

Current Concerns

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“The control mechanisms in the current financial system have become so overwhelming” Quadragesimo Anno more topical than ever

by Professor graduate engineer rer. nat. Dr iur. Heinrich Wohlmeyer

Concerned fellow citizens asked me if Pope *Pius XI's* statement of 15 May 1931, in the encyclica “*Quadragesimo Anno* – On the Social Order, Par. 106,” is still relevant, and I can only answer, as I will explain below, that this pope’s wake-up call and his exhortations in the middle of the “world economic crisis” were almost providential, because the big capital owners’ financial stranglehold was secured during the Second World War and above all by the “international financial order” institutionalised after the Second World War and further developed later.

Pius XI stated:

“This dictatorship is being most forcibly exercised by those who, since they hold the money and completely control it, control credit also and rule the lending of money. Hence they regulate the flow, so to speak, of the life-blood whereby the entire economic system lives, and have so firmly in their grasp the soul, as it were, of economic life that no one can breathe against their will.”¹

The way to the almost unlimited rule of big capital foreseen by the Pope, and its operations which are driven by anonymised merciless greed, will be briefly illuminated below.

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In order not to be dismissed as a “conspiracy theorist”, I will also cite some illuminating sources from the financial world and from science.

Looking at the present situation, we should begin at the beginning of modern banking: the invention of money was based on the idea of finding a scarce, easily transportable, durable and divisible commodity that might serve as measure of exchange and as a commodity for barter. This commodity was mainly silver and gold. In order to save on transport costs and to be safe from robbery, coin money was deposited with dealers of precious metals and goldsmiths, who issued receipts, “banknotes”, for this purpose. These were accepted like the hard money

in commercial intercourse. The “bankers”, however, soon came to the conclusion that customers did not normally collect their coins, and issued banknotes which were uncovered but trusted by the citizens (as they were redeemable at the bank).

Thus, the “fractional” creation of money out of nothing had been invented.²

The British globalised this system by appropriating gold mines worldwide³ and lending “gold-covered” money. The City of London, still today an extra-territorial area in London, became the “financial hub of the world”. However, as the British had underestimated the war costs of the First World War and had incurred debt with US high finance, they had to cede a good part of their financial dominance to them. They became “junior partners”. However, they were able to maintain their position largely through the colonial empire. It was the Second World War that brought the seismic shift:

Bretton Woods –

License for big (dollar) money printing

The Bretton Woods Agreement of July 1944 determined the world financial order for the period after the Second World War. The US as the main victorious power insisted on the US dollar as the reserve currency, which at that time was also fractionally gold-covered and to which the other currencies were linked.⁴ The installation of the US dollar as the reserve currency alongside gold was, in effect, a



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It's true: NATO with its eastward expansion has violated all pledges made

Russia's deepest fears have been realized

by Eric S. Margolis*



Eric Margolis
(picture ma)

At a time when the United States is convulsed by anti-Russian hysteria and demonization of Vladimir Putin, a trove of recently declassified Cold War documents reveals the astounding extent of the

lies, duplicity and double-dealing engaged in by the Western powers with the collapsing Soviet Union in 1990.

I was covering Moscow in those days and met some of the key players in this sordid drama. Ever since, I've been writing that the Soviet leader, *Mikhail Gorbachev*, and Foreign Minister, *Eduard Shevardnadze*, were shamelessly lied to and deceived by the United States, Britain, and their appendage, NATO.

All the Western powers promised Gorbachev and Shevardnadze that NATO would not expand eastward by 'one inch' if Moscow would pull the Red Army out of East Germany and allow it to peacefully reunify with West Germany. This was a titanic concession by Gorbachev: it led to a failed coup against him in 1991 by Communist hardliners.

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The documents released by *George Washington University* in Washington DC, which I attended for a semester, make sickening reading (see them online)¹. All western powers and statesmen assured the Russians that NATO would not take advantage of the Soviet retreat and that a new era of amity and cooperation would dawn in post-Cold War Europe. US Secretary of State *Jim Baker* offered 'ironclad guarantees' there would be no NATO expansion. Lies, all lies.

Gorbachev was a humanist, a very decent, intelligent man who believed he could end the Cold War and nuclear arms race. He ordered the Red Army back from Eastern Europe. I was in Wunsdorf, East Germany, HQ of the Group of Soviet Forces, Germany, and at Stasi secret police HQ in East Berlin right after the pull-out order was given. The Soviets withdrew their 338,000 troops and 4,200 tanks and sent them home at lightning speed.

Western promises made to Soviet leaders by President *George W. H. Bush* and *Jim Baker* quickly proved to be empty. They were honorable men but their successors were not. Presidents *Bill Clinton* and *George W. Bush* quickly began moving NATO into Eastern Europe, violating all the pledges made to Moscow.

The Poles, Hungarians and Czechs were brought into NATO, then Romania and Bulgaria, the Baltic States, Albania, and Montenegro. Washington tried to get the former Soviet Republics of Georgia and Ukraine into NATO. The Moscow-aligned government of Ukraine was overthrown in a US-engineered coup. The road to Moscow was open.

All the bankrupt, confused Russians could do was denounce these eastward moves by the US and NATO. The best response NATO and Washington could come up with was, 'well, there was no official written promise.' This is worthy of a street peddler selling counterfeit watches. The leaders of the US, Britain, France, Belgium and Italy all lied. Germany was caught between its honor and imminent reunification. So even its Chancellor *Hel-*

mut Kohl had to go along with the West's prevarications.

At the time, I wrote that the best solution would be for the demilitarization of formerly Soviet-controlled Eastern Europe. NATO had no need or business to expand eastward. Doing so would be a constant provocation to Russia, which regarded Eastern Europe as an essential defensive glacis against invasions from the West.

Now, with NATO forces on its western borders, Russia's deepest fears have been realized.

Today, US military aircraft based on the coasts of Romania and Bulgaria, former Warsaw Pact members, probe Russian airspace over the Black Sea and the vital strategic port of Sevastopol. Washington talks about arming chaotic Ukraine. US and NATO troops are in the Baltic, on Russia's northwestern borders. Polish right-wingers are beating the war drums against Russia.

In 1990, KGB and CIA agreed to the principal of 'not one inch' eastward for NATO. Former US ambassador to Moscow, *Jack Matlock*, confirms the same agreement. Gorbachev, who is denounced as a foolish idealist by many Russians, trusted the Western powers. He should have had a battalion of New York City garment district shyster lawyers to document his agreements in 1990. He thought he was dealing with honest, honorable men, like himself.

Is it any wonder after this bait and switch diplomacy that Russia has no trust in the Western powers? Moscow watches US-run NATO oozing ever eastwards. Today, Russia's leaders firmly believe Washington's ultimate plan is to tear apart Russia and reduce it to an impotent, pauper nation. Two former Western leaders, *Napoleon* and *Hitler*, had similar plans.

Instead of carrying on about Hitler's duplicity after Munich, we should look at our own shameless behavior after 1990. •

Source: www.ericmargolis.com from 16 December 2018 (with friendly permission by the author)

¹ <https://nsarchive.gwu.edu/briefing-book/russia-programs/2017-12-12/nato-expansion-what-gorbachev-heard-western-leaders-early>

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“license to print money” by reason of supremacy.

The established international financial institutions (World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund) secured and continue to secure this system. The US is able to enforce its high-finance strategies⁵ through its blocking minorities. The so-called Washington Consensus, which aims at unrestricted exploitation of indebted states, calls for the opening of borders, for lowering public finances and for free access to private and state assets.

Financial colonialism through debt policy

When the European colonial powers were no longer able to keep their colonies by military means, the new dependency-creating “financial colonialism” was developed. This is mainly dominated by US high finance. The “developing countries”, formally released into independence, were advised to accumulate high debts and thus forced into interest-rate bondage.⁶ They were subsequently offered the “liberating” sale of raw material sources and land⁷ – i.e. indirect colonialism.⁸

In a modified form, this strategy was also applied in “developed countries” such as Argentina and, more recently, Greece. There also, unreasonably large loans were given cheaply, so as to then raise interest rates, declare the nemesis and force the country to sell out.⁹

Looking at the development of the last two hundred years, one encounters the same repetitive pattern of strategy: grant cheap credit created out of nothing and, when the companies are heavily in debt, raise interest rates on the grounds of a dangerous hazard of inflation and overheating.¹⁰ Those in possession of money can then buy the insolvent companies at low prices and, into the bargain, allow themselves to be celebrated as saviours. The publicly accessible study by the ETH Zurich, “The Network of Global Corporate Control”¹¹ shows that this is not a tall tale of conspiracy. In this study, 37 million companies were examined in respect of their interconnectedness and dependencies.¹² The result is that 1318 out of 43,000 groups control four-fifths of the world’s sales and that the 50 companies pulling the central strings are big banks and capital funds. They own the “blue chips” – i.e. the best companies –, which they have acquired. In the current situation, it is above all the Chinese sovereign wealth funds that are constantly buying up companies and land.

A recent interview of ex-banker *Ronald Bernhard* in “*Endzeitre-*

porter” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKjTOKp5h2g>), shows how ruthless and interconnected the international finance business is. This is also about the creation and financing of wars up to the financial flows around human trafficking.

Bubbles are made – bubbles are burst

The assumption of power by the financial elite and the way they steer towards collective expropriation in their favour is particularly evident in the monetary policy of the European Central Bank (ECB), which, in violation of the basic monetary policy of monetary stability, “prints” 60 billion euros per month by buying bonds from ailing states and companies,¹³ and which has lowered the prime rate to zero. And yet all EU citizens are held responsible for the liability of this monetary policy.

The fact that this megabubble must burst at the expense of all citizens has been explained by the financial expert *Dr Markus Krall* in his book, “*Der Draghi Crash – Warum die entfesselte Geldpolitik in die finanzielle Katastrophe führt*” (“The Draghi Crash – why unleashed monetary policy will lead to financial disaster”).¹⁴ While savvy people are currently seeking refuge in tangible assets, the remaining bona fide owners of financial assets are facing collective expropriation in favour of the world’s financial elite.

Therefore, in my “Ausweg-Manifest” (“Way out manifesto”)¹⁵, which has already been translated into eight languages, I have made proposals for a “strategic tax reform” that will effect an appropriate contribution from big business to the financing of the community and to debt relief for states, and also recommended the reintroduction of the institutional separation of commercial and investment banking functions¹⁶ as well as a fundamental reform of the monetary system. In plain language: a release from the established interest bondage. *Dirk Solte*¹⁷, one of the best connoisseurs of the world finance scene, has explained very simply why these proposals are not being accepted by politicians: The big capital owners allow for the politicians’ short-term political survival, and these in turn do not touch the big capital playgrounds. If my proposals were accepted, the financial elite would lose their control as well as their capabilities of appropriation in the communities.¹⁸

The US is currently encumbered with debts to the unbelievable height of \$ 21 trillion (US trillion), or 21 million x millions¹⁹ to big business and therefore kept in its leading-strings. The US doctor and politician *Ronald Ernest Paul* (Ron Paul)²⁰ demonstrated that the citizens of the United States would have had to pay no taxes at all if the monetary expansion by the

state issue of money since 1913 had flown into the community²¹.

Several politicians have paid with their lives for their attempts to return money creation to the community. The most prominent are *Abraham Lincoln* (issuance of the Green-Back government bonds) and, more recently, *John F. Kennedy* (Executive Order No. 11110, which was cancelled immediately after his death).

The ESM, the European Stability Mechanism, into which the politicians were advised with the argument of avoiding crises, shows just how far the financially strong will take their insolence. Because this would not even be covered by the Lisbon Treaty, it was introduced in the form of a state treaty outside the “EU Constitution”. It enjoys extraterritoriality and immunity, eludes democratic control and can call up money from the member states arbitrarily. In the EU context, there is additionally the “stability pact”, according to which the member states have to report their budgets to Brussels, where they are corrected through, before being rubber-stamped by the parliaments.²² In my book “*Empörung in Europa – Wege aus der Krise*” (“Rebellion in Europe – Ways out of the crisis”)²³, I have, together with the experienced expert *Günther Robol*, pointed out this situation under the title “*Geldgesteuerte Scheindemokratie – die Staatsmacht als Dienstmagd der Finanzeliten*” (“Money-driven mock democracy – the state power as a servant of the financial elites”) and warned against the ratification of the ESM. It turned out that most MEPs had not read the text and had voted in favour relying on the information they had received.

Before concluding that the Pius XI warning is more relevant than ever, I would like to share three pieces of information with the reader:

The first is an enlightening commitment to creating money: Taking the bull by the horns²⁴, the Bank of England stated (admitted) in its 14th Quarterly Bulletin (2014 Q1) in the article “Money Creation in the Modern Economy”, that the creation of money essentially takes place through lending out of nothing (“bank lending creates deposits”). The description in many textbooks that banks accumulate savings and then lend them did not correspond to the “modern reality”.

Regulations, regulations, regulations: choke back the little fish, empower the big fish

The second is a colleague’s accidentally overhearing a conversation of high finance representatives in the couloirs of Brussels: the financial authorities said that six to seven banks in Europe would be enough

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to efficiently manage the money economy. This strategy is consistent with the current systematic stalling of local financial utilities through thousand-page rules that paralyse business and then result in closure because of the lack of profitability.

The authorisations to close down small banks go so far that according to the “Austrian Banking Restructuring and Resolution Act” (BaSAG), banks can be closed by the Financial Market Authority (FMA) on suspicion, without any legal remedy being permitted.²⁵

The third is the method of indirect transfer union within the framework of the European Central Bank system as pointed out by Mr *Hans Werner Sinn*. The Target2 system allows deficit states to “chalk up” what they bought from surplus states. In this way, on 31 December 2017 the German “Bundesbank” had the sum of about 906 billion euros in their books as a claim. That’s 2.7 times the federal budget of around 330 billion euros! It is anybody’s guess who will repay these sums ... In any case, the owners of the “Bundesbank” are liable for this risk ... and these are the German citizens.

Conclusion: The exploitative domination mechanisms in the current financial system have become so overwhelming that the warning of Pius XI is more relevant than ever, and that a gentle uprising and a courageous stand appear necessary.

In my book mentioned above and in my manifesto, I have shown ways to this effect.

- ¹ http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_19310515_quadregesimo-anno.html
- ² The currently mandatory low level of bank equity capital is in line with this pattern, and it should also be noted that most banks do not have any equity capital at all. As this is simply the difference between assets and liabilities, “equity” can be faked in the balance sheets through “hedonistic” valuation of the assets.
- ³ This was also the reason for the two Boer Wars in South Africa at the end of the 19th century.
- ⁴ In 1971, the gold cover was unilaterally terminated and the petrodollar system was created. An agreement with the Saudis as the leading producers and caller of the shots in OPEC made it possible to enforce that oil was traded only in US dollars. Since then, the US dollar is covered only by the military power of the United States. In all states that had wanted to break out of the dollar system, there were “humanitarian interventions” or revolutions. This attitude also explains the US position on world climate issues, which is usually about leaving the oil-based energy and transport industry.
- ⁵ Here it should be noted that the US Federal Reserve System (FED) is not a National Bank in the usual sense, but a large-scale cartel with National Bank privileges. This explains the USA’s policy of promoting and protecting big capital.
- ⁶ This is in line with the strategy that the second US President, *John Adams* (1735–1826), named: “There are two ways to own and exploit a country: by sword or by debt.”
- ⁷ An example of this is the book by John Perkins, *Confessions of an Economic Hitman – Traveling in the Service of the Economic Mafia*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2004
- ⁸ At present, aspiring powers such as China and India are pursuing an analogous strategy, especially in Africa.
- ⁹ The Greeks were advised to sell not only airports, railways and energy suppliers, but also entire islands to reduce their debts.
- ¹⁰ On a case-by-case basis – and I know of such cases – the cutting-off of money supplies is explained by the fact that criteria laid down in the original credit agreement are not or not sufficiently being fulfilled and that the risk has therefore become too high.
- ¹¹ Posted on 26 October 2011, <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0025995>
- ¹² Basis of data: *Database ORBIS of the OECD, as of 2007*
- ¹³ In total, these have been around 3,000 billion euros in the last three years. This also causes apparent GDP growth.
- ¹⁴ “Deutsche Bank” also warned in a study published in September 2017, *The Next Financial Crisis*, about a severe “shock” triggered by the bursting of financial bubbles in the next two years.
- ¹⁵ available at <http://wienerwende.org/>
- ¹⁶ Separation of commercial and investment banks, so that there can be no speculation with deposits.
- ¹⁷ His book “*Weltfinanzsystem am Limit – Einblicke in den heiligen Gral der Globalisierung*” (“World Financial System at the Limit – Insights into the Holy Grail of Globalisation”), Terra Media Verlag, Berlin 2009, is probably one of the most thoroughly researched specialist books with extensive data.
- ¹⁸ The founder of the Rothschild dynasty *Amschel Mayer-Rothschild* (1743–1812) and his son *Nathan* stated this in the familiar sentence: “Give me control of a nation’s money and I care not who makes its laws”.
- ¹⁹ That is around 35% of government debt worldwide. This situation also explains the United States’ almost desperate readiness for war, for the “Great Depression” of the 1930s was not overcome by the “New Deal” but by the Second World War.

- ²⁰ See *Ron Paul*, Institute for Peace and Prosperity, Homeschooling curriculum
- ²¹ In a pre-Christmas surprise rally on 22 December 1913, Congress passed the Federal Reserve Act granting the major bank cartel, now with National Bank privileges, the right to spend its own money (the Federal Reserve System).
- ²² This is the legal situation. The fact that from political opportunism (do not overstep the mark), these guidelines have recently often not been enforced shows the flexibility of the control strategists.
- ²³ Wohlmeyer, Heinrich. “*Empörung in Europa – Wege aus der Krise*” (“Rebellion in Europe – Ways out of the Crisis”), IBERA / European University Press, Vienna 2012 and 2014
- ²⁴ An unmasking article by the internationally renowned financial expert Prof *Richard Werner*, author of the world bestseller *The Princes of the Yen*, was threatening to appear.
- ²⁵ Interestingly, the FMA is bound by instructions of the ECB’s banking supervisor. The parallels to the control systems in China and Russia are striking. China manipulates its currency centrally and awards only “state-compliant” banking licenses. The export-friendly exchange rates have facilitated the accumulation of high foreign exchange reserves (totaling \$ 3.14 trillion at the end of 2017), which might now be spent on a shopping spree (military purchases as well as buying global companies and land). \$ 1.19 trillion of the total reserves are US debts, by means of which the US can be put under political pressure. Over the past three years, the Russian National Bank has deprived 350 private banks of their license, steering the Russian banking business towards state-owned banks.

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The “post-Mobutist” Congo: The USA is betting on Rwanda Congo – kleptocracy with no end in sight? (part 4)

by Peter Küpfer, former president of the “Association pour la Paix et l’Entente en Afrique (APEA)”

The Congo does not come to rest. Lately, our sparse media coverage of this country, being tortured for decades, revolved around the issue of the clinging of its young President Joseph Kabila to power. Similar to Mugabe in Zimbabwe, President Joseph Kabila also seems to be struggling to pave the way for a successor and election worthy of the name, in accordance with the pronouncements he made himself by the passing of the constitution. Experts of the recent development of the Congo and its many puzzling policies suspect similar reasons that also led Mugabe to cling to power: the own past and the contingency, to be summoned to the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague for past war crimes, especially crimes against humanity. Joseph Kabila is a former comrade in arms of Rwandan President Paul Kagame, who planned, realised, and supported the so-called Congolese Rebellion

(it was actually a war of aggression by the civil-war-tested armies of Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi) under the leadership of his father Laurent Désiré Kabila in 1996/97. Therein serious crimes against humanity have been committed, in particular against the eastern Congolese civilian population and the Hutu Rwandan families who fled the Congo, as explained in more detail below. Joseph Kabila, like many of today’s heads of state, has reason to cling to power. Under favour of the immunity granted by this official position, he remains protected from prosecution, as well as his political teachers and comrades Paul Kagame and Yoweri Museveni. (Museveni is the sole ruler of Uganda, who has come to power with purely military means and since then keeps it as a dictator, under the protection and the endorsement of major Western powers, above all the US and the UK).

Serious observers warn against being distracted from the real issues, particularly in the case of the Congo. These centre around the questions,

- how to explain that hundreds of thousands of Congolese civilians, particularly in the eastern provinces of the Congo, are still threatened by the turmoil of war in life and limb and have therefore been on the run for almost 25 years now;
- how to explain that the highly armed national army of the Congo is not able to identify and disarm the changing war formations in the border provinces of North- and South-Kivu (so-called militias, in reality mercenaries of Rwanda and Uganda) and bring those responsible to justice;
- how to explain that under the eyes of a UN military mission (MONUC) which has been in the country for decades, the most appalling crimes against the civilian population have taken place and continue to do so, that even the own UN-forces have been involved in the crimes;
- how to explain that members of foreign armies, which were in actual warfare with the country, held and still hold the highest positions in the country;
- how to explain that for years orders were issued and carried out by them which contained the most serious offences against humanity, i. e. mass executions of the civilian population, without the international public and the responsible institutions (United Nations) making it a matter of urgency, let alone persecuting the war criminals;
- how to explain that, although the number and the facts of the crimes committed are overwhelmingly reported in numerous internal UN documents, the perpetrators have so far had no legal action to fear (rule of lawlessness);
- how to explain that militias with changing names operating from Rwanda and

Uganda and receiving logistical support from these states, can always do the same thing and still do it? Depopulating the entire eastern Congolese territories by their systematic terrorist acts directed against the civilian population. At the same time illegally seizing the subterranean treasures of these regions and selling them on the international black market concealing their true origin. It’s robbing the genuine owners, the poor Congolese population, which has been firmly institutionalised and internationally tolerated for decades.¹ According to experts in this situation, four to five million people, most of them civilians, have died in the resource-rich eastern Congo since 1998 as a result of the direct or indirect consequences of this “indifferent war”, under the eyes of the UN contingent, which has been present there since that time and whose main mission is to protect the civilian population.

The curse of voracity for resources

The articles in this newspaper entitled “Congo – Kleptocracy without an end in sight”, which have been published sporadically so far, have recorded the recent history of the Congo (Zaire, later Democratic Republic of the Congo).² They were aimed to give some fact-based hints for answering the above questions. The contributions to date have shown that the tormented giant empire in the heart of Africa has been haunted for many decades by all the destructive forces imaginable, and also where they come from and what their true motives are and were. It has been shown that its origins are essentially to be found in the fact that in eastern Congo there are resources which have attracted the greed of economic- and great powers since colonial times. Whereas rubber and fine woods were exploited around the early 1900, it was especially the im-

mense copper deposits in Katanga, the diamond deposits in Kasai in the 20th century, as well as gold, cobalt, zinc and today the highly coveted coltan, all of which can be found in the two easternmost provinces of North and South Kivu as well as Kasai.³ In the meantime, coltan has become a much needed, rare resource. No single mobile phone, no remote-controlled missile and no drone will work anywhere in the world unless they contain components from this highly coveted ore mixture. In the two Kivu’s, the raw materials for coltan (colombo-tantalite) are present in large quantities, almost the only known mining site in the world. These two easternmost Congolese provinces, bordering Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda, were also the gateway to the recent two Congo wars (1996–2003) and their catastrophic consequences, as shown below. Since then, the apocalypse has ruled there until today for large sections of the population.

The new Africa policy of the US

It was also pointed out that the ceaseless war against the Congolese civilian population in the east must also be understood in its international geostrategic dimensions.⁴ The focus here is on the American so-called GHAI concept, the “Greater Horn of Africa Initiative”, which aims to create a new East African centre of power under American patronage. It should extend from Djibouti to Dar es Salaam and include the resource-rich eastern Congo. This requires the “Balkanisation” of the Congolese giant country and its weakening, a goal that the two recent Congo wars have certainly achieved. What is new is the American abandonment of the previous considerations of old diplomatic rules, interests and zones of influence, which in

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the case of the Congo were controlled primarily from France. In principle, this resulted in a simple formula: an "America first", long before *Trump*. In Africa, too, the motto should now be the same for the United States, without any political considerations, as it has been in other parts of the world for a long time: what America benefits from is good. With the ambivalent personality of the former Ugandan resistance fighter *Yoweri Museveni*, the late and present autocrat of Uganda, the USA had already drawn up its own "loyalist" in the past, on which they now also rely in connection with the Congo and its weakening leader *Mobutu*. In particular, their long-standing military and logistical support of Museveni's resistance movement NRA (National Resistance Army) against the former Ugandan ruler *Obote* helped them to achieve this. Museveni was called and praised by the USA as "African leader of a new type" after he took power in 1991. The fact, that this long term ruler (Museveni has also abolished by decree the limitation of the term of office prescribed by the constitution!) has trampled on democratic principles up to this day and exercised a one-party rule with dictatorial powers, has been and is swept under the table. With Museveni, the USA not only had an ideologically important ally, but also a geostrategically important ally, because Museveni supported the Lord's Resistance Army, which operated from the territory of northern Uganda against the Sudanese central government, for the USA a markedly "seat of evil". In the early 1990s, when it became clear that the Congolese dictator *Mobutu*, faithful to America, was increasingly weakening, personally and politically, and no longer held the reins of the giant country in his hands, things moved quickly. For the USA, it was excluded that its resource guarantor, Congo, return into the hands of patriotic and nationalist-oriented forces after *Mobutu*. The reorientation of the mining rights, which previously had been lucratively equipped for them, was at stake, but the military geopolitical option could not be left to chance either. For a long time, there had been a plan in the circles of the American military-industrial complex to build an anti-Islamic and America-friendly stronghold in East Africa, which would include large areas of the eastern Congo, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, and even parts of Kenya, a coherent area from Djibouti to Dar es Salaam with the corresponding hinterland, from which the Gulf of Aden and the Suez Canal could be controlled more efficiently as an important international trade and military axis. The American-inspired plan to proactive-



The map shows the rich mineral resources in the Kasai Province and in the two easternmost North and South Kivu Provinces, which adjoin Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. The black belt corresponds exactly to the areas occupied by the so-called "rebel forces" and their allies in the 2nd Congo War in 1998/99. Today, the so-called "rebel forces" have pulled back from Rwanda, Uganda and Burundi but the so-called militia, logistically supported by those "rebel forces" rampage throughout the whole area. They emerge under slick fantasy names such as "Democratic Congress for the Liberation of the People" (CLDP, under commander Ngundabatware who meanwhile went underground in Rwanda). CLDP is a "militia" who among other atrocities systematically decapitated all male adolescents with machetes in the conquered territories of Northern Kivu (Masisi). These militias of horror did and still do the same today: they terrorise the civilian population to drive them out, and then they secure militarily the illegal or semi-legal exploitation of the "wild" mines. Their main hub today is Kigali, the capital of Rwanda. Where only tea and coffee were traded in the past, today it is gold, diamonds (Rwanda is the second most important diamond exporter in the world today!), and coltan (columbite tantalite) – raw material deposits that cannot be found in Rwanda itself. The original legend to the map indicates that between 1998 and 2008, four to five million people, mainly civilians, have died in the area from the direct or indirect consequences of the Second Congo War (1998–2003). (Map from: Baracytse, Pierre. L'Enjeu Géopolitique des Transnationale Minières au Congo, Dossier SOS Rwanda-Burundi, Belgique, p. 36)

ly overthrow the long-standing Congolese dictator *Mobutu* and replace him with another guaranteed US satrap must obviously be seen in the context of the GHAI project mentioned above.⁵ For purely tactical reasons, the USA's choice for such a campaign was not Uganda, but the microstate of Rwanda, from which the true reasons for the military action that has now been prepared could be better concealed. *Paul Kagame*, an obedient disciple of Museveni and his protecting power, the USA, regained power in Rwanda in 1994, offered

the necessary guarantees, both politically and personally.

A creepy partner

The Rwandan dictator and new strongman of Rwanda, well-founded feared today by many African genuine democrats, was a political disciple of Museveni and his protecting power USA, "trained" in the field of guerrilla warfare in the American Fort Leavenworth (Kansas), a stronghold of American war experiences since the Vi-

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etnam War, involving junior military personnel for allies from regular and irregular military associations from all over the world. Paul Kagame grew up in Uganda as a child of Rwandan exiles of the Tutsi elite (they left the country when the Hutu majority, which they had traditionally suppressed, gained more political influence in Rwanda, which had previously been completely dominated by the Tutsi minority). Like many young Rwandan Tutsi in Uganda, he already served as a young soldier in Museveni's guerrilla formation NRA (National Resistance Army) and soon drew attention to himself through his dexterity and brutality.⁶ In Museveni's police state he became deputy director of the Ugandan secret (intelligence) service. Kagame was one of the founders of the Rwandan Tutsi guerrilla movement FPR (Front Patriotique Rwandais, RPF: Rwandan Patriotic Front), the military wing of the revanchist-minded exiled Tutsi minority. His goal was the military reconquest of power in Rwanda and the renewed oppression of the Hutu majority. When the Rwandan exiled Tutsi decided in 1990 to fight this battle by force, Museveni hurriedly brought Paul Kagame, who was at Fort Leavenworth for "further training" in the USA, back to Uganda, where he immediately took over the leadership of the guerrilla organisation and led the group's four-year fight until the final victory in the summer of 1994. The war was not only fiercely fought militarily, but from the very beginning it was fought by Kagame with great propagandistic efforts and "speech conventions" to manipulate the media accompanying the fight until today. In order to better understand this aspect, we have to deal with the painful history of the long irreconcilable antagonism between the two dominant Rwandan ethnic groups, the Hutu and the Tutsi.

Rwandan Hutu and Tutsi – an ancient conflict

In the flood of literature on the mass murderous events in Rwanda in the spring of 1994, much is said about the monstrous acts committed by the Hutu majority to the Tutsi minority. These acts are not denied. They were and are a memorial of human history. What is less to be found is evidence of the atrocities committed by the Rwandan Tutsi elite, in turn, against the members of the Hutu majority who have been oppressed by them for centuries. For all serious and committed to truth witnesses provide damning evidence: There were two genocides.⁷ Before, during and after the April events of 1994 and their aftermath, there was also a genocide of the victorious Tutsi on the Hutu.

Little you can learn also about the historical background of the 1994 disaster. The conflict between the two Rwandan communities is as old as their common history. Like the neighbouring state of Burundi, Rwanda was a monarchy until independence in 1962. The monarchist elite, the state apparatus and the officers all came from the Tutsi population group, traditional cattle ranchers who, according to their own legend, immigrated from the north as "Nilote" in prehistoric times, quickly gaining control over the resident Hutu. They treated the Hutu, a Bantu people, with contempt and social neglect from the very beginning. Until well into the 50s of the 20th century, hardly any Hutu was admitted to higher schools and was thus excluded from civil service. A military career was also excluded for them, even though the elitist Tutsis made up only a good tenth of the total population in both Burundi and Rwanda. For them, the Hutu were born stablemen and servants, while they cultivated the nimbus as a "natural" intelligent ruling class for themselves. The first German and then Belgian colonisers of Rwanda and Burundi have in many cases shared this ideological approach to the complex ethnic situation in Rwanda and Burundi. They praised the good cooperation with the Rwandan ruling elite. Governors, influential missionaries and ethnologists of that time were also impressed by the supposedly "innate talent of the Tutsi rulers" and underestimated the potential and also the disappointment of the oppressed Hutu, for whose advancement the colonisers did little or nothing.

Swiss archbishop as contemporary witness

Archbishop *André Perraudin* is a completely unsuspecting and reliable witness in this respect. Perraudin, who grew up as a simple goat herder in the French-speaking Canton Valais of Switzerland, came to Rwanda as a priest missionary already in the 50s of the last century and quickly attained the highest levels of priesthood there. He became Archbishop by dedicated service to the people and the church. In his autobiography, he gave a meticulous account of the stages and relevant steps of this career in the decisive years 1956–1962 and provided them with many authentic documents.⁸ Unlike some of his predecessors, he recognised early the division of the Rwandan population as fatal and called the de facto exclusion of the Hutu majority from the state administration and more responsible positions as unchristian. This brought him many enemies among the Tutsi, who later accused him of anti-Tutsi racism, an absurd accusation. It may be plausible in that situation, but it is nonetheless a disastrous circumstance that, when at the independence of Rwan-

da the Hutu majority wished for a democratic government, and then demanded it more and more resolutely, the Tutsi practically uni-voce spoke out against a democratic participation of the Hutu in the government. In an official statement by their political leaders, the Tutsi elite wrote even in 1958, in order to justify their unwillingness to engage in dialogue with the Hutu population: "The relations between us, the Tutsi, and them, the Hutu, have always been based on a servitude relationship to this day, so there is no basis for fraternity between them and us. [...] Since our kings have conquered the land of the Hutu and killed their kings and thus subjugated the Hutu – how can they now pretend to be our brothers?"⁹

This attitude, which diametrically contradicts the spirit of the UN Declaration of Human Rights, did not yield anything constructive. On the contrary. *Jean-Pierre Chrétien* describes the attitude that manifests itself here with good reason as a variety of "African racism".¹⁰ In the eventful history of both countries, Rwanda and Burundi, where for centuries the two population groups had been deeply distrustful for similar reasons, army coups, persecutions up to mass executions, new army coups and new persecutions alternated with each other after their independence in 1959. In Rwanda, after independence (1959), Hutu's pro rata participation in all social spheres finally became a principle, followed by persecutions of the long-standing oppressors. Many Tutsi emigrated, mostly to Uganda in 1959–61, including the Paul Kagame family, which is one of the most influential Tutsi families in Rwanda. Radical circles among the fled former Tutsi elite founded the FPR (Front Patriotique Rwandais) there and soon made preparations for a revanchist-motivated civil war in Rwanda. They wanted to regain their traditional minority rule, which as a matter of simple arithmetic could not be achieved with the democratic principle of elections, with the weapon in their hands. They were able to count on the active support of Museveni and his protector USA. The Rwandan civil war (if it was one!) was fierce and lasted from 1990 to April 1994, when the Hutu militia raged against the remaining inland Tutsi and Kagame's FPR invaded Kigali as the alleged saviour from the butchery in Rwanda's capital Kigali. What the public could not take note of (because iron silence was enforced) was the fact that the principle of extermination of the other ethnic groups (the Hutu) had long since been applied by the supposed saviours during the civil war in the so-called "liberated" areas of Rwanda itself and continued to rage in the next few years. In the new state

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doctrine, extensively enforced after the re-installation of the Tutsi minority rule in Rwanda by Kagame, everyone who kept his finger on the renewed oppression of the Hutu majority was in the language of the militarily reinstalled Tutsi rulers a hired racist and mass murderer ("un génocidaire"), propagating with his criticism of the new rulers their renewed liquidation – an outrageous allegation. An argumentation and instrumentalisation of the concept of genocide which seems to be somehow familiar in other contexts.

His own fellow ethnic Tutsis victimised

This had been the moment when a cynical assassination caused the tense political situation to explode. On the evening of 6 April 1994 a Falcon-50 plane approaching Kayibandi airport (Kigali) for landing was hit and destroyed by a SAM-16 rocket. All people on board were killed. Those included no lesser figures than the incumbent President of Rwanda *Juvenal Habyarimana* (a Hutu aiming for reconciliation) his chief of staff plus four other close aids, as well as *Cyprien Ntaryamira*, the president of Burundi with two of his ministers. The plane had three French crew members. It had just returned from Tanzania where the victims attended a conference which Paul Kagame's FPR had urged to convene. The fact that two moderate Hutu top politicians had been assassinated together with their closest collaborators, as well as the background of how they had ended up together in this plane, left no doubt for extreme Hutu circles that this had been carried out by the FPR, i.e. "the Tutsis". Just a few hours later extreme Hutu militias attacked members of the Tutsi minority still in the country – the butchery which would go on for months had started.

Meanwhile several disturbing, independent hints¹¹ have grown into certainty. Not only did Kagame and his followers indeed carry out the assassination of the moderate incumbent president Habyarimana (a Hutu) themselves. They were fully aware and even took it into their cynical guerrilla warfare consideration that this hit was bound to trigger again the very pogroms which moderates had warned against and the infamous Hutu militias such as the Interahamwe and their allies had prepared for months. Anything but conscience-stricken, the Tutsi strategists included those as an important cornerstone into their far-reaching war plans to regain the political power in Rwanda once and for all.

In the spring of 1994 the FPR was militarily prepared and sufficiently armed to wage an attack on Kigali. According to their strategy the decisive battle was to be



Opencast mining, often with children. By neglecting regulations, not only working conditions, often inhumane, but also water and pastures are contaminated with toxins.
(picture keystone)

supported by a state of maximal chaos in Rwanda's capital city. Not only in Kigali but in the whole country the situation had been extremely tense for a long time. Extreme wings of the Hutu forces had been backed up by radio channels such as radio *Mille Collines* for years, stirring up hate propaganda and openly calling for mass murder of the Tutsi minority: In a kin liability style argument, they were blamed for ethnic cleansing, systematically carried out by victorious FPR Tutsi forces according to media reports and eye witness accounts¹² in what they referred to as "liberated regions" in the west of Rwanda. In the spring of 1994 more and more people voiced their concern, including General *Romeo Dallaire*, commander of the Canadian UN unit MINUAR stationed in Kigali, who informed UN Secretary-General *Boutros-Ghali* that extremist Hutu groups had not only installed weapon depots throughout the Rwandan capital Kigali and the whole region, but had also compiled death lists with names of ethnic Tutsis. They were ready to strike any moment. Nobody knew that better than Kagame and his secret service.

From all what we know today about the underlying strategy regarding the Congo, the Rwandan civil war 1990–1994 and the double genocides appear to have been just the prelude of even more cruel events in hindsight, eventually leading to a reorientation of the political landscape in Central Africa. Retrospectively, the Rwandan FPR and their chief strategist and leader Paul Kagame not only approvingly accepted the genocide of the Tutsi minority by extremist Hutu organisations, but indeed triggered it by the assassination coup of 6 April and instrumentalised it as a propagandistic framework to re-establish mi-

nority Tutsi rule in Rwanda. For solely strategic reasons, the Tutsi chief strategist betrayed his fellow Tutsis – those who had stayed at their homes in Rwanda – to be victimised.

For simple technical reasons suggesting the assistance of at least one foreign power (and their intelligence services), this perfidious assassination, which triggered the mass murders in Rwanda, has never been officially investigated to this day, nor was anybody punished for it. The chief prosecutor of the UN special tribunal for the investigation of war crimes in Rwanda, Swiss attorney *Carla del Ponte*, describes in her autobiography which pressures she had to face when she made attempts to include the FPR and Paul Kagame, by now incumbent president of Rwanda, into her investigations¹³. It did not take long for her to be removed from her position as chief prosecutor regarding Rwandan affairs and to be replaced by somebody else. More facts and information on the international chess-board moves in connection with the never-ending Congo wars will be provided in future articles of this series. •

¹ cf. also *Bucyalimwe Mararo*, Stanislas. The Democratic Republic of Congo – amidst the East African storm, in: *Current Concerns*, No. 21 of 14 August 2015, where the author explains in all clarity the new African policy of America and the strategic concept of a "Greater East Congo", the Greater Horn of Africa Initiative GHAI, which is often referred to in this context; as well as *Küpfer, Peter*. The killing in eastern Congo continues – while diplomacy takes its time, in: *Current Concerns* No. 15/16 of December 2008

² Part 1: *Current Concerns* No. 32/33 of 31.12.2015: "50 years ago Mobutu Sese Seko revolted in the Congo, A never-ending Kleptocracy? (part 1)"; part 2: *Current Concerns* No. 6 of 22.3.2016: "50 years ago Mobutu Sese Seko revolt-

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ed in the Congo – A never ending Kleptocracy?"; part 3: *Current Concerns* No. 2 of 24.1.2017: "The 'new' Africa policy of the West and the Congo, Kleptocracy without end? Infinite Congo Troubles"

³ See map: Baracetyse, Pierre. L'Enjeu Géopolitique des Transnational Minières au Congo, *Dossier SOS Rwanda-Burundi*, Belgium 1999, p. 36

⁴ The emigrated Congolese historian Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo, a long-standing researcher and employee at the Africa of the Great Lakes Research Institute at the University of Antwerp, has provided relevant evidence in various publications with reference to decisive facts. The destabilisation of the Congo and the attempt to redraw its borders are described by Bucyalimwe as the "Balkanisation" of the Congo wanted by the Americans. Nothing less than the lucrative and resource-rich eastern Congo is to be separated from the rest of the country, re-drawing the map of East Africa according to the geostrategic concepts of the American military-industrial complex and its political mouthpieces. See among others Bucyalimwe Mararo, Stanislas. *Manoeuvring for Ethnic Hegemony. A thorny issue in the North Kivu Peace Process*, Brussels (Editions Scribe) 2014, foreword and passim. The humiliations to which the Congo has recently been subjected obviously have the objective of further disintegrating the state from within.

⁵ This strategic reorientation of the United States, which focused on the Rwandan civil war and the warlike conquest of eastern Congo, is precisely documented in his revealing book by the long-standing personal advisor Mobutus, Honoré Ngbanda Nzambo, who is now living in exile on the basis of a genuine democratic reorientation of the Congo, naming the main politicians responsible for this, including the democratic "bearer of

hope" Jimmy Charter: Honoré Ngbanda Nzambo. *Crimes organisés en Afrique centrale. Révélations sur les réseaux rwandais et occidentaux*, Paris (Editions Duboiris), 2004. ISBN 2-951159-9-6. See also Chossudovsky, M. Le génocide économique au Rwanda, in: *Mondialisation de la pauvreté et nouvel ordre mondial*, Montréal 2004, p. 134–135; Bucyalimwe Mararo, Stanislas. *Manoeuvring for Ethnic Hegemony. A thorny issue in the North Kivu Peace Process*, Brussels 2014 (Editions Scribe), vol. I, pp. 13. and passim.

⁶ Onana, Charles. *Les secrets du génocide rwandais*, Paris, Ed. Duboiris, 2002, pp. 22.

⁷ cf. the detailed testimonies of a former FPR officer who followed the corresponding actions as a contemporary witness and participant and later meticulously documented them: Ruzibiza, Abdul Joshua. *Rwanda. L'Histoire secrète*, Paris (Editions du Panama) 2005, pp. 334-347. He would have been one of the main witnesses in the failed trial against the Rwandan war criminals in the wake of today's Rwandan President Paul Kagame. With reference to the Belgian Africa researcher Filip Reyntjens (African Institute of the University of Antwerp), the German Rwanda specialist Helmut Strizek confirms that the FPR itself (between 7 April and 9 April 1994) murdered or had murdered 121 Hutu members, mainly intellectuals, in the district of Remera on the basis of existing own lists (Strizek, 1998, p. 218, note 3).

⁸ Perraudin, André. *Un Evêque au Rwanda. Témoignage*, St. Maurice (Switzerland) 2003

⁹ Strizek, Helmut. *Congo/Zaire-Rwanda-Burundi – Stabilité durch erneute Militärrherrschaft? München/Cologne/London (Weltforum-Verlag) 1998, p. 60*

¹⁰ Chrétien, Jean-Pierre. *L'Afrique des Grands Lacs. Deux mille ans d'Histoire*. Paris (Aubiers) 2000, p. 278, Chrétien, who derives the increase in tensions between Hutu and Tutsi meticulously historically,

confirms the alienation of the two ethnic groups, in part statistically (ibid., p. 249). In his monumental study on the disastrous effects of this racism on the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the emigrated Congolese historian Stanislas Bucyalimwe Mararo (who comes from the North Kivu), however, regrets the one-sided view of the much-cited connoisseur of the history of the countries in the African Great Lakes region, who, following the "official" reading here pushes the fanaticism mainly to Hutu and has a tendency to embellish the equally sinister and in their effects disastrous racially motivated activity of the Tutsi (Bucyalimwe Mararo, Stanislas. *Manoeuvring for Ethnic Hegemony. A thorny issue in the North Kivu Peace Process*, Brussels (Editions Scribe) 2014, vol. 2, pp. 168.

¹¹ Numerous publications confirm these facts. Four of them should be mentioned here: Onana, Charles. *Les Secrets du Génocide Rwandais*, Paris, (Ed. Duboiris) 2002; Onana, Charles: *Ces Tueurs Tutsi*. Paris (Ed. Duboiris), 2009, pp. 47 and passim; Ruzibiza, Abdul Joshua, Rwanda. *Histoire Secrète*, Paris (Ed. du Panama) 2005, p. 237ff.); Ngbanda Nzambo, Honoré. *Crimes organisés en Afrique Centrale. Révélations sur les réseaux rwandais et occidentaux*, Paris (Ed. Duboiris) 2004, pp. 119.

¹² Documented in detail by Ruzibiza, Abdul Joshua, cited above, listing dates and names of responsible FPR commanders. Honoré Ngbanda and Charles Onana, as well as many human rights organisations including the East Congolese Groupe Jerome who get their information from reliable sources on the ground, bear testimony to the RPF pogroms against Hutu civilians in the occupied territories.

¹³ Del Ponte, Carla. *Im Namen der Anklage. Meine Jagd auf Kriegsverbrecher und die Suche nach Gerechtigkeit*, 2009 (Fischer Taschenbuch-Ausgabe), p. 302–314

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No country can live with a political lie for good

by Karl Müller

To this day there are voices stating that politics had nothing to do with ethics and that it could not be measured with ethical standards. Politics, these voices say, was an instrument to enforce interests. And in this game, the end might justify the means – occasionally or generally.

In all times, there have been people who have not shared this view. From the ancient Greek tragedy to *Friedrich Schiller* to our times people have warned where amorality is leading: into disaster.

In ancient times, writers of tragedies thought that the representation of amorality and the subsequent tragedy on stage alone, the presented deep fall of the amoral ruler, was causing catharsis, purification and return to the path of morality. This may have been true for the ordinary people but generally not for the rulers who also visited the theatre. Even from the times before the French Revolution it is reported that the nobility was applauding loudly when their wrongdoings were shown on stage. This did not change their way of life, however. Today we know: Denouncing amorality alone will not improve politics.

From “Thou shalt not bear false witness” ...

But reason suggests that no country can live with a political lie for good. The 9th commandment in the Old Testament already stated: “Thou shalt not bear false witness.” This was far from being just a commandment for a godly life securing a place in heaven but a foundation for a conduct for living together in this life – the US at the time, however, only within one’s own group, not towards the “enemy”.

... to “bona fide”

But the thought has become universal: If I can no longer trust what others are saying and doing and if the others no longer say and do what answers truth – at least the truth he is convinced of, with good reason – then cooperation is undermined and human dignity no longer respected. This principle of “bona fide” has become part of law since the Roman Republic. Those who neglect this principle do not have the consequences in mind – neither in ancient times, neither before the French Revolution ... nor in our times.

But there are many examples for political lies in our times. Here just a few from the past months.

Political lies today:

1st example – Emmanuel Macron

On 26 September 2017, two days after the German elections to the Bundestag,

the French President *Emmanuel Macron* gave a much-noticed speech. As a location for the speech he had chosen the Sorbonne University in Paris, a place for science and the search for truth. His topic was the state and the future of the European Union. His lies started with his first sentence when he spoke of Europe, actually meaning the EU. Then he imputed that there were only two alternatives: A supranational entity which has had many different names before it became the EU – for Macron a place for “brotherly cooperation” and “peaceful rivalry” which from the beginning served only one purpose: the “promise of peace, prosperity and freedom”. But this achievement was heavily pressed by the second alternative, by “nationalism, identitarianism, protectionism, sovereignty through isolation.”

Macron and his audience were not disturbed by the fact that this Manichean image of Europe has little to do with reality. And we wonder: When will it be noticed that there are many EU critics and proponents of sovereign peoples for whom “peace, prosperity and freedom” has highest priority and who have no relation to the distorted pictures drawn incessantly? That the project of a supranational Europe was only to a limited extent related with peace, prosperity and freedom? It was related at least just as much with the Cold War and the US as promoter of a supranational Europe. A 1948 quotation from *George F. Kennan*, renowned consultant on foreign politics for the US administration at the time, gives food for thought:

“Deal in straight power concepts”

“Furthermore, we have about 50% of the world’s wealth but only 6.3% of its population. [...] Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of relationships, which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity without positive detriment to our national security. To do so we will have to dispense with all sentimentality and day-dreaming; and our attention will have to be concentrated everywhere on our immediate national objectives. [...] We should cease to talk about vague [...] and unreal objectives such as human rights, and democratisation. The day is not far off when we are going to have to deal in straight power concepts. The less we are hampered by idealistic slogans, the better.”

Emmanuel Macron is no fool. He will know what his speech was aimed at. What was the purpose?

2nd example – Wolfgang Ischinger

A second example: *Wolfgang Ischinger*, head of the “Munich Security Conference” (MSC), has given an extended interview to the journal *Internationale Politik (IP)* published in its January/February 2018 issue. IP is the journal of the semi-official *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Auswärtige Politik (DGAP)*. Echoing its US paragon, the DGAP is also called *German Council on Foreign Relations*. Contrary to the truth Mr Ischinger stated in this interview that since the end of the Cold War until 2014 the West and particularly Germany had done everything possible to get on well with Russia, but, starting 2007 with the Russian President *Putin’s* speech at the MSC, then in the Georgia War in 2008 and finally in Ukraine in 2014, Russia had shown a different face. But still German foreign politics was searching for an understanding. This is why “repair measures” had started in 2014 but “had not been successful yet”. This was “one of the great challenges for Germany because the goal to create a relationship with Russia as free of conflicts as possible was part of German *raison d’état*”. But it was also true that “it takes two sides to find an accord and currently the other side is not interested.”

It is tiring to list what once again Mr Ischinger does not say: from the dismantling of Russia in the 90s, controlled by the West, and the Eastern expansion of NATO to the coup d’état in Ukraine, purposefully supported also by Germany. Why is Mr Ischinger not talking about this? Where should this lead?

3rd example – sounding agreement between CDU, CSU and SPD

This brings us to the 3rd example: the sounding agreement between CDU, CSU and SPD of 12 January 2018. On page 25 the first sentence under the topic of “Foreign affairs, development and Bundeswehr” states: “German foreign politics is committed to peace.” And: “We focus on a sustainably peaceful, stable and just global order.” One might become cynical in face of the facts. Or simply marvel that the new German government should bring about a complete change with respect to the foreign politics of the past years – if one could trust the words. But why the silence about what had been part of German foreign politics since the late 80s: at the forefront during the liquidation of Yugoslavia, since the mid-90s actively involved in setting up the terror organisation KLA, in early 1999 a leading role in imposing the “treaty” of Rambouillet, from March to

Reasoning against an “ice age” in East-West relations

Gabriele Krone-Schmalz outlines solutions

by Carola and Johannes Irsiegler

With a view to a very bloody civil and colonial war on all sides, in his preface to his Algerian Chronicles the French humanist *Albert Camus* commits intellectuals to “seek by their own lights to make out the respective limits of force and justice in each camp. It is to explain the meaning of words in such a way as to sober minds and calm fanaticisms, even if this means working against the grain.”

The former Russia correspondent of German TV ARD *Gabriele Krone-Schmalz* who is a profound expert on Russia fulfills this commitment with her new book “Eiszeit – Wie Russland dämonisiert wird und warum das so gefährlich ist” (Ice Age – How Russia is demonised and why this is dangerous). She explains the meaning of words, she tries to sober minds by presenting facts and thus she deprives the fanaticism of our current intellectual and political hardliners in relation to Russia of their basis.

Ms Krone-Schmalz identifies a “poisoned atmosphere” in German-speaking media when it comes to the relation between Russia and Germany and the West and how to face this important country. Whippers in media and politics are firing more and more sharply against Russia and its political leadership, triggering, as it seems, unscrupulously a spiral of violence.

“No country can live with ...”

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June 1999 participation of the Luftwaffe in the aggression against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, violating international law, since 2001 active participation in the US aggression against Afghanistan, logistic support for the aggression against Iraq, violating international law etc. etc. – to the present day. Why all these lies? Do the authors of these sentences expect people to take them at face value?

What is the price of the political lie?

These three examples shall suffice. The reader will be able to add more. Should we settle for this? And which price will we have to pay for this settlement? A glance at history should clarify about the price.

The truth is demanding. The search for it and the strive for it is an intellectual and also mental challenge. Many truths can only be approximated; much is (still) unknown. Searching the truth is a joint effort. To study, to compile, check, discuss, correct, supplement, extend etc. etc. Lying, on the other hand, is simple: I just

The West and Russia – how to move on?

In this situation, Ms Krone-Schmalz asks herself and the reader various questions: “How should we move on? More and more NATO troops and heavy military equipment are moving closer to the borders of Russia in order to send a clear signal to Moscow and to meet the security needs of Poland and the Baltic States? A replay of the Cold War? What about the fear of people in the West and Russia of a hot war? Does anyone want it? Could it just happen? Because, in an atmosphere of sabre-rattling, misunderstandings create a momentum of their own that no longer can be captured? The ‘wartime generation’ is slowly dying out, and I have the impression, so does the awareness of the fragility of peace.”

The author wants to contribute to “de-escalate, to mediate, to put oneself in the position of others to get a better understanding of the other’s actions and to be able to better assess the consequences of the own actions”. Admonishingly, she notes that this has nothing to do with weakness, “but with political farsightedness, human greatness, and with the very Christian values that so many speak for”.

After these introductory words expressing her concern for peace and understanding, Ms Krone-Schmalz does the best she can do in this situation: she relies on the

claim something I have invented. There are many purposes. In politics the purpose is mostly power and rule – and interests.

A moral verdict about political lies does not help. But it is worthwhile to think about the consequences. And then to counteract – we all can contribute.

The consequences of political lies can be observed in Cottbus in Brandenburg. Aside from the war-brings-peace lie, the globalisation-is-good lie and the nation-states-are-a-problem lie, the German migration lie is more and more showing its fatal consequences. Cottbus is something like a microcosm for the emptiness of the promises of the German migration proponents. In Cottbus there have been openly violent conflicts between migrants and other inhabitants of the city; authorities are unable to cope; there can hardly be any talk of “integration”; for weeks the city has been the source of negative headlines. The political migration lie has divided the German population and brought enormous problems for the country, brought about by a negligent “welcome culture”.



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reason of the citizens and provides the reader with detailed factual knowledge that she can prove at every point aiming at “making it hard to ‘hardliners’ who do not permit another than their own position”.

No thinking in black and white terms

Ms Krone-Schmalz never falls into a dichotomous thinking in black and white terms, but she knows that analysing facts always means making visible the shades of gray. Step by step she illustrates the development of relations between Russia and the West in the last two decades since the collapse of the Soviet empire. We have been following many events in the media, often leaving questions unanswered. Ms Krone-Schmalz succeeds in embedding these events in a historical and political context.

Georgia, Ukraine and Syria

The military confrontation with Georgia, the obscure events on the Kiev Maidan, the development of the Syrian crisis, the West hastily dictating *Assad* has to go, despite a considerable ongoing support in the Syrian population – she confronts the common narrative of an expansively aggressive Russia under the leadership of its President *Vladimir Putin*, with a different, a de-escalating and de-demonising view, and she proves it piece by piece.

There is no evidence for the perception that Russia were aggressive

First of all, Ms Krone-Schmalz raises the question as to what NATO’s perception of Russia as aggressive and concretely threatening the Baltic states and Poland is based upon. Here she draws upon sources from transatlantic networks that show a different picture: “A paper from the “Stiftung

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"Reasoning against an ..."

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Wissenschaft und Politik, SWP" (Foundation for Science and Politics) analysed this question shortly before the Warsaw NATO summit and concluded that there was no concrete evidence. [...] According to it, the threat scenarios arise from strategic military planning games [...]. The SWP paper considers a Russian attack on the Baltic states [...] to be less realistic." The paper also notes that observation flights and inspections under the umbrella of the OSCE reveal no evidence of a Russian concentration of troops at the borders of the NATO states.

Who is threatening whom? This question also arises in view of the massively higher military spending of NATO countries compared to Russia. Ms Krone-Schmalz proves that in 2016 alone, European NATO members spent nearly four times as much on military as Russia – not to mention the USA! All these figures speak for themselves.

The issue of NATO's missile defence shield

More precisely, Ms Krone-Schmalz discusses the developments around the so-called missile defence shield, which NATO has intended to deploy for years in Eastern Europe on the border with Russia – arguing that there was a threat posed by Iran. For years this process had been a controversial issue between NATO and Russia. Russia perceived its nuclear counter-nuclear capacity to be under threat by the construction of the Western missile shield and began to develop its own missile defence and to deploy rockets in Kaliningrad. But then, unexpectedly in summer 2015 the nuclear deal with Iran was concluded. This considerably reduced the threat posed by Iranian missiles. Actually a reason to relax. But what did the West? In December 2015, "the base in Romania was put into operation, and in May 2016, work began on the base in Poland. What should be the effect of this move on Moscow? The Iranian threat practically gone, but the missile defence shield is still needed. Of course, it is not directed against Russia, but actually, against whom?"

Raising concerns with regard to 2018

These developments raise concerns with regard to 2018. Then, the missile defense system in Poland is due to be put into operation: "In any case, in 2018, the world will be heading for a highly dangerous conflict that may quickly get out of hand. And all that because of long-range missiles and nuclear warheads that Iran does not have. Is this really inescapable?" This question is to be posed. In addition, it would be worth considering who actually has an interest in further fueling the conflict. Cui bono? The people in Germany and Russia obviously do not want it. Ms Krone-Schmalz quotes the result of a survey from 2016, according to which 64% of German citizens agree with former foreign minister *Steinmeier* warning against increasing "sabre-rattling" in politics and calling for a change in direction.

A majority of Germans against war course of hardliners

This result gives cause for optimism, as it shows that despite the media's one-sidedness a majority of the German population does not support the hardliners' war course. However, at the same time the author rightly raises the question why it is the case that a majority in our democracy hardly finds voice in our media.

There are many more examples in the book. They show that the idea of Russia pursuing an aggressive policy of expansion is extremely erroneous. Russia is acting from a strategically defensive position.

Plea for a new policy of detente ...

Therefore, Ms Krone-Schmalz urgently and rightly makes a plea for a policy of detente and of confidence-building. Here, the author follows the successful Ostpolitik of the *Brandt* era in Germany. What would it take to do that? Ms Krone-Schmalz notes that a policy of detente and confidence-building basically requires the ability to recognise as legitimate other perspectives than one's own. That should be possible for an enlightened Europe, the reader wonders.

... however, the ability of the West to compromises is waning

However, Ms Krone-Schmalz observes that in the West this very ability is wan-

ing: "The West is no longer able to make real compromises because it considers its own worldview as without alternative. This has something to do with missionary zeal which has always been the best recipe for causing major disasters."

However, we could do different as well. Ms Krone-Schmalz outlines in a quite concrete manner what means "different" by showing that there is always scope for peaceful solution if only the will to do so exists. Let us mention just two aspects. For example, as part of *détente* policy the author suggests to withdraw prospects of accession to NATO for Ukraine and Georgia – something that French President *Emmanuel Macron* seems to have at least considered. Germany could play a peacemaking role and support such a project.

Proposal for the Crimea issue

Ms Krone-Schmalz also outlines an interesting attempt to solve the Crimea issue. "What if Crimea was declared mandated by UN, it remained under international law with Ukraine, but Russia was entrusted with the administration [...]" and then later on, the UN could hold a referendum? Why not thinking through such ideas, picking them up, discussing them in panels and so helping to disentangle the grim situation?

The last chapter of the book is entitled "Think for yourself": "I consider it important that 'responsible citizens' remain sceptical with regard to far too platitudinous truths and far too smooth dividing lines between good and evil. Think for yourself. But don't get discouraged by terms like conspiracy theories, populism and propaganda." In addition to outer freedom, this requires the inner freedom to "feel free enough to use one's own mind without channeled guidance from others and without approval, whether one may think so [...]." After such ideas isn't it obvious to conclude the readable and informative book with the motto of the Enlightenment by *Immanuel Kant*: "Sapere aude! Have courage to make use of your own reason!"

Ms Krone-Schmalz shows us the way. ●
(Translation *Current Concerns*)

“To deny students the important literary texts means depriving them of their identity”

Interview by Alexandre Devecchio, “Le Figaro”, with Barbara Lefebvre*



Barbara Lefebvre
(picture ma)

The demise of the French school is an issue which is a little hackneyed. However, the recently published book by Barbara Lefebvre goes well beyond commonplaces. In the book “Génération ‘j’ai le droit’ – la faillite

de notre éducation” [“Generation ‘I have the right’ – the failure of our school”], the author and high school teacher picks up topics such as the withdrawal of the parents, the multicultural wrong ways of our assimilation model or the political instrumentalisation of the subject history. She provides an impressive analysis of the crisis of authority in our ultra-individualistic society.

When Barbara Lefebvre took up her first year of teaching in a secondary school [grades 7 to 9] in Sarcelles – a region with increased educational needs – she had no idea what to expect. Her passion for transmitting knowledge and her enthusiasm to pass on the joy of history to the students, in order to bring them closer to the world, were soon shattered by reality. She writes: “The daily reality corresponded to what was systematically created by the ‘Uprooters’ day after day by making the local little teachers, like myself, believe that they participate in the great republican work. We were just the small employees of the big uprooting machine, whose goal is to eradicate culture and history out of the hearts and minds of the new generations.”

The book “Génération ‘j’ai le droit’” is the carefully worded angry report of this disillusionment and, at the same time, a further reflection on the failure of a misguided belief in progress that has led to irresponsible individualism.

The author – co-author of “Les territoires perdus de la République” [“The lost territories of the Republic”] and “Une France soumise” [“France in hostage”] – combines with great skill per-

sonal experiences and philosophical considerations. “Our unlimited passion for individual freedom, paired with the passion of equality distorted in egalitarianism, has led to the disappearance of the ‘we’ in favor of the almighty ‘I’, only claiming and not tolerating any contradiction”, in the words of the author’s analysis, who now wants to commit herself to the education of disabled children.

Le Figaro: Your book is entitled “Génération ‘j’ai le droit’”. Why this title?

Barbara Lefebvre: This title is the result of what I heard from many parents and colleagues complaining about the children’s and students’ permanent opposition to their authority. The individualistic “I” is overtrumping the “we” of the common good. In this omnipotent individual’s view, the other does not only have the sole role of fulfilling my needs, but apparently there does not exist any authority which has the right to tell me something what to do.

What do you answer to those who, especially in the field of liberty, see progress in this extension of individual rights?

I would like to state that I distinguish between the respect for fundamental human rights, which must comply with the adult to the child and the claims for special rights that contradict the common good. Thus, liberty is not to be equated with the absolute satisfaction of what the individual considers to be his right. Similarly, respect for minorities does not mean to concede special rights to them that separate them from society. The unlimited desire for liberty characterising the western civilization since Renaissance times has led to the individual’s development. But there is an abyss between the recognition of each person’s uniqueness, testified, for example, in *Montaigne’s* work, and the childish individualism of our time. The child as a king who wants to “live free and to enjoy free from restraints” – to quote a well-known slogan from the 1960s. Liberty always has limits, and it is up to the adults to set and embody them. If the adult abdicates his responsibility, this leads to the child’s lack of understanding towards any social imperative and thus to a constant frustration or even to violence.

This individualistic revolution, which you describe as a change of civilisation, has developed in school. How was this rever-

sal done? Who are the “destroyers of the school”?

It is the ideologues of deconstruction, the destruction of institutional authority in the name of freedom in its libertarian falsification, and equality in its levelling down and dumbing down. Developed at the time of the “Beat Generation” in the American universities of the 1950s, this development became the dominant ideology two decades later in order to result in today’s liberal-libertarian political correctness. This dogma understood itself as revolutionary. However, it has completely adapted to globalised ultra-liberalism and identitarianism – the two gravediggers of our civilisation model. The “destroyers” have been situated at the switchboard of the French education [Education nationale] since the time of *Alain Peyrefitte* [Minister of Education under *Georges Pompidou* during the student riots of 1968, translator’s note] and spread a pedagogical doctrine of salvation nicely packaged with expert opinions. An army of gentlemen of the sort *Homais* [figure from the novel “Madame Bovary” by *Gustave Flaubert*: Apothecary of the eponymous heroine’s husband, who carries out a risky operation on a patient in his blind belief in the progress of science, which leads to a disaster, translator’s note] who exercise their authorisation to teach in the service of “progress.” They insist that authority is a synonym of authoritarianism and that culture is a dangerous weapon of Western bourgeois dominance.

So in your eyes, it is all about a crisis of authority?

To a large extent, yes. The legitimate authority of the teacher given to a person or an institution by society has been called into question. Once one challenges the representative of that authority, one allows the child or student to disregard it, to disobey it, to believe, it is his right to attribute authority to a third party, who in his eyes is more legitimate, or else to be his own boss. The child, because of his intellectual and emotional immaturity, needs someone to guide him in his search for autonomy and freedom.

You have to let it be felt that the reality of the world is made up of constraints and frustrations and that a truly free adult overcomes them without feeling constantly hurt in his rights! The act of teaching, because of its verticality, has been described by some people as an act of vi-

* Barbara Lefebvre is upper school teacher of geography and history. She is co-author of the books “Les territoires perdus de la République” (The lost territories of the Republic) and “Une France soumise” (France in hostage). She regularly publishes columns on these questions and comments undauntedly also in radio and television programs. Her latest book is “Génération ‘j’ai le droit’ – la faillite de notre éducation” (Generation ‘I have the right’ – the failure of our school).

“To deny students the important ...”

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olence against the student. Nevertheless, within school, authority is the opposite of domination: the goal of the teacher is to impart knowledge to the student in order to enable him to become self-sufficient, gradually to break away from that authority. Anyway, it has been possible to convince parents and even teachers that school is a place of cultural arbitrariness and institutional violence. When teachers internalise this ideological rejection of their authority, they do not realise that this jeopardises the very core of their task and destroys the content of the lesson.

At the time of the experiments of the '68 generation you were a student and at the end of the nineties you were a teacher ... Most of my teachers were very experienced and practised a thorough lesson. The heresy about the autonomy of the student obviously left them cold. I learned to read according to the syllabic method. During my entire elementary school, I had lessons in spelling and grammar, separate from teaching in reading comprehension or writing. There was homework, conjugations or multiplication tables had to be memorised, classical poems recited, books, and not just excerpts of them, were read! There was no culture of impunity for most of my primary school teachers. Students had to use the formal form to address the teachers today the familiar “Du” is in common use. When I became a teacher, I did not feel tied to the pedagogical hocus-pocus that the *IUFM* [*Instituts universitaires de formation des maîtres* = educational colleges] attempted to enforce. For me, the talk of these experts in “educational science” was the living expression of stupidity as described by

Flaubert: earnest in the name of the progress of the masses, presumptuous, dogmatic truths proclaiming and pretending to serve the rational mind.

You have gained your first teaching experience in hot spot schools in Sarcelles, Pierrefitte-sur-Seine and Colombes. So you had no ideological prejudices ...

I didn't only have any prejudice, but I really wanted to teach in such schools. Precisely because school has to fulfill its task especially with regard to students from educationally disadvantaged social classes, who have the least access to classical education.

What struck me immediately was the impunity, the missing of consequences concerning the lack of discipline or handling of absences from which students benefited. The administration and some colleagues have lost their role as responsible adults. Everything was negotiable. They bought themselves social peace from ten or twenty leaders who had taken control of the school's social life. Suffice a small minority that exerts constant pressure to achieve the subjugation of the majority. I was appalled to hear some colleagues or principals downplaying racist and anti-Semitic insults, sexist or homophobic behavior by referring these to cultural idiosyncrasies: „That's the way they are at home, what should one do against it?“ I never could accept that. I experienced this as a frontal attack on the republican school's mission and as a contempt for the whole of the students and their families, who were condemned to live under the yoke of an uneducated and oppressive minority. Today we can see how far in some areas this minority has already enforced their patterns of behavior and their segregative principles. These areas are culturally lost. This was the motive for our book from 2002 entitled “The Lost Territories of the Republic” ...

You emphasise the importance of literature for mediating culture. Is it possible to teach the important texts in these “lost areas of the republic”?

It should be possible to teach it, but here as well as in other areas these lessons have been made impossible, except in some specially sponsored public showpiece schools. Since the beginning of my professional career I have realised that the problem was primarily learning French. I describe this in detail in the book because it is, in my opinion, essential. As several studies have shown, mass illiteracy is the result of methods and theories that, under the pretext of “equal opportunities” and autonomy of the student, have exacerbated inequalities. Instead of questioning their teaching methods, these experts prefer to pathologise students struggling with dif-

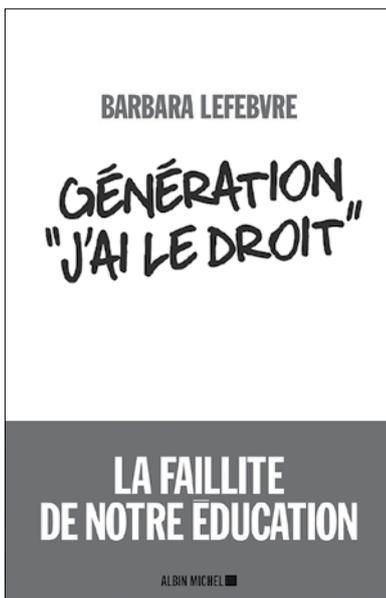
ficulties! The current acculturation is the result of a lack of instruction in the French language, because pedagogism dismissed a thorough teaching of spelling and grammar by flooding the whole with insubstantial theoretical concepts. Gone are the past tenses of the “*passé simple*” (past historic) and the “*plus-que parfait*” (past perfect). About 600 hours of French lessons have been lost in elementary school since the early 1970s, while at the same time linguistics have transformed school grammar into an incomprehensible jargon. Likewise literature is taught in a technical and cold manner, as if it were natural sciences. Students should be given the pleasure of reading again from the earliest age, but that is impossible if they can not understand the deciphered ... France is a literary nation. To prevent students from getting to know the literature, to immerse oneself in the great works, from *Rabelais* to Flaubert to *Racine* and *Colette*, means depriving them of their civic identity. I think you get to know and love your country by getting to know its great authors. This is even a peculiarity of the French identity, that it is completely contained in its literature.

You are a history teacher. According to you, education in this subject has been abused for ideological purposes. What are they?

History and the teaching of history have always been at the centre of important political and civilising issues. However, amongst teachers there is significant discord as far as teaching of history as well as French are concerned. The media mocks those who advocate for the “national novel” as an important national narrative as nostalgic reactionaries. In fact, those “anti-reactionary” historians and activists are hypocrites because they are fully aware that any historic scripture in itself is a report of the past. History always has to be renewed, always has to be rewritten. They only accuse the “national novel” of being but a collection of clichés in order to be able to replace it with another national or – more accurately – another post national novel.

Their statements are intended to reduce history's complexity to a dualistic point of view: Governing/governed, executioner/victim, victor/defeated. The teleological point of view of history in no way aligns with my own view – it neither serves progress nor an utopian idea. If you teach history, you don't teach metaphysics but an undogmatic presentation of the past. As far as content is concerned, history education in schools has to be diligent and thorough, but it is not meant to let the students participate in research by going through trial and error. It has to con-

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The founder of mountain rescue

Doctor, chamois hunter, mountain guide and pioneer of accident medicine

by Heini Hofmann

The Engadin “sun doctor” became famous for his heliotherapy. Less well known is that *Oscar Bernhard*, affectionately known by the locals as “Il Bernard”, is also the “Father of Mountain Rescue”.

In the middle of the 19th century the challenge of mountaineering and scientific curiosity overrode the fear of the alpine world. Alpinism joined the classical spa tourism. Mountain sports, initiated by the Englishmen, soon became very popular. This brought on mountain accidents. The rescue service in the high mountains, however, was still at the very beginning. As often in life, it was a practical genius who solved this issue, namely the well-known doctor from the Upper Engadine, Oscar Bernhard (1861–1939). He was born in Samedan as son of a pharmacist. His youth was shaped through nature and the mountains. At the age of 16, he shot his first chamois and two years later he received the mountain guide commission.

The first mountain Samaritan

At the beginning, he led a mountain practice in Samedan with a branch in the village of Pontresina. In 1895, “Il Bernard” was the driving force behind the founding of the first hospital in the Engadine. Today, it still exists in Samedan as the highest acute-care hospital in Europe and was headed by him as “directing physician” (chief physician) for twelve years.

“To deny students the important ...”

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tribute to develop students into future citizens who share a common culture and history. However, the common denominator is excluded and the teaching of history is demoted to being a hostage of identities and memories that all demand their rights and fight in fierce and often radical competition.

What’s your take on Jean Michel Blanquer’s appointment to National Minister of Education? Can one minister win the cultural fight that takes place in schools? One minister is not almighty. How long will he be in office? But he can achieve a lot with the manner in which he communicates and through the counsellors that he surrounds himself with. We all witnessed the catastrophic effects under his predecessor Najat Vallaud-Belkacem. I think that Mr Blanquer is willing to give school back the meaning of its original

This is where he founded the sunlight therapy with which he would become world famous later on in his own clinic in St. Moritz.

As a practicing physician and surgeon, passionate high mountain hunter and commissioned mountain guide, as well as president of the Bernina section of the Swiss Alpine Club (1894–1904), Oscar Bernhard also saw the need for action in mountain rescue. Upon this realisation he immediately put it into practice.

His famous picture panels

At that time, no electronic means of communication existed. Therefore lectures and pictorial representations were used for teaching. In the winter of 1891, for example, Bernhard organised a multi-day Samaritan course for mountain guides, club members and other interested parties on “first assistance with injuries and sudden illnesses in the mountains” in Samedan in the Bernina section of the Swiss Alpine Club.

For this purpose he manufactured his 55 panels with 173 drawings on seven topics which later became famous: simple, precise and practical instructions for the Samaritan service in the mountains, both for first aid in mountain accidents as well as for transport in difficult terrain. The seriousness of the request is reflected in the over-the-top clothes of the rescuers, wearing a white shirt, gilet, hat, and necklet ... – perhaps mocked at today.

purpose: to convey culturally and scientifically challenging knowledge within a safe framework that includes all students. There’s a lot to do, especially in teacher’s education. *Xavier Darcos*, (Minister of Education from 2007 to 2009) worked toward that goal albeit without the support of the executive branch at the time. I hope that it will be different for Mr Blanquer, if he’s serious and the wrath and resistance of pedagogists is unleashed. Within the national education system there is a lot of people who have zero interest in changing the system! He will have to fight against this kind of conservatism that pretends to be progressive. However, I do think that he is in harmony with a large number of teachers who do their best and with parents who would love to trust in the republic’s school again.

Source: ©Alexandre Devecchio, “*Le Figaro*” from 19 January 2018

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

“Il Bernard” as a young practitioner. He was physician (founder of heliotherapy) Samaritan (initiator of mountain rescue), naturalist, high mountain hunter, numismatist and patron of art.



(picture
Dr Waldemar
E. Bernhard)

Samaritan manual became a hit

These charts of which originals still exist in the cultural archives of Upper Engadine in Samedan and the Swiss “Samariterbund” in Olten, caused a sensation: They received a first class diploma and a gold medal at the trade school in Zurich and also the highest award and a gold medal one year later at the hygiene exhibition in Munich. Even the superintendent of the Swiss Army, at that time still wearing his blue uniform, described them in a militarily-sober way as “very beautiful and meritorious.”

This great response prompted Oscar Bernhard to publish a guideline in words and pictures entitled “Samaritan Service, with special regard to the conditions in the high mountains” in 1896. The “*Allgemeine Fremdenblatt, St. Moritz*” wrote in the 15-July-issue: “The Samaritan booklet which you can carry comfortably in your pocket is highly recommend to everyone, but especially the mountaineers, tourists and guides.”

New: accident medicine in sports

Similar to the bestseller “Herbs and Weeds” by herbalist *Johann Künzle*, this first medical almanac for mountain guides and mountaineers had such resounding success that the Swiss Alpine Club, the German-Austrian Alpine Club, the Samaritan Association, and the Red Cross pushed the publication of a new edition. At the time when mountaineering just turned into sports and, as Bernhard himself put it, “pour hundreds of thousands into the Alpine region every year to enjoy the beautiful nature”. This new pocket booklet for mountain guides and tourists titled “First Aid in High Mountain Accidents” appeared in its fifth edition in 1913 and was translated into Italian, French and English. As Bernhard writes in the preface, “it also took into account alpinism in winter which has developed so much since the introduction of

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"The founder of the mountain rescue"

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skiing". Thus, Oscar Bernhard was a real pioneer of accident medicine in sports.

Improvisation instead of high tech

With regard to the type of transport in the high mountains, Bernhard writes: "The very fragmented terrain with its raging streams, wild ravines, deep gorges, dense and mostly trackless forests, steep drop-offs, rocky outcrops, and wastes of ice and snow make the transport very difficult and requires extraordinary transportation and odd transport material."

He continues: "In the mountains, mostly packsaddles are used for the pack animals, bows, and sledges to be pulled by man or beast, further carrying chairs of the reef type or the mountain basket of the northern and the carrier (Gerlo) of the southern Alps which are carried by a single man. Especially the Alpine people have become accustomed to this type of carrying and a strong man can transport a wounded or an ailing man for hours. Several carriers are better, however, who can replace one another."

Above all, do not harm!

Bernhard's instructions are always precise and practical. In the closing word of

his first aid manual, his calm and superior manner is clearly reflected: "If you face a sudden and bad accident act calmly, deliberately and purposefully! If one or the other time it isn't clear sure how to act, it is better to do too little rather than too much, and then perhaps something wrong! A sin of omission is always and rightly forgiven, rather than a pointless approach where someone is harmed through incorrect treatment."

He puts it even clearer: "As generally in life and in particular when it comes to medical aid, the never-minded clever lies are dangerous. The omniscient observer of whom *Billroth* says their brains are like a book-box, from where in the given case they only have to take one wrong book from a wrong place to do great harm! Such people are likely to discredit the Samaritan system."

Therefore, his paternal advice is still valid today: "So be always very careful with medical assistance, mindful of the motto based on *Hippocrates*, the father of medicine: Above all, do not harm! If, in a misfortune you have done well and the right thing, you are crowned the most beautiful reward, the feeling that you have done a good deed."

A timeless credo

The final words, so to speak, include his philosophy of life: "It is nice soothing a suffering person's pain; glorious to save him from disease and infirmity; the ultimate thing, however, which a human heart can experience is the awareness of having saved a person's life." This is what a doctor and philanthropist, for whom the profession is vocation and who from his own experience knows what he is speaking of!

(Translation *Current Concerns*)



Large mountain loop for the transport by a draft animal.
(picture "Kulturarchiv Oberengadin")