing big investors at home and abroad fat profits and forced housing prices up.

When the economic crisis arrived, many Latvians were not able to repay their credits any more. The real estate prices sank by more

than a half and the biggest Latvian bank, the Parexbank, could only be saved from collapse through nationalisation. That again forced Latvia’s national debt to such height that a national bankruptcy could be only prevented by a “rescue package” of the International Monetary Fund IMF. Today Latvia is facing ruin.

Latvia’s public sector under IMF and EU administration

The credit of 7.5 billion Euro, one third of the GDP, was linked to the condition that the deficit of the Latvian national budget should not pass the limit of 5%. When the government in Riga did not reach this aim, the IMF blocked the payment of one credit tranche amounting 200 million Euros. “Facing a decrease of the economic performance by 18% in the first and even 19.6% in the

second quarter of 2009 and the corresponding decrease in tax incomes, the IMF and EU have meanwhile increased the permitted deficit limit to 8%, but on the other hand they have basically put the country’s public sector under their administration”, writes “Die Tagesszeitung” in its foreign column on 14th August. The government is no longer allowed to make decisions having effects on the national budget, without consulting the IMF and getting its permission. In order to comply with the conditions, schools and hospitals will now be closed and thousands of teachers and employees in the health care will be dismissed. 32 of altogether 56 hospitals are to be closed. Until the end of the month, all 570 employees of Riga’s largest hospital, Rgas Pirma Slimnca, will be given notice, since the hospital is going to be closed by the end of the year.



Unemployed people in front of the job centre. Due to the budget shortening combined with almost halved wages and the skyrocketing unemployment, many people cannot afford their medicines any more. (picture reuters)

Due to the budget shortening combined with almost halved wages and the skyrocketing unemployment, many people cannot afford their medicines any more. Many people leave the hospital too early against the doctor’s orders, because they cannot afford to pay the percentage excess. Today, the percentage excess amounts to 18 Euros a day, but is to be raised to 50 Euros. “Since July all heart and vascular operations have been delayed unless they are mandatory due to a life threatening state of the patient’s health. All knee and hip operations are delayed alike – unless one can pay the 10,000 Euros out of one’s own pocket.” The state allows every hospital a certain quota of operations per month. If this quota is run out, no further operations are to be carried out. A wholesaler for pharmaceuticals threatened some hospitals with a delivery block, since their debts have meanwhile amounted to 6 million Euros. According to a study of the physicians’ magazine *Latvijas rsts*, 20 to 30 doctors leave the country each month. They are welcomed in Europe with open arms. The editor in chief of the magazine reminds of the fact that the medical competence and future of the Latvian health services are seriously endangered. *Gunta Ana* of the Latvian umbrella association of the patient organizations *Sustento* says: “Latvia obviously does not mean much for Europe. We are left alone and can not even determine our affairs autonomously. We wrote to the European Union and described our desperate situation, but we only received meaningless answers.”

Switzerland does well to maintain its independence instead of thoughtlessly submitting itself to Brussels’ dictate. Even if we must tighten our belts – and that will certainly be the case – it is nevertheless better to decide our affairs independently.

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at least in Germany. But if the EU issues detailed rules for missions (Article 43 paragraph 2 P. I TEU) i.e. if it takes military action (war) as a reaction to some crisis and issues legal regulations for such an event of war which facilitate the death penalty, then any contradicting fundamental right in the EU Constitution or any national set of fundamental rights will be to no avail. But, as stated before, the actual explanation on the Fundamental Rights would apply, and not the Right itself!¹⁷

... Death penalty in times of riot and insurrection

In the notes on explanations it states: “3. a) Art. 2 para 2 of the ECHR: A killing is not considered a violation of this article when it results from the use of force which has been absolutely necessary to a) protect any person from unlawful violence; b) lawfully arrest or prevent the escape of someone who is lawfully deprived of liberty, or c) to lawfully fight a riot or insurrection.”¹⁸ So even in case of revolt or rebellion the death penalty would be possible if it accurately reflects the explanation. And because it is a European act of law it cannot be measured against either the Irish, German or any other national constitution, even if it states that the death penalty has been abolished. Since European law overrules national law, the death penalty would be possible.¹⁹ Well, somebody will ask: Who defines what is an insurrection or a riot? The EU is entitled to interpret ad libitum what and how it deems. Could this apply to situations as we used to have in Leipzig (the Monday demonstrations) or riots like we had recently in Latvia etc.? I.e. demonstrations accompanied by violence which could be interpreted as insurrection? Or when people gather because they do not agree with something and then some “black bloc” is smuggled in from somewhere? Will Brussels interpret the social disturbances expected even by Germany on the grounds of the economic crisis as upheavels or riots? And who, in that

event, will be responsible for measuring the extent of violence?

Citizen right to live not secured

Since in the Lisbon Treaty the death penalty is again permitted under certain circumstances, the right to live is not secured. This is a crime, all the more so because this is just mentioned in the footnote of a footnote and can thus be reintroduced through the backdoor. Which politician has explained this clearly to his or her voters?

The Irish Senior Lecturer Emeritus in Social Policy, *Anthony Coughlan* expresses his outrage at the reintroduction of the death penalty in the the Lisbon Treaty, too, saying that “most people in Ireland and Britain have never heard of it.”²⁰(!)

Both the German Constitution (Art. 102 GG) and the principle of human dignity of the UN Human Rights Charter command the abolition of the death penalty. The peoples of Europe have fought hard for this principle after the two horrible world wars in which 55 million people were slaughtered and which paralyzed the countries involved for decades. Reintroducing the death penalty would mean a step backward, falling behind the Enlightenment principle of “freedom, equality and fraternity”, the Human Rights Declaration of 1948, any right to justice and the hard-fought-for freedom of our nations.

The EU would do well to cooperate with its citizens in a mutual effort to fashion our society reasonably and to aim at living and working together in dignity and equality based on human standards. Anything else is mere striving for power which the peoples of Europe do not want.

¹ Cf. Eberhard Bort, Mit ihrem Nein stürzen die Iren die EU in eine tiefe Krise. In: *News aus Irland*. Deutsch-Irischer Freundeskreis, 14.6.2008; Premier Brian Cowen, *Spiegel online*, 19.6.2009, p. 1.
² Nicolas Sarkozy, November 2007. In: *Euro-med*, March 7, 2008.
³ William Hague, *Irish Times*, July 26, 2008.
⁴ Propagandaschock, Nein zur EU-Diktatur, 2.7.2009.

⁵ Charly McCreedy, *Irish Independent*, 29 June 2009.
⁶ William Hague, *Irish Times*, 26 July 2008.
⁷ *Irish Times*, 26 July 2008.
⁸ *Focus Online*, 16.6.09, Erklärung zum EU-Reformvertrag soll Weg für zweites Referendum ebnen, p. 1.
⁹ Ibid.
¹⁰ Ibid.
¹¹ Ibid.
¹² Ibid.
¹³ Cf. Ibid.
¹⁴ *Focus Online*, 16.6.2009, Erklärung zum EU-Reformvertrag soll Weg für zweites Referendum ebnen, p. 1.
¹⁵ Prof. Dr. iur. Karl Albrecht Schachtschneider: Der Vertrag von Lissabon ist ein Grundgesetz des un-

gebremsten Kapitalismus. *Zeit-Fragen* Nr. 14/15 vom 6.4.2009.
¹⁶ Karl Albrecht Schachtschneider: Europa nicht als Grossstaat, sondern als “Republik der Republiken” organisieren. *BüSo*, Juni 2005, S. 5.
¹⁷ Cf. *ibid*.
¹⁸ K. A. Schachtschneider: *Argumente gegen die Zustimmung zum Vertrag über eine Verfassung für Europa*, Kurzfassung, S. 3 f.
¹⁹ Cf. *ibid*.
²⁰ What Irish Taoiseach Brian Cowen should now do on Lisbon. In: *Point 12*, p. 4/PANA Peace and Neutrality Alliance by Anthony Coughlan, 25 September 2008.

EFTA as an Alternative to the EU-Reform Treaty

by Dr Titine Kriesi, Switzerland

The European Free Trade Association EFTA was founded in the 1960s in order to achieve economic growth, full employment, an increase in productivity, financial stability and a constant improvement of living standards by abolishing trade restrictions among the member states.

Today there are four member states remaining, among them Switzerland, Norweiga, Iceland and the Principality of Liechtenstein; the others have joined the EU.

The EFTA never aimed at becoming a political body and was strictly against the principle of supranationality. This compared to today’s EU, which is an undemocratic centralistic colossus. Without giving up their state sovereignty, the EFTA member states agreed on a gradual reduction of customs duties on industrial products. Since 1994, the EFTA has with great success established free trade agreements with countries of the former Eastern Bloc, with Israel, the Palestinian National Authority. Moreover, there are cooperation agreements with Albania, Egypt and Macedonia.

The EFTA never aimed at establishing a common market. It only regulated the free trade on a commercial basis under just competitive conditions. The member states excluded agrarian products as a common market for agricultural products would have contradicted the basic structure of a loose association and restricted the free range of activity for the individual states.

The EFTA states acknowledged the principle of self-supply as a national task and is a credible and proven alternative to the EU. Through their establishment of a free trade zone in Europe, the EFTA countries could maintain their own political interests und were able to resist any political centralism. This was of special importance for countries like Switzerland as it served the security of self-supply and helped to support traditional small-scale agricultural units which is so typical for this country.

Moreover, it added a humane dimension: the active self-help, self-determination, and the right to decide on the countries’ own food supplies. This is another reason why the EFTA is a viable and genuine alternative to the EU.

“We Will Overcome the Crisis, Backwardness and Corruption”

A Speech from the Russian President Dmitri Medwedew, 10 September 2009

cc. On 10 September the Russian President Dmitri Medwedew addressed the Russian people with a detailed message via Internet. It provides the reader with an extremely differentiated insight in Russia’s problems today, which are often skewed in Western media. Moreover, the message shows how Russia tries to deal with its problems. As the text is of great interest for the other countries in the world, we publish it here.

In a few months Russia will enter a new decade of the twenty-first century. Of course, important junctures and significant dates are more symbolic than practical. But they give us a reason to reflect on the past, evaluate the present, and think about the future. Think about what awaits each of us, our children, our country.

First, let’s answer a simple but very serious question. Should a primitive economy based on raw materials and endemic corruption accompany us into the future? And should the inveterate habit of relying on the government, foreign countries, on some kind of comprehensive doctrine, on anything or anyone – as long as it’s not ourselves – to solve our problems do so as well? And if Russia can not relieve itself from these burdens, can it really find its own path for the future?

Next year we will celebrate the sixty-fifth anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War. This anniversary reminds us that our present day is the future of the heroes who won our freedom. And that the people who vanquished a cruel and very strong enemy back in those days must today overcome corruption and backwardness. To make our country both modern and viable.

Have received a huge inheritance
As the contemporary generation of Russian people, we have received a huge inheritance. Gains that were well-deserved, hard-fought and hard-earned by the persistent efforts of our predecessors. Sometimes the cost of hardships really was terrible casualties. We have a huge territory, large amounts of natural resources, solid industrial potential, an impressive list of outstanding achievements in science, technology, education and art, a glorious history regarding our army, navy, and nuclear weapons. By using its authority Russian power has played a significant – and in some periods determinate – role in events of historic proportions.

How should we manage that legacy? How to magnify it? What will the future of Russia be for my son, for the children and grandchildren of my fellow citizens? What will be Russia’s place, and hence the place of our descendants, heirs, and future generations, among other nations in the global labour market, in the system of international relations, in global culture? What must we do to steadily improve the quality of life of Russian citizens today and in the future? To allow our society to become richer, freer, more humane and more attractive? So that Russian society can give to those who desire it a better education, an interesting job, a good income, and comfortable environment for both personal life and creative activity?

I have answers to these questions. And before I turn to them, I would like to assess the current situation.

Far from being in the best state
The global economic crisis has shown that our affairs are far from being in the best state. Twenty years of tumultuous change has not spared our country from its humiliating dependence on raw materials. Our current economy still reflects the major flaw of the Soviet system: it largely ignores individual needs. With a few exceptions domestic business does not invent nor create the necessary things and technology that people need. We sell things that we have not produced, raw materials or imported goods. Finished products produced in Russia are largely plagued by their extremely low competitiveness.

This is why production declined such much, more than in other economies, during the current crisis. This also explains excessive stock market volatility. All this proves that we did not do all we should have done in previous years. And far from all things were done correctly.

The energy efficiency and productivity of most of our businesses remains shamefully low,

but that is not the worst part. The trouble is that it seems that owners, directors, chief engineers and officials are not very worried about this.

As a result Russia’s influence in global economic processes is, quite frankly, not as great as we would like. Of course, in the era of globalisation the influence of any country cannot be unlimited. That would even be harmful. But our country must have substantial opportunities, as befits Russia’s historic role.

As a whole democratic institutions have been established and stabilised, but their quality remains far from ideal. Civil society is weak, the levels of self-organisation and self-government are low.

Every year there are fewer and fewer Russians. Alcoholism, smoking, traffic accidents, the lack of availability of many medical technologies, and environmental problems take millions of lives. And the emerging rise in births has not compensated for our declining population.

Managed to gather the country together to stop centrifugal tendencies

We managed to gather the country together to stop centrifugal tendencies. But many problems still remain, including the most acute ones. Terrorist attacks on Russia are continuing. Residents of the republics in the North Caucasus simply do not know peace. Military and law enforcement personnel are dying, as are government and municipal employees, and civilians. Of course these crimes are committed with the support of international criminal groups. But let’s face up to it, the situation would not be so critical if the socio-economic development of Southern Russia were more viable.

To sum up, an inefficient economy, semi-Soviet social sphere, fragile democracy, negative demographic trends, and unstable Caucasus represent very big problems, even for a country such as Russia.

Of course we do not need to exaggerate. Much is being done, Russia is working. It is not a half-paralyzed, half-functioning country as it was ten years ago. All social systems are operating. But this is still not enough. After all, such systems only propagate the current model, and do not develop it. They cannot change current ways of life and therefore bad habits remain.

Achieving leadership by relying on oil and gas markets is impossible. We must understand and appreciate the complexity of our problems. We must frankly discuss them in order to act. In the end, commodity exchanges must not determine Russia’s fate; our own ideas about ourselves, our history and future must do so. Our intellect, honest self-assessment, strength, dignity and enterprise must be the decisive factors.

Five priorities
My starting point while setting out five priorities for technological development, offering specific measures for the modernisation of the political system, as well as measures to strengthen the judiciary and fight corruption, is my views on Russia’s future. And for the sake of our future it is necessary to liberate our country from persistent social ills that inhibit its creative energy and restrict our common progress. These ills include:

1. Centuries of economic backwardness and the habit of relying on the export of raw materials, actually exchanging them for finished products. *Peter the Great*, the last tsars and the Bolsheviks all created – and not unsuccessfully – elements of an innovative system. But the price of their successes was too high. As a rule, it was done by making extreme efforts, by using all the levers of a totalitarian state machine.
2. Centuries of corruption have debilitated Russia from time immemorial. Until today this corrosion has been due to the excessive government presence in many significant aspects of economic and other social activities. But it is not limited to governmental excess – business is also not without fault. Many entrepreneurs are not worried about finding talented inventors, introducing unique technologies, creating and marketing new products, but rather with bribing officials for the sake of ‘controlling the flows’ of property redistribution.
3. Paternalistic attitudes are widespread in our society, such as the conviction that all problems should be resolved by the government. Or

by someone else, but never by the person who is actually there. The desire to make a career from scratch, to achieve personal success step by step is not one of our national habits. This is reflected in a lack of initiative, lack of new ideas, outstanding unresolved issues, the poor quality of public debate, including criticism. Public acceptance and support is usually expressed in silence. Objections are very often emotional, scathing, but superficial and irresponsible. Well, this is not the first century that Russia has had to confront these phenomena.

People tell us that we cannot completely cure chronic social diseases. Those traditions are steadfast, and history tends to repeat itself. But at one point serfdom and rampant illiteracy seemed insurmountable. However, we overcame them all the same.

Of course traditions have a considerable influence. But they nevertheless fit in with each new era and undergo changes. Some simply disappear, and not all of them are useful. For me, only unquestionable values which must be preserved may be regarded as traditions. They include interethnic and interfaith peace, military valour, faithfulness to one’s duty, hospitality and the kindness inherent in our people. Bribery, theft, intellectual and spiritual laziness, and drunkenness, on the other hand, are vices that offend our traditions. We should get rid of them by using the strongest terms.

Of course today’s Russia will not repeat its past

Of course today’s Russia will not repeat its past. Our time is truly new. And not just because it is moving forward, as time does, but also because it opens up before our country and each one of us tremendous opportunities. Opportunities of which there was no trace twenty, thirty, or much less a hundred or three hundred years ago.

The impressive legacy of the two greatest modernisations in our country’s history – that of Peter the Great (imperial) and the Soviet one – unleashed ruin, humiliation and resulted in the deaths of millions of our countrymen. It is not for us to judge our predecessors. But we must recognize that the preservation of human life was not, euphemistically speaking, a government priority in those years. Unfortunately, this is a fact. Today is the first time in our history that we have a chance to prove to ourselves and the world that Russia can develop in a democratic way. That a transition to the next, higher stage of civilization is possible. And this will be accomplished through non-violent methods. Not by coercion, but by persuasion. Not through suppression, but rather the development of the creative potential of every individual. Not through intimidation, but through interest. Not through confrontation, but by harmonising the interests of the individual, society and government.

A chance to build a new, free, prosperous and strong Russia

We really live in a unique time. We have a chance to build a new, free, prosperous and strong Russia. As President I am obliged to do everything in my power to make sure that we fully take advantage of this opportunity.

In the coming decades Russia should become a country whose prosperity is ensured not so much thanks to commodities but by intellectual resources: the so-called intelligent economy, creating unique knowledge, exporting new technologies and innovative products.

I recently identified five strategic vectors for the economic modernisation of our country. First, we will become a leading country measured by the efficiency of production, transportation and use of energy. We will develop new fuels for use on domestic and international markets. Secondly, we need to maintain and raise our nuclear technology to a qualitatively new level. Third, Russia’s experts will improve information technology and strongly influence the development of global public data networks, using supercomputers and other necessary equipment. Fourth, we will develop our own ground and space infrastructure for transferring all types of information; our satellites will thus be able to observe the whole world, help our citizens and people of all countries to communicate, travel, engage in research, agricultural and industrial production. Fifth, Russia will take a leading position in the production of certain types of medical equip-

ment, sophisticated diagnostic tools, medicines for the treatment of viral, cardiovascular, and neurological diseases and cancer.

Five strategies for success in high-tech spheres

As we follow these five strategies for success in high-tech spheres, we will also pay constant attention to the development of our most important traditional industries and, first of all, the agro-industrial complex. One in three of us live in rural areas. The availability of modern social services for rural residents, increasing their incomes, improving their working conditions and daily life will always remain our priority.

Of course Russia will be well-armed. Well enough so that it does not occur to anyone to threaten us or our allies.

These goals are realistic. The targets we have set for achieving them are difficult but attainable. We have already developed detailed, step-by-step plans to move forward in these areas. We will encourage and promote scientific and technological creativity. First and foremost, we will support young scientists and inventors. Secondary and higher education will prepare a sufficient number of specialists for promising industries. Academic institutions will concentrate major efforts on the implementation of breakthrough projects. Legislators will take all decisions to ensure comprehensive support for the spirit of innovation in all spheres of public life, creating a market place for ideas, inventions, discoveries, and new technologies. Public and private companies will receive full support in all endeavours that create a demand for innovative products. Foreign companies and research organisations will be offered the most favourable conditions for establishing research and design centres in Russia. We will hire the best scientists and engineers from around the world. Most importantly, we will explain to our young people that the most important competitive advantage is knowledge that others do not have, intellectual superiority, the ability to create things that people need. As *Pushkin* wrote: “There is a higher courage: the courage of invention, creation, where an extensive plan is overwhelmed by the creative idea.” Inventors, innovators, researchers, teachers, entrepreneurs who introduce new technologies, will become the most respected people in society. In turn, society will give them everything they need to be productive.

Part of a culture based on humanistic values

Of course an innovative economy cannot be established immediately. It is part of a culture based on humanistic values. It is grounded in our efforts to transform the world and guarantee a better quality of life, liberate individuals from poverty, disease, fear and injustice. Talented people who want reform, people who can create new and better things will not come here from another planet. They are already here among us. And that is clearly proven by the results of international intellectual competitions, the fact that inventions made in Russia are patented abroad, and the fact that our best specialists are headhunted by the world’s largest companies and universities. We – the government, society and the family unit – must learn to find, nurture, educate and take care of such people.

Inextricably linked with the progress of political systems

I also think that technological development is a priority public and political task because scientific and technological progress is inextricably linked with the progress of political systems. Experts believe that democracy originated in ancient Greece, but in those days there was no extensive democracy. Freedom was the privilege of a select minority. Full-fledged democracy that established universal suffrage and legal guarantees for the equality of all citizens before the law, so-called democracy for everyone emerged relatively recently, some eighty to one hundred years ago. Democracy occurred on a mass scale, not earlier than the mass production of the most necessary goods and services began. When the level of technological development of Western civilization made it possible to gain universal access to basic amenities: to education, health care and information.

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“We Will Overcome the Crisis, ...”
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Every new invention which improves our quality of life provides us with an additional degree of freedom. It makes our existential conditions more comfortable and social relations more equitable. The more intelligent, smarter and efficient our economy is, the higher the level of our citizens’ welfare, and our political system and society as a whole will also be freer, fairer and more humane.

The growth of modern information technologies, something we will do our best to facilitate, gives us unprecedented opportunities for the realisation of fundamental political freedoms, such as freedom of speech and assembly. It allows us to identify and eliminate hotbeds of corruption. It gives us direct access to the site of almost any event. It facilitates the direct exchange of views and knowledge between people all around the world. Society is becoming more open and transparent than ever – even if the ruling class does not necessarily like this.

Russia’s political system will be extremely open, flexible and internally complex

Russia’s political system will also be extremely open, flexible and internally complex. It will be adequate for a dynamic, active, transparent and multi-dimensional social structure. It will correspond to the political culture of free, secure, critical thinking, self-confident people. As in most democratic states, the leaders of the political struggle will be the parliamentary parties, which will periodically replace each other in power. The parties and the coalitions they make will choose the federal and regional executive authorities (and not vice versa). They will be responsible for nominating candidates for the post of president, regional governors and local authorities. They will have a long experience of civilized political competition: responsible and meaningful interaction with voters, inter-party cooperation and the search for compromises to resolve acute social problems. They will bring together in one political entity every element of society, citizens of all nationalities, the most diverse groups of people and territories of Russia endowed with ample powers.

The political system will be renewed and improved via the free competition of open political associations. There will be a cross-party consensus on strategic foreign policy issues, social stability, national security, the foundations of the constitutional order, the protection of the nation’s sovereignty, the rights and freedoms of citizens, the protection of property rights, the rejection of extremism, support for civil society, all forms of self-organisation and self-government. A similar consensus exists in all modern democracies.

This year we started moving towards the creation of such a political system. Political parties were given additional opportunities to choose those occupying leadership positions in the federal regions and municipalities. We relaxed the formal requirements for the creation of new parties. We simplified the conditions in place for the nomination of candidates for election to the State Duma. We passed legislation guaranteeing equal access to public media for parliamentary parties. A number of other measures were adopted as well.

We will not rush

Not everyone is satisfied with the pace at which we are moving in this direction. They talk about the need to accelerate changes in the political system. And sometimes about going back to the ‘democratic’ nineties. But it is inexcusable to return to a paralyzed country. So I want to disappoint the supporters of permanent revolution. We will not rush. Hasty and ill-considered political reforms have led to tragic consequences more than once in our history. They have pushed Russia to the brink of collapse. We cannot risk our social stability and endanger the safety of our citizens for the sake of abstract theories. We are not entitled to sacrifice stable life, even for the highest goals. In his time Confucius remarked: “Impatience in small matters destroys a great idea”. We have all too often experienced this in the past. Reforms for the people, not the people for reform. At the same time this will displease those who are completely satisfied with the status quo. Those who are afraid and do not want change. Changes will take place, but they will be gradual, thought-through, and step-by-step. But they will nevertheless be steady and consistent.

Russian democracy will not merely copy foreign models

Russian democracy will not merely copy foreign models. Civil society cannot be bought by foreign grants. Political culture will not be reconfigured as a simple imitation of the political traditions of advanced societies. An effective judicial system cannot be imported. Freedom is impossible to simply copy out of a book, even a very clever one. Of course we’ll learn from other nations – from their experiences, their successes and failures in developing democratic institutions. But no one will live our lives for us. Nobody is going to make us free, successful and responsible. Only our own experience of democratic endeavour will give us the right to say: we are free, we are responsible, we are successful.

Democracy needs to be protected

Democracy needs to be protected. The fundamental rights and freedoms of our citizens must be as well. They need to be protected primarily from the sort of corruption that breeds tyranny, lack of freedom and injustice. We have just begun to develop such protective mechanisms. Our judicial system must be a central component here. We have to create a modern efficient judiciary, acting in accordance with new legislation on the judicial system and based on contemporary legal principles. We also have to rid ourselves of the contempt for law and justice, which, as I’ve said repeatedly, has lamentably become a tradition in this country. But the formation of a new judicial system cannot be achieved by competitions or campaigns, or idle talk about how the system itself is rotten and that it would be easier to create new judicial and law enforcement systems than to change them. There are no entirely new judges, just as there are no new public prosecutors, police, intelligence personnel, civil servants, businessmen and so on. We need to create normal working conditions for the law enforcement agencies and get rid of the imposters once and for all. We have to teach law enforcement officers to protect and defend rights and freedoms, to justly, clearly and effectively resolve conflicts in the legal field. We need to eliminate attempts to influence judicial decisions for whatever reasons. Ultimately, the judicial system itself has to understand the difference between what it means to act in the public interest or in the selfish interests of a corrupt bureaucrat or businessman. We need to cultivate a taste for the rule of law, for abiding by the law, respect for the rights of others, including such important rights as that of property ownership. It is the job of the courts with broad public support to cleanse the country of corruption. This is a difficult task but it is doable. Other countries have succeeded in doing this.

Economic and humanitarian programmes for the South of the country

We will do everything possible to allow the people in Russia’s Caucasus to lead normal lives. Economic and humanitarian programmes for the South of the country will soon be reviewed and fleshed out. We will set up some very clear criteria to assess the performance of heads of governmental structures dealing with the Caucasus. This applies primarily to federal and regional ministries and departments responsible for policy in industrial production, finance, social development, education and culture. At the same time, law enforcement authorities will continue to stamp out the bandits who seek to intimidate and terrorise the population of some Caucasian republics with their crazy ideas and barbaric customs.

Negative demographic trends must be slowed and stopped. We need to improve the quality of medical care, promote fertility, ensure safety on the road and in the workplace, combat the pandemic of alcoholism and develop physical culture and mass sport. This requires both a strategic approach and making such things the everyday tasks of the government.

Whatever the scope or effects of these transformations, their goal is ultimately the same, improving the quality of life in Russia. Creating better conditions by providing citizens with housing, employment, medical care, care of pensioners, protection of children, and support for people with disabilities – these are the duties of the authorities at all levels.

Russian politicians often remind us that, under our Constitution, Russia is a welfare state. This is true, but we must not forget that the modern welfare state is not some kind of

bloated Soviet social security system, and benefits are not distributed from the sky. A welfare state is a complex, balanced system of economic incentives and social benefits, legal, ethical and behavioural standards, a system whose productivity crucially depends on the quality of work and level of training of every one of us.

Whatever is distributed to society by government should only be what it has earned. Living beyond our means is immoral, unwise and dangerous. We need to make the economic system more productive so that we can earn more. Not just wait for the oil price rising at a given moment – we’ve got to earn our way.

We will improve the efficiency of social services in all spheres, paying special attention to problems of material and medical support for veterans and pensioners.

Use the intellectual resources of post-industrial societies

The modernisation of Russian democracy and establishment of a new economy will, in my opinion, only be possible if we use the intellectual resources of post-industrial societies. And we should do so without any complexes, openly and pragmatically. The issue of harmonising our relations with western democracies is not a question of taste, personal preferences or the prerogatives of given political groups. Our current domestic financial and technological capabilities are not sufficient for a qualitative improvement in the quality of life. We need money and technology from Europe, America and Asia. In turn, these countries need the opportunities Russia offers. We are very interested in the rapprochement and interpenetration of our cultures and economies.

Of course no relationship is free from contradictions. There will always be controversial topics, reasons for disagreement. But resentment, arrogance, various complexes, mistrust and especially hostility should be excluded from the relations between Russia and the leading democratic countries.

We have many common goals, including absolute priorities which affect every inhabitant on Earth such as the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and reducing the risk of adverse effects from man-made climate change.

We must have interested partners

We must have interested partners and involve them in joint activities. And if we need to change something ourselves in order to do so, abandon previous prejudices and illusions, then we should do so. I am of course not referring to a policy of unilateral concessions. Lack of will and incompetence will not gain us any respect, gratitude, or gains. This has already happened in our recent history. Naïve notions of the infallible and happy West and the eternally underdeveloped Russia are unacceptable, offensive and dangerous. But no less dangerous is the path of confrontation, self-isolation, mutual insults and recrimination.

Nostalgia should not guide our foreign policy and our strategic long-term goal is Russia’s modernisation. Along with this Russia is one of the world’s leading economies, a nuclear power and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. It should openly and explicitly explain its position and defend it in all venues, without weaselling or giving in to pressure to conform. And in the case of a threat to our own interests we must strongly defend them. I talked about these principles of our foreign policy in August last year.

In addition to this active work on the western front, we must increase our cooperation with the countries of the EurASEC [Eurasian Economic Community], CSTO [Collective Security Treaty Organisation] and CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States]. These are our closest, strategic partners. We share the common goal of modernising our economies, regional security, and a more equitable world order. We must also develop worldwide cooperation with our partners in the SCO [Shanghai Cooperation Organisation] and BRIC [Brazil-Russia-India-China].

Like every great people, the Russian people are brilliant and heroic, they command the world’s respect and admiration, and at the same time our history has been a controversial, complex, ambiguous one. It means different things to different people in different countries. And much remains to be done to protect our historical heritage from distortion and political speculations. We must look clearly at our past and see our great victories, our tragic mistakes, our role

models, and the manifestations of the best features of our national character.

We will be attentive to our history and we will respect it

In any case, we will be attentive to our history and we will respect it. First and foremost we must respect our country’s role in maintaining a balanced world order for centuries. Russia has always, at all stages of its development, sought to achieve a more equitable world order.

Russia has often sought to protect small nations, those confronted with the threat of enslavement or even destruction. This was the case only recently, when Saakashvili’s regime launched its criminal attack on South Ossetia. Russia has often put an end to the plans of those bent on world domination. Russia has twice appeared in the vanguard of the great coalitions: in the 19th century to stop *Napoleon* and in the 20th by defeating the Nazis. In war and peace, when a just cause has demanded decisive action, our people have been there to help. Russia has always been a staunch ally in war and an honest partner in economic and diplomatic affairs.

In the future, Russia will be an active and respected member of the international community of free nations. It will be strong enough to exert a significant influence on the formulation of decisions that have global implications. It will be able to prevent anyone’s unilateral actions from harming our national interests or adversely affecting our internal affairs, from reducing Russians’ level of income or damaging their security.

Priority is given to modern ideas of equality and fairness

For these reasons, along with other countries we are trying to reform the world’s supranational political and economic institutions. The aim of this modernisation is the development of international relations in the interests of as many peoples and countries as possible. We want to establish rules of cooperation and dispute settlement, in which priority is given to modern ideas of equality and fairness.

These are my views on the historical role of our country and its future. These are my answers to some of the questions that affect us all.

I would invite all those who share my convictions to get involved. I would also invite those who do not agree with my ideas but sincerely desire change for the better to be involved as well. People will attempt to interfere with our work. Influential groups of corrupt officials and do-nothing ‘entrepreneurs’ are well ensconced. They have everything and are satisfied. They’re going to squeeze the profits from the remnants of Soviet industry and squander the natural resources that belong to all of us until the end. They are not creating anything new, do not want development, and fear it. But the future does not belong to them – it belongs to us. And we are an absolute majority. We will act patiently, pragmatically, consistently and in a balanced manner. And act now: act today and tomorrow.

We will overcome the crisis, backwardness and corruption. We will create a new Russia. *Go Russia!*

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Voluntary Vaccination



Largely Untested on the Market

Did you know that up to this spring a pandemic could only be proclaimed if a higher than average number of dead had to be mourned? For the swine flu, this criterion was simply cancelled. To my knowledge scarcely one thousand people have died up to now worldwide. Yet according to WHO investigations 500,000 people die of the ordinary kind of influenza every year without our getting to hear anything about it. Did you also know that the vaccine against the swine flu will come on the market in October largely un-

tested for side effects? This happens because there is simply no time to carry out the necessary tests. In order not to let the pharmaceutical companies perish (only the vaccinated persons will do so), the United States' and the British Health Departments have signed a decree safeguarding the producers from having to pay compensation, should the public contract a disease from the side effects.

There is a simple reason for that. As early as in 1976, after the outbreak of a swine flu, forty millions citizens were vaccinated by the authorities in the US in the course of a special campaign, and afterwards thousands of them demanded compensation, because they had contracted the so-called *Guillain-Barré syndrome*. Even though I do not want to put Switzerland on a level with the US, I feel ever more uncomfortable the longer I think of the health emergency measures states can nowadays put into action, just because the swine flu has been declared a pandemic by the WHO.

Finally a savoury detail: The WHO, responsible for watching over the outbreak of so-called pandemics or epidemics all over the world, informs us on its website that it will not track the development of the swine flu any longer. How long will it take until we will not be tracked any longer by the security measures launched against it?

Priska Bühler, Müllheim/Germany

(Translation Current Concerns)

Novartis CEO for Immunisation only by Choice



In his interview by the daily newspaper "Blick" of 29 August, Novartis leader *Daniel Vasella* gives the following answer to the question whether he would vaccinate with blanket coverage: "Risk groups should be vaccinated. But only if the people volunteer".

British Nurses Will Refuse to Have the Swine Flu Jab

The British paper "Daily Mail" reports in its online edition of 18 August 2009 that a recent poll by *Nursing Times Magazine* has found that up to a third of nurses will say no to the swine flu jab because of concerns over its safety.

According to the report, NHS workers are the first to be vaccinated but a survey of 1,500 nurses found many will reject it.

A government scientist recently condemned the results saying nurses who do not have the jab are putting patients at risk.

Nevertheless the poll "will raise questions over the Government's planned mass vaccination programme", the report says.

Of 1,500 readers of *Nursing Times Magazine*, 30% would not say yes to the vaccine, while 33% said maybe. Just 37% said they

would definitely have the jab. Of those who said they would refuse the jab, 60% said their main reason was concern about the safety of the vaccine.

A further 31% said they did not consider the risks to their health from swine flu to be great enough, while 9% thought they would not be able to take time off work to get immunised.

Some 91% described themselves as front-line nurses.

According to "Daily Mail Online", one nurse said: "I would not be willing to put myself at risk of unknown long-term effects to facilitate a short-term solution."

Another nurse added: "I have yet to be convinced there is a genuine health risk and

it's not just government propaganda." The jab currently pushed forward has not sufficiently been tested before use.

There will be no tests at all carried out on children under three, even though babies and children at high risk will be among the first to get the vaccine.

There are also concerns the jab can cause *Guillain Barre Syndrome* (GBS), which can lead to paralysis and even death.

A mass swine flu vaccination in the US in 1976 caused far more deaths than the disease it was designed to combat and the Health Protection Agency watchdog has asked doctors to be on the lookout for cases of GBS. •

Source: *Daily Mail Global Research*, 18 August 2009

Oligarchs are Planning Genocide of Two-Thirds of the World Population

Kevin Trudeau personally spoke with Bilderberg members

by Paul Joseph Watson

Billionaire entrepreneur *Kevin Trudeau*, who has been constantly harassed and sued by the FTC (Federal Trade Commission) for promoting alternative health treatments, told *The Alex Jones Show* yesterday that elitists and Bilderberg members who he had personally conversed with spoke of their desire to see "two thirds of the dumb people" wiped off the planet.

Trudeau admitted that he was in Greece recently and implied that he attended the *Bilderberg Group* meeting, while also stating that he personally knew many Bilderberg members who he "conversed with on a regular basis."

Overpopulation is a primary concern of the elite, and it was the subject of a recent clandestine meeting of billionaire "philanthropists" in New York.¹ Elitists veil their agenda with the humanitarian rhetoric of the need to naturally reduce world population by means of contraception and education, whereas in reality, as we have exhaustively documented, their program has its origins in the inhumane

pseudo-science of eugenics which first flourished in Britain, and the ideology of racial and genetic superiority that was later adapted by the Nazis with the aid of *Rockefeller* funding.

"Some of the conversations you have on the 200 foot yachts off the coast of Monaco – you can't believe what really goes on behind closed doors," said Trudeau, noting that *Alex Jones* had exposed such issues in his documentary films, notably *Endgame*. The billionaire said that he had recently spent time in Monaco with Crown *Prince Albert II*.

Trudeau stated that elitists he had talked to thought their plans were for the greater good of humanity but that they believed there were two classes of people on earth, the ruling elite and the "worker bees," and that the elite were defined not necessarily by money or power, but by their genetic ancestry.

Trudeau shockingly detailed conversations with elitists during which they brazenly admitted their desire for massive global population reduction.

"I've been sitting on the boats off the coast of Barbados with the guys who basically said we need to get two-thirds of the dumb people off the planet – I've been in the meetings," said Trudeau, adding that such words were not spoken in an evil manner, but in a "matter of fact" way under the pretext that such a thing would be for the good of planet earth.

Revealingly, Trudeau said that elitists see *Alex Jones* as an annoyance but tolerate him because they believe *Jones* as well as Trudeau himself are, "desensitizing people to these realities," – which in a way works to their benefit.

"I've been told that's why I still get invited on the yachts," added Trudeau.

Trudeau aid that the elite was divided into two camps, one larger faction that, "Categorically believes they are genetically superior than the rest of the population," and another smaller faction, mainly comprising of younger people, that are feeding Trudeau information who, "Have come to the conclusion that some people are smarter than others,

some people are more talented than others, some people are more motivated to work ... but everyone should be allowed to succeed or fail based on their own choices or initiative ... and that's where there's a split and a division right now at the highest levels," said Trudeau.

We would urge people to listen to the full interview with Kevin Trudeau via You Tube², as it is packed with eyebrow-raising information about the mind set of the elite and their future agenda, particularly in relation to the economy. •

Article printed from *Alex Jones' Prison Planet.com*: www.prisonplanet.com, 27 May 2009

¹ subject of a recent clandestine meeting of billionaire "philanthropists" in New York: <http://www.prisonplanet.com/secretive-rich-cabal-met-to-discuss-population-control.html>

² full interview with Kevin Trudeau via You Tube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ejbJfk61mY&feature=channel_page

... Reduce World Population ...

As long as the Bilderbergs do not reveal their Athens agreement they are under suspicion of following Nazi paths



cc. The British paper *The Sunday Times* reported on 24 May that "America's leading billionaires have met secretly to consider how their wealth could be used to slow the growth of the world's population" and "discussed joining forces to overcome political and religious obstacles to change." Most interesting, "the informal afternoon session was so discreet that some of the billionaires' aides were told they were at 'security briefings'." Moreover, "the billionaires were each given 15

minutes to present their favourite cause. Over dinner they discussed how they might settle on an 'umbrella cause' that could harness their interests" and what they decided was that "they agreed that overpopulation was a priority." Finally "a consensus emerged that they would back a strategy in

which population growth would be tackled as a potentially disastrous environmental, social and industrial threat." Moreover, they agreed that "they need to be independent of government agencies, which are unable to head off the disaster we all see looming."

A guest said that they wanted to speak rich to rich without worrying anything they said would end up in the newspapers, painting them as an alternative world government. •

Source: *The Sunday Times* of 24 May 2009

Adviser of Gordon Brown Wants to Reduce UK Population to 30 Million

According to a "Sunday Times Online" report of March 2009 by *Jonathan Leake* and *Brendan Montague*, *Jonathan Porritt*, one of

"In the event that I am reincarnated, I would like to return as a deadly virus, in order to contribute something to solve overpopulation."

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Husband of Queen Elizabeth II., quoted from the foreword to *Fleur Cowles, If I Were an Animal* (William Morrow, publisher, 1987, ISBN 9780688061500)

Gordon Brown's leading green advisers, is to warn that Britain must drastically reduce its population to 30m.

Porritt's call came at this week's annual conference of the Optimum Population Trust (OPT), of which he is patron.

The trust will release research suggesting UK population must be cut to 30m if the country wants to feed itself sustainably, the report says.

This is part of the thinking behind the call for Britain to cut population to 30m – roughly what it was in late Victorian times. •

Source: *The Sunday Times Online*, 22 March 2009

Note: *Optimum Population Trust* is the leading think tank in the UK concerned with the impact of population growth on the environment. (www.optimumpopulation.org)

Preventing Violence – Considerations and Suggestions

by Dieter Sprock, Switzerland

The act of violence of three Küssnacht (Switzerland) pupils in Munich was shocking. The victim will suffer from permanent injuries and will probably be handicapped for life. Munich, Winnenden, Blacksburg and the many other juvenile violence excesses are alarming indicators of both an alarming trend and an expression of a profound crisis of meaning in our society. Effective media headlines are however only the visible part of the problem. In some places, conditions prevail, which demand too much of all the people involved: Teachers report that they can hardly teach. Pupils indicate in polls that they fear violence of schoolmates most. In each village, drugs are available. The consumption of alcohol is increasing. Moreover, in psychiatrists' and psychologists' offices the cases of juvenile depression and suicidality among the young accumulate.

With all these difficulties in mind, we may not forget, however, that the larger part of our youth still tries to find a reasonable way despite the difficult times. The majority of youth is not violent.

A violent potential for political purposes?

The violence of young people shows a new "quality". It serves the purpose of having fun and demonstrating power and it is directed against completely innocent people, where no conflict preceded. The action is very often announced beforehand on the Internet or by SMS, as was the case with the three pupils, who wanted to hit out once again. The offenders show no sympathy and do not leave the victim alone even when it is already defenselessly lying on the ground; the kind of violence aims at the destruction of the victim. After the act, the offenders do not show any sense of guilt or regret. On the contrary, they film the terrible act with their mobile phones, boast about their act and lampoon their victims by sending the films off all over the world. Some the offenders are described as quiet, nice and completely inconspicuous children and young people. For many years, they have been living in parallel worlds, in which completely different rules and laws are valid. Whereas in the one world, the material one, they go to school on time, behave politely and unobtrusively and their mothers prepare hot chocolate for them in the morning, they develop their dreams of rulers over life and death in the virtual world, which lends power and prestige to them. Feeling lonely in their hearts, insignificant, without being emotionally bound to any values they are the masters of the world in their games, until one day they turn their dream, which they dreamed and trained thousandfold, into reality and carry



2nd year pupils of a Zurich Secondary School maintain public footpaths in Valais. "Curricula must be established in such a way that they serve the promotion of public welfare. They should contain tasks in the social field which are obligatory for everyone." (picture rr)

out a massacre. In the virtual world, the heroes of power and murder govern. The winner is the one who kills most human beings by shooting them in their heads. It looks as if the virtual competition will shift into the material life, if we do not change something crucial. The stupid twaddle of the highly paid computer game "specialists", who try to confuse the public opinion on behalf of the games manufacturers, cannot be taken serious.

A part of the youth developed a violent potential, which is on call at any time. The perpetrators of violence have a network whose members are easily to be mobilized. Thus, the rampaging young people in the burning Paris suburbs were directed via mobile phone, and immediately provided with the incendiary mixtures by certain political wirepullers.

Youth violence in the service of sinister political interests behind it is still another horror vision in our countries today; however, it may become reality, if in times of crisis unemployment and futility spread in the cities.

Form alliances – find common solutions

It is a matter of reason and responsibility for our children to look for solutions, which prevent a further escalation of violence and strengthen social coherence on the grounds of philanthropic ethics and the respect for life.

The act of Munich initiated reflections on the issue. Many people are looking for a way out, and each of us is called to keep this in mind and make a contribution. We cannot

delegate prevention to some "responsible person" or "expert". The honest discussion among citizens is required, in which solutions are developed by a common effort.

A field, in which the considerations for violence prevention must certainly be included, is the field of education. We must answer the question of how we want to live. Which world, i.e. which educational ideas do we want to pass on to our children? The child knows exactly what rejoices his parents' hearts. Which attitudes and views do we want to train and promote in our children? Which ones do they need for their life in a difficult time with economic drawbacks and misery? How can our children become capable human beings, who are able to think and contribute to the common weal in order to solve the problems?

An "all inclusive service mentality" in education has produced bad-tempered children. They lack nothing, they are well-fed, cared for around the clock and nevertheless dissatisfied with themselves and the world; they are children, whose only aim is to get a blue car even if they already possess a red, green and yellow car. They suffer from an inner vacuum and they are not linked to other people. The service mentality has produced a society, in which many people tumble from one event to the other, ill their time with fun, shopping and meeting others, who dance and laugh and do not take any notice of wars, the contamination of the world, hunger and misery. We live, as if all that did not exist.

There are tasks to be tackled: How can we develop something else with our children and young people and conceive of another world, in which justice and peace prevail? How can we address our youth, which forces can we mobilize in them? How do we succeed in connecting the children with their parents and other people so that they find deep friendships in the world?

Which position should school have in our society, and which contents and values should it teach the pupils for their lives? For 30 years, teachers have wrongfully been made responsible for any problem in society, because many of them do an outstanding job; they are teachers with all their hearts. Their reputation and their authority must be repaired; those responsible for their being defamed must be named and their goals revealed.

In order to enable school to accomplish its mission for education, a union between parents, schools and municipalities is required. Parents, teachers and children must succeed in establishing an alliance, which contributes to the co-operation and development of all. This includes moral concepts and shared rules for all. School is not a business in the service sector, which has to satisfy all the needs of its customers. The schools' mission for education does not only refer to instruction and professional training, although both are important for the development, but also to the education of the whole human being, his manual and mental abilities and to character formation. Curricula must be established in such a way that they serve the promotion of public welfare. They should contain tasks in the social field which are obligatory for everyone. Today's youth can easily be won for solidarity with the third world. We could also co-operate with church youth organizations, which have great experience in this field.

Today large parts of the young people have also started to think likewise. Many feel uneasy. They fear to be victims of chicaneries and violence themselves. We should summon the magnanimity to stand by their side and suggest shared effort taking, without wanting to anticipate the solution, which we intend to develop together.

Let us invite the pupils to contribute their ideas. They know the internal processes among themselves and can contribute their experience. If we succeed in addressing the positive forces in our youth, a large variety of ideas is certain to emerge. What about using this mood of embarrassment and reflection and arranging a competition in school buildings or even all over Switzerland to develop the best ideas for violence prevention?

Book review

Massimo Zucchetti: Depeted Uranium. A scientific approach to the hazards of military use of depleted uranium

bha. Whether we talk about Iraq, Somalia, former Yugoslavia, Afghanistan or Lebanon – the cancer rates obviously increase in those countries maltreated by the western war alliance. Both the civilian population and the military are concerned indiscriminately. Even the soldiers of the "own" troops could not escape. Multiple cancers occur and an immediate occurrence of the illness can be observed with young people – the reports from Kosovo indicate that e.g. the 30 to 40 year-old people die from aggressive tumors.

Massimo Zucchetti, professor for radiation protection and nuclear security of the Polytechnic Institute in Turin/Italy, explains the physical characteristics of this type of ammunition used by the ton, which burns at the impact on a hard target: Uranium ammunition. The radioactive and chemically toxic uranium metal disintegrates into particles, often nanoparticles, which unfold their devastating effect primarily when inhaled. By the so-called "bystander-effect", the alpha radiation

also impairs un-irradiated cells of the body. According to Zucchetti, there are strong indicators that the radiological and chemical effects of the uranium ammunition have so far been underestimated.

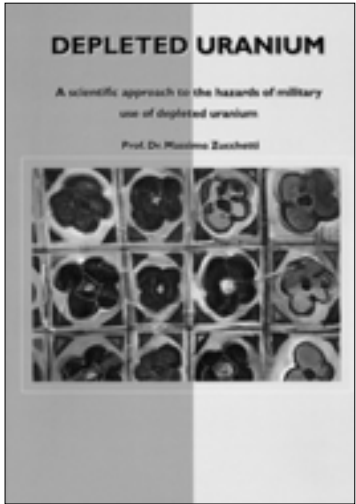
Since the 1990s, there has been a politically motivated controversy on the recognition of uranium ammunition as a cause for cancer and leukemia cases, often shifted to the scientific literature, which in the first instance makes it difficult to look at the medical facts.

Who would lay the burden of proof with the physicians of a Serbian hospital in Kosovska-Mitrovica who in 2001 had already claimed that the rate of the patients suffering from malicious illnesses has increased about 200% since 1998? Why could their voice not be heard? Or does the ill victim have to prove that he or she fell ill due to the employed weapons? Should we not apply the reversal of the burden of proof in this case, a principle that has been applied in environmental law for long?

Zucchetti dedicates a whole chapter to Iraq. Dust and dryness of the agriculturally used grounds in Iraq multiply the effects of the use of uranium weapons on the people's health. The brochure contains pictures of malformed children and patients with enormous tumors. Concerning the illustrations, experts in radiation biology suggest a great-

er similarity to the victims of the Hiroshima bomb than to diseased workers of uranium mines. The child cemetery in Basra resembles the cemeteries in Serbia: For a long time they have become too small to host those who died young.

According to Karen Parker, American international law activist, uranium ammunition complies with all 4 criteria of humanitarian international law for illegal weapons. Massimo Zucchetti's publication confirms this assessment.



The book can be ordered at: zucchetti@polito.it
Meppel Netherlands 2009,
ISBN/EAN: 978-90-9024147-0



Letter to the Editor

Current Concerns publishes absolutely marvellous news we do not hear from any other source. In New Zealand the people have no idea how the Swiss system works and what a model for the world it should be; instead, when we tried to change our system to "Referenda" we were ignored by the media, and finance did not permit us to fight on. The attacks you describe in Current Concerns coming against Switzerland are incredible, but according to the plan, "World Government" is to be pointed on us all and the Swiss model, the greatest in the world, must be destroyed.

It is important that the people with the help of referenda fight these imperialists and madmen.

The USA appears on track for a "revolution". Switzerland and your militia system must not back down to the Communist EU and must continue to be free.

Keep up the good fight for the truth.

Leo Helleur, New Zealand

Love – with a View on the Entire World, on the Human Being as an Entity

The Social Encyclical Letter of Pope Benedikt XVI., “Caritas In Veritate”

by Bishop Dr. Elmar Fischer*



Bishop Dr Elmar Fischer (picture zvg)

cc. In the following we publish the speech of Bishop Dr Elmar Fischer, held at the Conference “Mut zur Ethik” on the topic “Sovereignty of the people or imperialism – what is true democracy?”, 4 to 6 September 2009 in Feldkirch/Austria.

How does the Pope see the chances of a beneficial development of the world and the human being in view of today’s situation marked by the financial crash?

1. Important references from the word of God: Hebr 10, 8-18, esp. 12f: “But when this priest (Jesus) had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. Since that time he waits for his enemies to be made his footstool.” Why does he wait passively, until the enemies are made his footstool? Luke 7, 28-35: Although he, Jesus, states that neither John (the Baptist) nor he him-

self is able to correspond with “the people of this generation”, particularly the Pharisees, “wisdom” (a Messiah title repeatedly used in Old Testament) nevertheless comes into its own.

The substantial statement of these passages: The Messiah with his life, death and resurrection obviously proved the true rescue and redemption. He respects, however, the freedom of the human being, and it is this human being who has the possibility of converting his personal and social ideas of redemption. If, however, a minimum of Jesus’ spirit is not innate to these conversions, the ideas are doomed to fail, they make themselves the footstool of “wisdom”. It is wisdom whose acts are right.

2. Differently from the past social encyclical letters, Pope Benedikt XVI considers the word globalization and its influence on today’s world and takes into view the entire world in its various relations, and makes pointing landmark statements for the holistic development of human beings.

The encyclical letter “Rerum novarum” (1899) of Leo XIII took a stand on the “laborers’ issue” considering the then strongly expanding industry. In 1931 Pius XI took a stand in “Quadragesimo anno” on the liberal-capitalistic system. Johannes XXIII in his 1963 encyclical letter “Pacem in terris” states that each human being has inalienable rights and obligations by his nature, by his humaneness. He clearly professes a constitutional state based on freedom and the rule of law. Democracy, which respects the human rights, becomes the “required aim” and is to be pursued. Pope John Paul II particularly emphasizes in “Laborem exercens” of 1981 that human work is to be regarded not only as a monetary value, but must also be profoundly considered in also its personal value. Man unfolds his person by work as well.

In two encyclical letters, the Popes took a stand on the increasing priority of the prob-

lem of developing countries: Paul VI in “Populorum progressio” (1967). Developmental aid given to the people may not only concern technical aid. Effective assistance requires the extension of knowledge, education, and respect for the dignity of man, the acknowledgment of eternal values, and the acknowledgment of God as source and aim of values. In a further relevant letter “Sollicitudo rei socialis” (1987) Pope John Paul II points to the fact that business initiatives may not be suppressed, but have to be promoted and the developing countries have to correct their own errors.

3. For the statements of Pope Benedikt XVI on the various aspects for the social situation and development this basic view is essential: Jesus Christ is the person, who contains the representation of the people in each dimension.

Thus, looking at the procedure, which we call globalization, justice is to be strived for aiming at coming up to the people, the world and its ecological requirements, for the common good and in solidarity. For Pope Benedikt, justice in this sense is the minimum of love. He mentions the manifold needs and tasks, which are to be regulated, and his suggestion is to create an authority similar to the UN, which is able to steer the entire world in a binding way, rather than bringing a world government into being, He calls this a challenging demand for the world of today, since the single states are no longer able to steer the development sufficiently.

“Caritas in Veritate”, charity in truth, in truthfulness, this is how the encyclical letter starts and thus attracts the view particularly to the development of human beings, to their task of the holistic development of their nature, a task given to them by their creator. Pope Benedikt takes up the statements by Paul VI in “Populorum progressio” on (as quoted above) and refers in remarkable detail to Paul VI’s statements in “Humanae vitae” (1968), in which the ability to establish relations in marriage and family are worked out.

Society, municipalities and their institutions can only cope with their tasks, if they do not only promote people in different sectors of their existence (as a worker, as a specialist, as someone of political importance for a party, as donors for funds and financial resources...) but figure on man as an entity, knowing about his developmental task: to become able to love with all his gifts and convert all his capabilities into love.

Looking at a human being equipped with various drives and forces, love may sound very emotional. In this regard, the Pope cares for *veritas*, for truth and austerity. Emotion and feeling are not to determine love. He wants the makers of the social world help the people properly, in sympathy and with a view on the network of different situations, to develop and cooperate in the establishment of a profound public welfare.

The church cannot give isolated orders or concrete concepts for action from its fund of Christ’s messages, but it wants to contribute with its insights to the full development of the world, of the people and the community. In all the possibilities, which are offered to the people’s success today, only that one will succeed in the long term, which carries the wisdom, as Christ lived it, in himself. •

* Dr Elmar Fischer is bishop of the diocese of Feldkirch/Austria. He was born on 6 October 1936 in Feldkirch-Tisis. From 1970 to 1982, Elmar Fischer was rector of the Diocesan Boarding School Marianum in Bregenz. From 1974 to 1990, he was at the same time director of the officially approved Diocesan Institute for Marriage, Family and Life Counseling. Starting from 1979 to 1990 Elmar Fischer was director of the Marriage and Family Center of the Diocese Feldkirch. In 1991 he was listed as a state approved psychotherapist. His predecessor, Bishop Klaus Küng, appointed him Vicar General of the Diocese Feldkirch on 6 March 1989. In May 2005, Elmar Fischer was appointed bishop of Feldkirch by Pope Benedikt XVI.

Dialogue is the True Alternative to War

Appeal for peace from the leaders of the world’s great religions on the occasion of the Crakow Meeting from 6 to 8 September 2009

“Men and women of different religions, we convened in the ancient city of Crakow, seventy years after the outbreak of World War II, to pray, to dialogue with each other, to foster a spiritual humanism of peace.

We pay tribute to the memory of John Paul II, a son of this land. He was a master of dialogue and a tenacious witness of the holiness of peace, capable of providing the world with a vision even in difficult times: it is the Spirit of Assisi. That very spirit has blown through a number of peaceful changes that took place in the world. It blew in 1989, twenty years ago, when Poland and other Eastern European countries were restored to freedom. In September 1989 men and women of different religions, gathered in Warsaw by the Community of Sant’Egidio, firmly stated their love for peace: “War never again!” We have remained faithful to this spirit even when many people, in recent years, maintained that violence and war can solve problems and conflicts in our world.

The bitter lesson of World War II has often been forgotten, though it was a tremendous tragedy in human history. We went as pilgrims to Auschwitz, aware of the abyss into which humankind had fallen. We needed to come back here, into the abyss of evil, to better understand the heart of history! Such immense pain cannot be forgotten!

We need to look at the pains and sorrows of our world: people at war, pover-

ty, the horror of terrorism, the many victims of hatred. Here, we heeded the plea of many people who suffer. Entire peoples are hostage to war and poverty, and many are forced to leave their homes. Many have just vanished, were kidnapped or lack a secure life.

Our world is disoriented by the crisis of a market that believed it was almighty, and by an often faceless and soulless globalization. Globalization is a unique opportunity, yet the world has often preferred to live it as a clash of civilisations and religions. There can be no peace when dialogue between peoples is extinguished. No human being, no people, is ever an island!

Regardless of their differences, our religious traditions strongly testify that a world with no spirit will never be human. They show us the path to return to God, the source of peace.

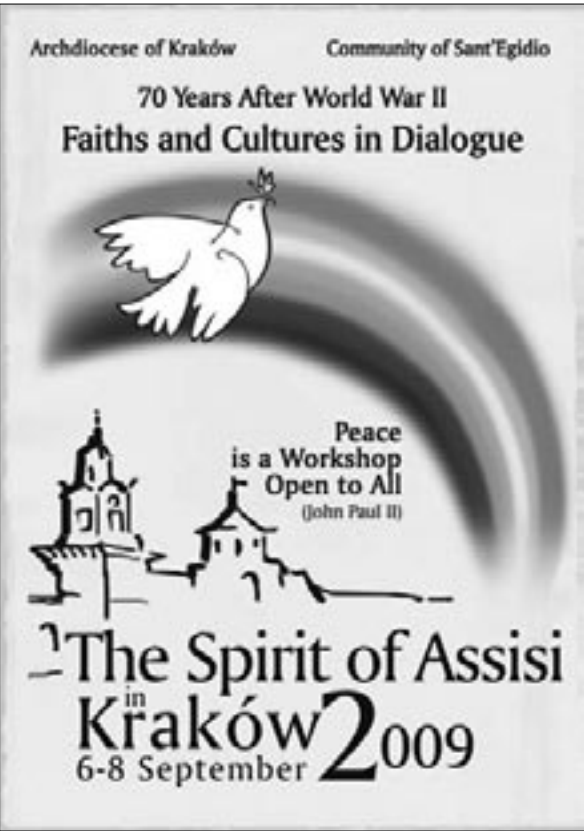
Spirit and dialogue will give courage to our globalized world! A world without dialogue will be enslaved by hatred and fear for the other. Religions do not want war and do not want to be used for war. To speak of war in the name of God is blasphemous. No war is ever holy. Humanity is always defeated by violence and terror.

Spirit and dialogue show the way to live together in peace. We have discovered, even more clearly, that dialogue delivers from fear and distrust. It is an alternative to war. It does

not weaken anyone’s identity but enables us to rediscover the best of ourselves and of the others. Nothing is lost with dialogue! Dialogue writes a better history, while conflict opens up abysses. Dialogue is the art of living together. Dialogue is the gift we want to make to this 21st century.

Let us start afresh from the memory of World War II, from the prophecy of John Paul II, and be pilgrims of peace. With patience and courage, let us give shape to a new era of dialogue, uniting together in peace those who hate and ignore each other, all peoples, and all humankind. May God grant the entire world, every man and every woman, the wonderful gift of peace!”

Cracow, 8th September 2009



cc. On Pope John Paul II’s suggestion, the Christian community Sant’Egidio of the Roman Catholic church organises a peace meeting of the world religions every year. This year the meeting took place in the Polish city of Cracow. For further information about this year’s peace meeting see the community’s website at www.santegidio.org.