

# Current Concerns

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

English Edition of *Zeit-Fragen*

## Austria: “They who want a professional army want to send us to war more quickly!”

*The debate on the abolition of mandatory military service in Austria clearly shows that it is not at all a question of modernising or improving things but of preparing a trouble-free participation of Austrian men and women in foreign wars of aggression.*

hep. After reckoning up to his party members in 2010 that a professional army would cost at least twice as much as the current system of the Austrian military service, Austria's current Defence Minister *Norbert Darabos* (SP) performed a volte-face and began promoting a “professional army” and the abolition of mandatory military service. Since then the Minister's Office has spared no expenses to present this shift towards an army of easily deployable mercenaries as pivotal and the only alternative.

The Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) – second biggest party in the current coalition government – which had persistently conjured up the death of

neutrality in real politics over the past decades, arguing for a NATO membership and the establishment of a professional army, has fundamentally changed its position and is now campaigning for the preservation of mandatory military service, mainly with the argument of economic viability.

### Referendum for Austrians in January 2013

A referendum shall now end this deadlock situation. The two ruling parties agreed to consult the people in January 2013. The result is to be binding.

On 20 January 2013, all Austrians entitled to vote will be asked the following questions:

“Do you favour the establishment of a professional army and a paid voluntary social year? Or do you favour retaining the general mandatory military service and civil service?”

Accordingly, the answers will not be “yes” or “no”, but the voters tick off their preferred answer.

### “As all the others abandon mandatory military service we are also urged to give it up”

Following current trends without questioning them is not a sound guiding principle, neither in life nor in politics.

The arguments for the abolition of mandatory military service and the establishment of a regular army, or “professional army”, as it has recently been called, are quickly listed:

First, mandatory military service had become obsolete and was no longer justified in today's peaceful Europe, secondly, we needed professionals who could deal with the new threat scenarios for Austria, for example disasters, terrorist attacks or cyber attacks, and, thirdly, every other country did the same. Usually figures such as the following are presented in this context: Out of 27 EU member states, only five still insisted on their mandatory military service (Finland, Greece, Estonia, Cyprus and Austria). Even “alli-

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### media release

## Swiss Federal Office of Public Health (FOPH) must revise its concepts

### “IG Freiheit” (Interest Group Freedom) is pleased with the rejection of the prevention law

After today's decision of the Council of States the prevention law is definitely done for. The IG Freiheit is relieved: Common sense has prevailed. The unnecessary law would have allowed more government intervention, created new cost and would have led to an expansion of the administration. Now the IG Freiheit expects the Federal Council to put this decision into practice consistently: The FOPH's unrestrained activism has to be broken. The countless programs running under the title “prevention” have to be reduced.

IG Freiheit has struggled for years together with the Swiss Trade Association, GastroSuisse, and the Economy Alliance for a Moderate Policy of Prevention (AWMP) against a national prevention law. The drafted decree would not only have allowed further government intervention into the private sphere, but would also have brought new prohibi-

tions and requirements. The IG Freiheit has moreover rejected the law because it would have caused a further expansion of the administration and new cost for business and industry. IG Freiheit refuses decidedly the government's paternalism, which is closely associated with the idea of the prevention law.

Since the idea of the prevention law has definitely been discarded, we must now closely scrutinize the activities of the FOPH. It is unacceptable that the federal administration launches one program after another, without any legal foundation. The administration's expensive and often ineffective campaigns are questionable. Also in the area of prevention, the state must understand his role as a subsidiary one: Only where no private efforts are undertaken, government measures are appropriate. However, there are countless

private initiatives, especially in the area of prevention.

The IG Freiheit calls on the Federal Council to now closely scrutinize the sometimes uncontrolled activities of the Federal Office of Public Health. The FOPH's numberless programs and the cost must be reduced. Now leadership is needed: The FOPH has to be provided with clear guidelines in which areas activities are desired.

Likewise, the mission of the extra-parliamentary commissions, which already require more money and space has to be substantiated and restricted. The IG Freiheit is about to submit an interpellation concerning this issue.

Source: [www.freiheit-liberte.ch](http://www.freiheit-liberte.ch),  
27.9.2012

(Translation Current Concerns)

**"Austria: They who want ..."**

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ance-free countries" such as Sweden and Ireland had already converted their armies into so-called professional armies.

The calculations made by the minister and his agents, that a professional army would be less expensive, have been refuted by all experts.

For well informed democrats mandatory military service cannot be outdated unless the dream has come true that the entire mankind succeeded in transforming all swords into ploughshares. The army of a democratic state, which is, by its constitution, not entitled to wage wars of aggression, must remain rooted in the population and focus on protection, prevention and defence of their own country.

A country that does not interfere in wars with other countries will not have to fear terrorism. Solely the participation in international combat missions in *EU Battle Groups* threatens the population in Austria and at the place of action. Strengthening a neutral Austria will guarantee real security.

The arguments are flimsy and manipulative. So what is the motive for the change? Here *Eduard Paulus*, the President of the *Officers Association*, has an interesting answer: "A professional army is the desire of those circles who desperately want to play war abroad. Even the Austrian *Greens* are part of the game.<sup>1</sup> And this is of course not possible with a pure conscript army. They want a professional army, because they would not have to take account of the population." (cf. "Die Presse", 18.07.2010)

**Shooting open trade routes, in cooperation with NATO**

The second part of the answer comes from the former SP Finance Minister and big businessman *Hannes Androsch*. Androsch, who was recently appointed head of the "Committee for the end of mandatory military service"<sup>2</sup> by the SP leadership, frankly says why the abolition of mandatory military service and the establishment of a professional army are so important and so urgent for him. The function of an army has changed, it "is now all

about being combat-ready in the European grid in cooperation with NATO to defend resources and energy sources, transport routes, sea lanes and pipelines. In addition there are the problems of refugees, terrorism and cyber warfare."<sup>3</sup>

Thus he clearly states that participation in wars for natural resources and trade routes was the reason for the "war games abroad". These are no "peace missions" planned for young men and women in our new "professional army".

It is against this background that Minister Darabos' statements should be classified: "Conventional national defence is no longer the main concern for the Austrian army. Today some 1,500 Austrian soldiers are deployed abroad. Since the existence of the Austrian armed forces, there have never been so many." (*OTS* original text service of 11.05.2012)

**Plans for a new Anschluss policy with Germany?**

Now it becomes clear why Darabos is pushing for an expansion of tasks for the *EU Battle Group*, in which Austria has been participating since 2011. Just last week, according to a bulletin of the defence ministry, at a meeting with his EU counterparts in Nicosia the Austrian defence minister suggested gearing up combat troops "as a tactical reserve for existing EU missions". The *Battle Group* could, for instance, intervene in Bosnia-Herzegovina, "if the security situation deteriorates." (*OTS* original text of 27 September)

A concern which he shares with the designated head of the EU military staff, the Austrian Major General *Wolfgang Wosolobe*, "We are committed to make the squad more versatile." ("Die Presse" on May 11) and "The *Battle Group* is an important tool on which the EU can rely at any time in its international crisis management planning." (*OTS* original text of 11 May)

From 1 July 2012, the Austrian Armed Forces have taken over logistical management responsibilities in such a battle group. There are about 350 Austrian soldiers in an armoured transport company, working together with Croatians, Irish and Macedonians, and who are, under German leadership, currently prepared to be

operational within five days in all conflict zones. Austria's next participation in the combat troops, together with Germany, is planned for 2016.

**Austria practises eagerly – "Combined Endeavour 2012"**

Between 7 and 20 September, the US military training ground at Grafenwoehr in Germany hosted the world's largest military exercise in the field of communication ("interoperability"). This year the Austrian Armed Forces provided 26 of the 1,400 military and civilian personnel from 40 NATO and PfP countries. According to the official statement of the Ministry of Defence this exercise primarily serves multinational cooperation purposes with different communication systems which "significantly improve the safety of the soldiers on foreign missions in particular." This exercise is funded by *EUCOM*, the *United States European Command*, a key NATO command in Europe. "The *United States European Command* primary mission in support of NATO is to provide combat-ready forces to support US contributions to the NATO alliance. [...]"<sup>4</sup>

**Austria has a different tradition and would have important tasks to fulfil**

We are not unrealistic if we reject war as an instrument of politics, regardless of the current media trends, and if we consider violence illegitimate apart from defence purposes at the utmost. We are not less realistic if we want Austria to refocus on its role as a neutral state in the world community, to resign from military alliances and focus on political mediation and active support in negotiations. •

<sup>1</sup> *Peter Pilz*, security spokesman for the Greens, demands, for example, the immediate abolition of military service and wants an effective army that can be regularly deployed in foreign assignments.

<sup>2</sup> Personenkomitee "Unser Heer" (Persons Committee Our Army) [www.personenkomiteeunserheer.at](http://www.personenkomiteeunserheer.at), retrieved on 28.09.2012

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/agency/dod/eucom.htm> (as of 07.10.2012)

<sup>4</sup> US European Command, [Globalsecurity.org](http://www.globalsecurity.org), update 6.11.2008., quoted in: Wagner, Jürgen: *Das Eucom in Stuttgart Vaihingen – Multifunktionaler Krisenstützpunkt*. <http://imi-online.de/download/JW-EUCOM.pdf>

# On Europe's Madness

**"But the truth is that the protesters are right"**

by Paul Krugman

*The truly irrational players are the allegedly serious politicians and officials demanding ever more pain.*

So much for complacency. Just a few days ago, the conventional wisdom was that Europe finally had things under control. The European Central Bank, by promising to buy the bonds of troubled governments if necessary, had soothed markets. All that debtor nations had to do, the story went, was agree to more and deeper austerity – the condition for central bank loans – and all would be well.

But the purveyors of conventional wisdom forgot that people were involved. Suddenly, Spain and Greece are being racked by strikes and huge demonstrations. The public in these countries is, in effect, saying that it has reached its limit: With unemployment at Great Depression levels and with erstwhile middle-class workers reduced to picking through garbage in search of food, austerity has already gone too far. And this means that there may not be a deal after all.

Much commentary suggests that the citizens of Spain and Greece are just delaying the inevitable, protesting against sacrifices that must, in fact, be made.

But the truth is that the protesters are right. More austerity serves no useful purpose; the truly irrational players here are the allegedly serious politicians and officials demanding ever more pain.

Consider Spain's woes. What is the real economic problem? Basically, Spain is suffering the hangover from a huge housing bubble, which caused both an economic boom and a period of inflation that left Spanish industry uncompetitive with the rest of Europe. When the bubble burst, Spain was left with the difficult problem of regaining competitiveness, a painful process that will take years. Unless Spain leaves the euro – a step nobody wants to take – it is condemned to years of high unemployment.

But this arguably inevitable suffering is being greatly magnified by harsh spending cuts; and these spending cuts are a case of inflicting pain for the sake of inflicting pain.

First of all, Spain didn't get into trouble because its government was profligate. On the contrary, on the eve of the crisis, Spain actually had a budget surplus and low debt. Large deficits emerged when the economy tanked, taking revenues with it,

but, even so, Spain doesn't appear to have all that high a debt burden.

It's true that Spain is now having trouble borrowing to finance its deficits. That trouble is, however, mainly because of fears about the nation's broader difficulties – not least the fear of political turmoil in the face of very high unemployment. And shaving a few points off the

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**"Beyond that, a significant part of public opinion in Europe's core – above all, in Germany – is deeply committed to a false view of the situation."**

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budget deficit won't resolve those fears. In fact, research by the International Monetary Fund suggests that spending cuts in deeply depressed economies may actually reduce investor confidence because they accelerate the pace of economic decline.

In other words, the straight economics of the situation suggests that Spain doesn't need more austerity. It shouldn't throw a party, and, in fact, it probably has no alternative (short of euro exit) to a protracted period of hard times. But savage cuts to essential public services, to aid to the needy, and so on actually hurt the country's prospects for successful adjustment.

Why, then, are there demands for ever more pain?

Part of the explanation is that in Europe, as in America, far too many Very Serious People have been taken in by the cult of austerity, by the belief that budget deficits, not mass unemployment, are the clear and present danger, and that deficit reduction will somehow solve a problem brought on by private sector excess.

Beyond that, a significant part of public opinion in Europe's core – above all, in Germany – is deeply committed to a false view of the situation. Talk to German officials and they will portray the euro crisis as a morality play, a tale of countries that lived high and now face the inevitable reckoning. Never mind the fact that this isn't at all what happened – and the equally inconvenient fact that German banks played a large role in inflating Spain's housing bubble. Sin and its consequences is their story, and they're sticking to it.

Worse yet, this is also what many German voters believe, largely because it's what politicians have told them. And fear of a backlash from voters who believe, wrongly, that they're being put on the hook for the consequences of South European irresponsibility leaves German politicians unwilling to approve essential emergency lending to Spain and other troubled nations unless the borrowers are punished first.

Of course, that's not the way these demands are portrayed. But that's what it really comes down to. And it's long past time to put an end to this cruel nonsense.

If Germany really wants to save the euro, it should let the European Central Bank do what's necessary to rescue the debtor nations – and it should do so without demanding more pointless pain. •

Source: © *The International Herald Tribune* from 29/30 September 2012

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## UN Special Envoy Brahimi speaks of 5,000 mercenaries in Syria

About 5,000 foreign mercenaries are currently fighting against the Government troops in Syria. The UN-Arab League Special Envoy for Syria, *Lakhdar Brahimi*, said so with reference to official information from Damascus. As the news agency *afp* reported, Brahimi pointed out at a meeting of UN Security Council that the armed conflict in the Arab country was the result of an “international conspiracy” according to an official statement from Damascus. The

consultation took place behind closed doors.

Media reported last week that the Syrian Government troops had killed more than 100 Afghan extremists in the second largest city of Aleppo. Previously the independent Syrian newspaper “Al Watan” had communicated that about 75 percent of the extremists fighting against the Government in Damascus side by side with the so-called Free Syrian Army were Jihad propo-

nents from other Arab and various other countries.

Right at the beginning of the armed conflict a year and a half ago the authorities in Syria had declared that the State had to fight against an international conspiracy. Syrian official media call the proponents of the Free Syrian army nothing else than “mercenaries and terrorists”. •

Source: *RIA Novosti*, 24 September 2012

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## Iran's President calls for reforms of the UN Security Council and the General Assembly

Iran's President *Mahmoud Ahmadinejad* called for infrastructural reforms in the United Nations during the 67<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly. “Reforming the world's affairs and bringing about tranquility and prosperity requires the participation of all”, said Ahmadinejad in New York. “The United Nations is the key center for coor-

dinating the common global management. Its structure needs to be reformed [...]”, the Iranian President explained.

Thereby, he called to modernize completely the Security Council where currently only five permanent members – China, France, Britain, Russia and the United States – enjoy the right of veto. “All in-

dependent States and nations [need to] be able to participate in the global governance actively and constructively”, the Iranian added. •

Source: *RIA Novosti*, 24 September 2012

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

## “Apparently religious discord is being fuelled” State Duma wants tougher measures against blasphemy

The State Duma (Lower House of the Russian Parliament) discussed the draft statement “on the protection of religious feelings of citizens of the Russian Federation”, which condemns the increasing number of cases of desecration of religious shrines.

The head of the Duma Committee for social organizations and religious organizations, *Jaroslav Nilov*, who presented the draft of the document, addressed a number of “blasphemous, outrageous events” in 2012. After the “Pussy Riot” scandal icons have been desecrated in various cities across the country. Temples and synagogues have been defaced with swastikas, satanic symbols and various inscriptions.

Two Islamic spiritual leaders were killed or injured in two high-profile terrorist attacks – in Dagestan and Tatarstan. A wooden church was burned down in Krasnodar and a Protestant prayer house in the Moscow suburb of Novokossimo was demolished, Nilov reported. “This is a challenge to peace in the country, and we have to respond in a timely fashion,” Nilov said.

“Apparently religious discord is being fuelled. All this has a destructive, provoca-

tive character and is aimed at destabilizing the situation and fomenting hostility in our society,” Nilov added. “The State Duma must not stand back”, the MP added. According to his report, the committee presided by him had drafted a statement of all Duma factions at its first meeting in autumn in order to demonstrate the compliance of their positions.

According to the MP *Dmitri Sablin*, today's statement shall point out that the Russian society unanimously supports the traditional values that also hold the society together.

According to the statement the religious associations currently perform important functions with regard to the preservation of the spiritual and cultural heritage of Russia, to the development of relations between the Church and the State and to international cooperation, to the consolidation of civil peace and civil unity, to the education of the younger generation and her education in a spirit of love and respect for their home country.

The State Duma “condemns such criminal actions and calls for a tough response to the destructive forces praising anti-re-

ligious extremism, vandalism and hooliganism, and fanning in society hatred against the Russian Orthodox Church and other religious organizations,” the statement says.

The first Deputy Chairman of the Committee on Public and Religious Organizations, *Sergei Popov*, had previously announced that the members are to make amendments to the penal code in the next few days on tightening the responsibility for insulting the feelings of believers and the desecration of venerated shrines.

According to article 214 (vandalism) of the Russian penal code the desecration of houses or buildings, the damage to assets in transport and at public staging points is now punished with fines up to 40,000 rubles (about 1,000 euros), corrective labor or imprisonment for up to three months.

According to Popov, the members would like to introduce custodial sentences of up to three years for such actions. •

Source: *RIA Novosti*, 25 September 2012

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

healthcare system

## “The economy has to serve medicine – not the other way round”

### Diagnosis Related Groups (DRGs) and their consequences in German hospitals

by Heike Faller and Christiane Grefe

*sl.* In 2003, Germany introduced the Diagnosis Related Group, DRG [die Fallpauschale]. That the impact of this new accounting system is now assessed on period of nine years. What some of the doctors had predicted from the beginning is becoming clear: The Diagnosis Related Group, DRG, i.e. case-based payment, was a false political decision. It has not made health care less expensive, but the economic pressure has damaged the patient-related work, had produced wrong decisions and delayed cases that need to be taken over by neighboring systems.

Recently, the “Deutsche Gesellschaft für Innere Medizin, DGIM” (German Society for Internal Medicine) published a statement saying that today’s hospitals are managed like “industrial companies”, “diseases are becoming commodities, physicians providers and patients billed cases”. The change imposed by the neo-liberal economy which bases on the American model cannot be blamed on doctors

and hospital staff, as the decision had been made responsible of the financial sector and politicians and has to be corrected at the political level. The doctors are still bound from the Hippocratic Oath and the Declaration of Geneva of 1948. Recently, European and American physicians (2002) have established and published a “Charter on Medical Professionalism” which is, however, little known and not binding in Germany, it would not even have become necessary if this economically and politically wrong decision had not meanwhile changed the every-day clinic routine into a tariff-oriented enterprise. Yet, in a democracy, wrong decisions must also be reversible.

Therefore, the German weekly “Die Zeit” has not only dedicated a review article on this problem, which is reprinted hereafter, but in an interview with physicians it has also illustrated the situation with examples. The described situation refers to German hospitals. Every country in the EU will

have to reflect and describe its own situation separately, as there may be big differences.

In Switzerland, the DRG was introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2012 and already shows first effects going in the same direction. Within the framework of this intransparent reform of the health care funding, there is ever less tax money at hand for our health care, a fact that Mr Conti, President of the “Schweizerische Gesundheitsdirektorenkonferenz” (Swiss Conference of the Cantonal Ministers of Public Health) pointed out (Current Concerns No. 22 of 29 May and “Neue Zürcher Zeitung” of 31.12.2011). As the result is a continuous rise of health insurance premiums, this must not be used as reason to import German-American health reforms. If a system has such blatant negative effects already now in the surrounding countries, Switzerland should act according to the motto “Nip it in the bud!” “Current Concerns” commented on the introduction of the DRG on 12 July 2011 (Nr. 9).

Every doctor knows these words, “I will prescribe regimens for the good of my patients according to my ability and my judgment and never do harm to anyone.” So it is laid down in that famous oath from ancient times, named after the Greek physician *Hippocrates*. Today, 2500 years later, physicians may no longer swear by the gods Apollo and Asclepius. But the main ideas of these ethics still apply: the primacy of the patient’s welfare, the obligation to secrecy, the euthanasia ban. Or the *primum non nocere*: the imperative, to refrain from a procedure, rather than risking future damage, or even death.

But paper is patient, and in the contradictions of everyday life the ideals often get lost. By this time, the flood of letters to the editor that reached us after publishing the cover story “The end of the obligation to secrecy” (Die Zeit No. 21/12) shows how strong the level of suffering of many doctors is. In that article doctors had reported about everyday life in their hospitals and complained that they found themselves ever more frequently in a conflict of interests between the welfare of patients and the profit expectations of their hospitals. They reported about unnecessary treatments, arranged for financial reasons, or the fact that hospitals did not let patients go, when lucrative fixed rates could be collected.

#### Manifesto for a humane medicine\*

1. Medical doctors are challenged by a constant conflict between the well-being of their patients and economic goals of their hospitals. If a physician chooses to confront his or her employer in a concrete case because of reasons of conscience he or she should not be left alone. Medical councils should support colleagues opposing economic directives of their hospitals. They should set up boards of arbitration at which such conflicts may be settled.
2. Doctors tend to surrender to economic and hierarchical pressure too easily and sometimes lose sight of what is best for their patients. A culture of anticipatory obedience prevails in German hospitals which is maintained by an excessive dependence of junior doctors on consultants and medical directors during their medical training. Medical faculty members should therefore be liable for the quality of training. Medical councils should monitor that.
3. Hospital do not exist in order to meet shareholders’ return assumptions. Economy should serve medicine, rather than the other way round. Bonus agreements interfering with medical decisions are therefore unethical.
4. Medical personnel and nurses spend not enough time with the patients but too much time with documentation and non-medical activities. Their workload regarding non-medical tasks has to be reduced.
5. Doctors may have to understand economics – but economists also have to consider the medical side. Health economists therefore have to absolve an obligatory internship on a medical ward.
6. Teaching communication skills and supervision have to be integral parts of the medical routine.
7. Patients can contribute to an affordable health service, too. Costs may be reduced by a transparent documentation of treatments and by cost sharing.

\* This Manifesto was compiled by participants – Susanne Sängler, Ursula Stüwe, Paul Brandenburg, Michael Scheele und Urban Wiesing – in a conversation with the German weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* (20 September) – working together. It is meant to spark a discussion about the current state of the health service. Interested people may join the discussion on [facebook.com/medizinermanifest](https://www.facebook.com/medizinermanifest).

**“Economy has to serve ...”**

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The doctors who told us about these cases wanted to remain anonymous. Only like this they could be able to continue their work without being sued by their employers or by the affected patients. However, the overwhelming echo to the report was revealed: The bitter experiences are no single cases. Also the majority of the authors of letters to our newspaper, among them many doctors, complained that in German hospitals a brutal distribution battle is raging in which the survival of the hospital takes the precedence over an adequate treatment of patients.

**If a patient stays too long – due to old age or infirmity – the clinic loses out**

A decisive reason is the changed funding system of hospitals and doctors' offices. Since 2003, the German hospitals do no longer get daily rates which are calculated on the basis of the admission diagnosis.

For a hip replacement, there is another package as for a heart attack. If patients have to stay longer as the calculated period of hospitalization – because they are old and infirm, or because there are delays in the examinations – then the prolonged waiting time is charged to the hospital.

This is an incentive to work faster. Between 2000 to 2010, the average length of a hospital stay was shortened by two days to 7.8 days. This contributed to the fact that the hospital spendings in Germany have remained stable for years, although the population has been aging and medical progress is offering new treatments.

Simultaneously, the lump-sum calculation made the efficiency of hospitals comparable and fuelled competition among hospitals. Whoever is not able to work efficiently can now be exposed – and sooner or later will be merged, privatized or closed.

In recent weeks the physicians have been fighting for higher fees. Even in medical offices services are remunerated differently. The reasons for the dispute with health insurances are the complaints of many physicians about the billing system. What benefits will be paid for what kind of services is being continuously renegotiated in committees. So it happened that specialists sometimes offer the patient acupuncture and sometimes a preventive

colonoscopy, depending on what is currently rewarded.

In the clinics, on the other hand, the control by DRGs has particularly drastic consequences: Hospitals often choose the most lucrative patients or procedures (“cherry picking”). There is a greater incentive to carry out the more profitable – complex operations – and to neglect the essentials, such as a conversation with the patient. Elderly and frail patients are either not taken in or sent home too early, when the cost of treatment exceeds the fixed rates (“bloody dismissal”). This may result in even higher costs, which have to be turning over by other systems. While on paper the hospital appears to be more efficient.

Work in hospitals has changed in every respect. Color markings in the computer system indicate to nurses that a patient has exceeded the maximum length of stay and whether the business has become negative. Nurses and doctors spend more time at the computer. Consultants and senior doctors participate in business objectives by bonus contracts that may be opposed to appropriate treatment. Presently, hospitals are run “like industrial companies”, as the German society of internal medicine (DGIM) recently criticized. Diseases are becoming “a commodity, doctors providers and patients billed cases.”

Of course, not in all hospitals are there management speculators, and certainly not all doctors work negligently or recklessly. The majority of the patients continue to receive professional and responsible help. But the patient can not be sure if the doctor who advises him has only his healing in mind.

Now one might say: That's nothing new. In the history of medicine, there were – in spite of all the oaths – always quacks and charlatans who were out for making money. And in modern hospitals profit making was always a target apart from the patients' recovery: At the time of day rates, the patients were often hospitalized a few days longer than necessary in order to fill the available beds. Private patients had always not only run the risk that too much was put on their account, but also that too much was measured, x-rayed, cut and administrated.

Yet, it is obvious that the new framework increases the risk that hospitals are looking more after business objectives than after the patient's well-being. This

often happens quite unconsciously, because already a respective corporate culture has developed. Doctors follow uncritically the directions of their senior consultant or head physician, otherwise their careers might be jeopardized.

**Doctors themselves are now calling for change**

However, resistance has already begun. The German Medical Association (DGIM) opposed “misdevelopments by wrong incentives” in July. Bonus agreements favouring higher case numbers or turnovers were challenged as tempting doctors into “over-diagnosing” and making them “corruptible”, the DGIM statement reads. Junior doctors are misguided resulting in “faulty prioritization of professional activities.” Thinking in terms of mere economic focus is criticized as “significantly reducing the abilities of empathy and tender attention.” The DGIM demands a decisive change of policy. But such redirections take time, and for the time being the question arises: Is all that still compatible with the professional ethos of a physician?

Especially physicians have always held commitment to their values of professional conduct in high esteem. After the Second World War the Hippocratic Oath was rephrased according to contemporary standards by the World Medical Association. This “Declaration of Geneva” emphasizes that doctors should treat their patients irrespectively of religion, nationality, race, party politics or social standing, and should never, even under threat, use their medical knowledge “contrary to the laws of humanity.” This text is cited in the preamble of the Code of Medical Ethics in Germany.

Bonus agreements are not mentioned in the declaration of Geneva. They are mentioned in the *Charter of Medical Professionalism* though, which has been compiled and published by European and American doctors in 2002, but is widely unknown and non-binding in Germany.

Should there be a new oath then for people working in hospital and medical practice settings? A declaration, granting steadfastness to doctors and security to patients? •

Source: *Die Zeit* Nr. 39. 20 September 2012(Translation *Current Concerns*)

# “Changing views in health care issues urgently needed”

## Discussion about costs and rationalization debates must not superimpose the meaning of medical practice

by Erika Vögeli

The weekly newspaper *Die Zeit* (no 39, 20 September) has the merit of having initiated a broader public discussion that in our countries a rethinking in questions of health care is urgently needed. In a large part of the medical profession this rethinking has obviously already started. Several initiatives, so the *Charter on Medical Professionalism* published already in 2002 document a reflection that medical treatment has to be founded ethically and thereby the benefit of the patient has highest priority. Medical treatment must be equally accessible to all people independent of their social status. The charter takes up thoughts as they came up in the *Declaration of Geneva* after the inhuman practices during the Second World War and formulates it for our time and for today's situation.

Also the participants in the discussion with the *Zeit* – Paul Brandenburg, specialist of general and emergency medicine, the surgeon Ursula Stüwe, doctor and philosopher Urban Wiesing, the nurse Susanne Sängler and the former chief consultant of the department of obstetrics, Michael Scheele – subsequent to the discussion in *Zeit* – wrote a “Manifesto for a Humane Medicine” which demands a correction of the current undesirable developments in health care and to relegate economics to its rightful place, i.e. serving human life and thereby also medicine. Basically – says Urban Wiesing who works at the Institute for Ethics and History of Medicine talking to the *Zeit* – the medical ethos “is undisputed in its core. I don't think that we have to rewrite the professional standards. We have to remember them.”

In the course of economization, discussions about costs and debates about rationalization the primary sense of medical care – to help the ill or suffering patient to the best of one's knowledge and belief – has increasingly been pushed into the background by economic considerations of profitability; for example in a case where the director of the clinic as economic chief determines the working schedule (of the doctors) against the expressed protest of the head physician and over his head, although the schedule was rejected by the medical direction, because it was considered to be a danger for the patients in this form. The head physician had protested and become active. “It's my duty. Patients are more important than profit. [...] It cannot be that the medical expertise of the head physician is overruled by the economic director of the hospital. And if this is the case, the head physician must

### (Physicians) Declaration of Geneva

*Revised professional duties of physicians as decided at Geneva by the World Medical Association in 1948 (following the Hippocratic Oath; modified by the German Medical Assembly):*

“At the time of being admitted as a member of the medical profession: I solemnly pledge to consecrate my life to the service of humanity. I will give to my teachers and colleagues the respect and gratitude that is their due. I will practice my profession with conscience and dignity. The health of my patient will be my first consideration. I will respect the secrets that are confided in me, even after

the patient has died. I will maintain by all means in my power, the honor and the noble traditions of the medical profession. My colleagues will be my sisters and brothers. I will not permit considerations of age, disease or disability, creed, ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, social standing or any factor to intervene between my duty and my patient. I will maintain the utmost respect for human life. I will not use my medical knowledge to violate human rights and civil liberties, even under threat. I make these promises solemnly freely and upon my honor.”

act. However, he has to be clear himself about the consequences”, says Michael Scheele in the *Zeit*-discussion.

Not every physician acts as consistently and especially young doctors will have difficulties. But this aspect of the problem is recognized as a problem by the physicians themselves, too. It is put up for discussion for example in the “Manifesto for a Humane Medicine” which speaks of a “culture of anticipatory obedience” which is “promoted by an unduly dependence of the assistant doctors on their senior and head physicians during the period of training”.

As a whole society we have to reflect how we want to organize our living together and along with that our health care. If we have a “competition for survival which doesn't depend on medical benefit but remain in the black, i.e. be profitable”, we have set clearly wrong priorities. Thereby the welfare of the single patient falls by the wayside but in the hospital's fight for survival there will be prescriptions for better-paid therapies, not really serving the welfare of the patient but the profitability of the hospital. Ursula Stüwe, 65, who is looking back on a career first as nurse and afterwards as a surgeon and has been president of the *Landesärztekammer Hessen* (Hessian Medical Association) from 2004 to 2008 and vice-chairwoman of the physicians union *Marburger Bund*, describes how the introduction of the flat rate payment led to the primacy of medical treatment shifting towards economic criteria: “I have been working in German hospitals since 1965, therefore I overlook many years. The introduction of the per case flat rate in 2003 was really the turning-point for me. In a clinic well-known to me for example a new surgery was opened which of course was to yield a profit. Then

the economists sit down and calculate: if one operates about 35 gall bladders per day the new tract will be profitable. In this way it is communicated to the doctors. It is here where the conflict between economy and medicine begins. Gall bladders don't grow on trees. The consequence: unexplained upper abdominal complaints in the presence of gall stones simply result in an operation somewhat faster.”

However, we can't blame the doctors for these developments. We all have witnessed the times of neo-liberal economy and how all parts of society were subjected to economic criteria; we are all called to take up the discussion and to contribute to a correction of the undesirable developments. This includes to feel responsible as a citizen for our health care system as part of the community life and accordingly care for it and look after it. It shouldn't become a “transfer system for the consequences of our attitude of excessive claims”. This is how the emergency doctor Paul Brandenburg formulates and illustrates the situation from his experience: “Not the few severely ill people in the intensive care units make the German system so expensive. It is the trifles: if people call the emergency because their child has stumbled and has a bruise and then in hospital even demand a computer tomography.” The claim formulated for the physician in the Hippocratic Oath that he should not harm has to be applied the other way round, as well: our social system resulted from the idea of solidarity. It will only then serve the good of all if we want to carry on in that sense. Different groups of physicians have started the debate. We are called upon to join and help to achieve a political breakthrough in this matter. •

## Charter on medical professionalism

# Charter on medical professionalism in the new millenium: a physician's charter

cc. Several American and European associations (American Board of Internal Medicine, American Society of Internal Medicine, American College of Physicians, European Federation of Internal Medicine) dealt with ethical issues of health care and medical work in several joint discussion meetings and formulated a corresponding document. It appeared in February 2002 – simultaneously in the “Annals of Internal Medicine” (Vol. 136, p 243) and in the “Lancet” (Volume 359, p 520). It was reprinted in various journals and translated into several languages.

The English original document was published under the title “Medical Professionalism in the New Millennium: A Physician Charter.”

## Preamble

Professionalism is the basis of medicine's contract with society.

It demands placing the interests of patients above those of the physician, setting and maintaining standards of competence and integrity, and providing expert advice to society on matters of health. The principles and responsibilities of medical professionalism must be clearly understood by both the profession and society. Essential to this contract is public trust in physicians, which depends on the integrity of both individual physicians and the whole profession.

At present, the medical profession is confronted by an explosion of technology, changing market forces, problems in health-care delivery, bioterrorism, and globalisation. As a result, physicians find it increasingly difficult to meet their responsibilities to patients and society. In these circumstances, reaffirming the fundamental and universal principles and values of medical professionalism, which remain ideals to be pursued by all physicians, becomes all the more important.

The medical profession everywhere is embedded in diverse cultures and national traditions, but its members share the role of healer, which has roots extending back to *Hippocrates*. Indeed, the medical profession must contend with complicated political, legal, and market forces.

Moreover, there are wide variations in medical delivery and practice through which any general principles may be expressed in both complex and subtle ways. Despite these differences, common themes emerge and form the basis of this charter in the form of three fundamental principles

and as a set of definitive professional responsibilities.

## Fundamental principles

### 1. Principle of primacy of patients' welfare

This principle is based on a dedication to serving the interest of the patient. Altruism contributes to the trust that is central to the physician-patient relationship. Market forces, societal pressures, and administrative exigencies must not compromise this principle.

### 2. Principle of patients' autonomy

Physicians must have respect for patients' autonomy. Physicians must be honest with their patients and empower them to make informed decisions about their treatment. Patients' decisions about their care must be paramount, as long as those decisions are in keeping with ethical practice and do not lead to demands for inappropriate care.

### 3. Principle of social justice

The medical profession must promote justice in the health-care system, including the fair distribution of health-care resources. Physicians should work actively to eliminate discrimination in health care, whether based on race, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, religion, or any other social category.

## A set of professional responsibilities

### 1. Commitment to professional competence

Physicians must be committed to lifelong learning and be responsible for maintaining the medical knowledge and clinical and team skills necessary for the provision of quality care. More broadly, the profession as a whole must strive to see that all of its members are competent and must ensure that appropriate mechanisms are available for physicians to accomplish this goal.

### 2. Commitment to honesty with patients

Physicians must ensure that patients are completely and honestly informed before the patient has consented to treatment and after treatment has occurred. This expectation does not mean that patients should be involved in every minute decision about medical care; rather, they must be empowered to decide on the course of therapy. Physicians should also acknowledge that, in health care, medical errors that injure

patients do sometimes occur. Whenever patients are injured as a consequence of medical care, patients should be informed promptly because failure to do so seriously compromises patients' and societal trust. Reporting and analysing medical mistakes provides the basis for appropriate prevention and improvement strategies and for appropriate compensation to injured parties.

### 3. Commitment to patients' confidentiality

Earning the trust and confidence of patients requires that appropriate confidentiality safeguards be applied to disclosure of patients' information. This commitment extends to discussions with people acting on a patient's behalf when obtaining the patient's own consent is not feasible.

Fulfilling the commitment to confidentiality is more pressing now than ever before, given the widespread use of electronic information systems for compiling data on patients and an increasing availability of genetic information. Physicians recognise, however, that their commitment to confidentiality must occasionally yield to overriding considerations in the public interest (for example, when patients endanger others).

### 4. Commitment to maintaining appropriate relationships with patients

Given the inherent vulnerability and dependency of patients, certain relationships between physicians and patients must be avoided. In particular, physicians should never exploit patients for any sexual advantage, personal financial gain, or other private purpose.

### 5. Commitment to improving quality of care

Physicians must be dedicated to continuous improvement in the quality of health care. This commitment entails not only maintaining clinical competence but also working collaboratively with other professionals to reduce medical error, increase patients' safety, minimise overuse of health-care resources, and optimise the outcomes of care.

Physicians must actively participate in the development of better measures of quality of care and the application of quality measures to assess routinely the performance of all individuals,

**"Charter on medical professionalism"**

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institutions, and systems responsible for health-care delivery. Physicians, both individually and through their professional associations, must take responsibility for assisting in the creation and implementation of mechanisms designed to encourage continuous improvement in the quality of care.

6. *Commitment to improving access to care*

Medical professionalism demands that the objective of all health-care systems be the availability of a uniform and adequate standard of care. Physicians must individually and collectively strive to reduce barriers to equitable health care. Within each system, the physician should work to eliminate barriers to access based on education, laws, finances, geography, and social discrimination. A commitment to equity entails the promotion of public health and preventive medicine, as well as public advocacy on the part of each physician, without concern for the self-interest of the physician or the profession.

7. *Commitment to a just distribution of finite resources*

While meeting the needs of individual patients, physicians are required to provide health care that is based on the wise and cost-effective management of limited clinical resources. They should be committed to working with other physicians, hospitals, and payers to develop guidelines for cost-effective care. The physician's professional responsibility for appropriate allocation of resources requires scrupulous avoidance of superfluous tests and procedures. The provision of unnecessary services not only exposes patients to avoidable harm and expense but also diminishes the resources available for others.

8. *Commitment to scientific knowledge*

Much of medicine's contract with society is based on the integrity and appropriate use of scientific knowledge and technology. Physicians have a duty to uphold scientific standards, to promote research, and to create new knowledge and ensure its appropriate use. The profession is responsible for the integrity of this knowledge, which is based on scientific evidence and physicians' experience.

9. *Commitment to maintaining trust by managing conflicts of interest*

### The Hippocratic Oath (original version)

*The Hippocratic Oath, including few modifications, is still valid today:*

I swear by Apollo the physician, AEsculapius, and Health, and All-heal, and all the gods and goddesses, that, according to my ability and judgement, I will keep this Oath and this stipulation.

To reckon him who taught me this Art equally dear to me as my parents, to share my substance with him, and relieve his necessities if required; to look up his offspring in the same footing as my own brothers, and to teach them this art, if they shall wish to learn it, without fee or stipulation; and that by precept, lecture, and every other mode of instruction, I will impart a knowledge of the Art to my own sons, and those of my teachers, and to disciples bound by a stipulation and oath according to the law of medicine, but to none others.

I will follow that system of regimen which, according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patients, and abstain from whatever is deleterious and mischievous. I will give

no deadly medicine to any one if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; and in like manner I will not give a woman a pessary to produce abortion.

With purity and with holiness I will pass my life and practice my Art. I will not cut persons laboring under the stone, but will leave this to be done by men who are practitioners of this work. Into whatever houses I enter, I will go into them for the benefit of the sick, and will abstain from every voluntary act of mischief and corruption; and, further from the seduction of females or males, of freemen and slaves.

Whatever, in connection with my professional practice or not, in connection with it, I see or hear, in the life of men, which ought not to be spoken of abroad, I will not divulge, as reckoning that all such should be kept secret.

While I continue to keep this Oath unviolated, may it be granted to me to enjoy life and the practice of the art, respected by all men, in all times! But should I trespass and violate this Oath, may the reverse be my lot!

Medical professionals and their organisations have many opportunities to compromise their professional responsibilities by pursuing private gain or personal advantage. Such compromises are especially threatening in the pursuit of personal or organisational interactions with for-profit industries, including medical equipment manufacturers, insurance companies, and pharmaceutical firms. Physicians have an obligation to recognise, disclose to the general public, and deal with conflicts of interest that arise in the course of their professional duties and activities. Relationships between industry and opinion leaders should be disclosed, especially when the latter determine the criteria for conducting and reporting clinical trials, writing editorials or therapeutic guidelines, or serving as editors of scientific journals.

10. *Commitment to professional responsibilities*

As members of a profession, physicians are expected to work collabora-

tively to maximise patients' care, be respectful of one another, and participate in the processes of self-regulation, including remediation and discipline of members who have failed to meet professional standards. The profession should also define and organise the educational and standard-setting process for current and future members. Physicians have both individual and collective obligations to participate in these processes. These obligations include engaging in internal assessment and accepting external scrutiny of all aspects of their professional performance.

#### Summary

The practice of medicine in the modern era is beset with unprecedented challenges in virtually all cultures and societies. These challenges centre on increasing disparities among the legitimate needs of patients, the available resources to meet those needs, the increasing dependence on market forces to trans-

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## DRG-funding of hospitals and bonus systems for physicians: Stop aberrations provoked by false incentives!

The medical profession is subject to special requirements, which are enshrined in the codices of medical ethics. These contain four key principles:

- a) to offer aid and care to all patients (primacy of the patient's welfare)
- b) not to harm the patient ("primum non nocere")
- c) to respect the patient's right to self-determination
- d) to ensure the equality and justice of treatment, including the fair distribution of resources.

Since *Hippocrates* the orientation towards these professional ethics is a fundamental principle of the medical profession. The pursuit of this ethos has provided the medical community with trust and respect and has remained the basis of the contract between doctors, patients and society.

Yet, under the conditions of the DRG system, hospitals have changed in recent years from institutions of basic public care to business companies or hospital trusts. They demand from their doctors more cases per physician and a higher income per bed. In hospitals organized as industrial companies diseases are becoming commodities, physicians providers and patients billed cases. Bonus contracts based on economical targets and objectives are introduced, in order to increase the number of cases, operations and interventions. Physi-

cians are thus being encouraged to put the company's goals above the patient's welfare.

We are convinced that the principles of medical task management, economic thinking and medical care would not exclude each other. The increasing economic heteronomy however considerably reduces the commitment and care for the patient.

The German Society of Internal Medicine (DGIM) observes this development with extreme concern. It strongly speaks out against all financial bonus or malus systems that stress the relationship between doctor and patient and are not orientated towards the patient's welfare. The DGIM sees the following dangers that will substantially damage the health system and society's trust in this system:

- bonus contracts violate the medical code of ethics if they set the economic business goals of a hospital above the patient's welfare.
- The number of cases – or revenue-based bonus contracts mislead doctors to generous indication criteria, thus making them corruptible.
- On the patient's side, the change of the goals of medical activities is leading to a profound loss of confidence: "Am I being correctly advised?"
- New generations of doctors will learn a wrong prioritization of medical activi-

ties. In the long run all this will negatively affect society's confidence in the health care system.

Nevertheless DGIM fully supports efforts to create a system of incentives to improve the quality of medical care based on defined and measurable criteria. Examples would be an optimization of task management, the introduction of new mandatory standards (so-called standard operating procedures) and continuing medical education and specialist training in groups with people from different professions.

The DGIM therefore urgently calls all the responsible partners of the health sector to discuss the above mentioned mistaken developments, in order to eliminate them, and to develop appropriate incentives in their place.

*Prof Dr med E. Märker-Hermann*  
*Chair of the DGIM*

*Prof Dr med Dr Dr h. c. U.R. Fölsch*  
*General Secretary of the DGIM*

*Prof Dr med M. Weber*  
*Chairman of the DGIM 2004–2005*  
*Wiesbaden, July 2012*

This declaration is also supported by the BDI (German association of internists).  
Press contact for further requests: DGIM (German association for Internal Medicine),  
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form health-care systems, and the temptation for physicians to forsake their traditional commitment to the primacy of patients' interests. To maintain the fidelity of medicine's social contract during this turbulent time, we believe that phy-

sicians must reaffirm their active dedication to the principles of professionalism, which entails not only their personal commitment to the welfare of their patients but also collective efforts to improve the health-care system for the welfare of society.

This Charter on Medical Professionalism is intended to encourage such dedica-

tion and to promote an action agenda for the profession of medicine that is universal in scope and purpose. •

Source: *Annals of Internal Medicine, The Lancet* and the *European Journal of Internal Medicine*, 5 February 2002

## “Negotiate in good faith, stop sabre-rattling” UN expert urges the international community



Alfred de Zayas  
(picture thk)

*On International Day of Peace, the newly appointed United Nations Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order, Alfred de Zayas, calls on States and civil society to work for the peaceful settlement*

*of all disputes, persevere in our commitment to a culture of dialogue and reject the logic of war.*

“When negotiations are at an impasse, when States dig their heels in, it is time to ‘undig’ them in a spirit of compromise. We all need to unlearn the predator in us, unlearn discrimination, unlearn privilege.

Peace is an enabling right, the condition for the full enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. Peace is also an end right, the result of the exercise of human rights by all. Thus there is a reciprocal relationship between peace and human rights. In short: Peace is where human rights, the rule of law and social justice prevail. Wherever harmony and solidarity reign, there is no need to use force – domestically or internationally.

Today, I call on States and civil society to keep faith with the United Nations Charter, refrain from the threat or the use of force, and to stop on-going propaganda for war, fear-mongering and sabre-rattling, which all are incompatible with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

At the Nuremberg Trials, US Prosecutor *Robert Jackson* rightly condemned the ‘crime against peace’ as the ‘supreme crime,’ because once hostilities begin, war crimes and crimes against humanity follow. However, in spite of the Nuremberg Judgment and countless UN resolutions condemning war and occupation, humanity has not enjoyed peace since 1945 and the pledge in the UN Charter that succeeding generations be spared the scourge of war has not been kept. The UN General Assembly Resolutions on Friendly Relations and Aggression must be reaffirmed and strengthened.

The Human Rights Council has established an inter-governmental working group to draft a Declaration on the Right to Peace. Its work is of the utmost importance and enjoys the support of thousands of non-governmental organizations. Civil society demands peace, so that all human beings can enjoy security, development, justice and human rights.

Civil society says ‘basta’ to war and war games. It demands an end to sabre-rattling and a renewed commitment to

disarmament. The motto of the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 was ‘Pax optima rerum’ (peace is the highest good). The negotiators there understood well the horrors of war. The motto of the International Labour Organization ‘si vis pacem, cole justitiam’ (if you want peace, cultivate justice) reminds us that peace requires social justice. Let us work toward this goal so as to achieve an international order that is more equitable, more peaceful, more democratic.”

*Mr Alfred de Zayas* (United States of America) was appointed as the first Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order by the Human Rights Council, effective May 2012. He is currently professor of international law at the Geneva School of Diplomacy. Mr. de Zayas practiced corporate law with the New York law firm Simpson Thacher and Bartlett and is a retired member of the New York and Florida Bar. He has been visiting professor of law at numerous universities including the University of British Columbia in Canada, DePaul University in Chicago, the Graduate Institute of the University of Geneva, and the University of Trier (Germany) and he has been board member of several organizations. •

Source: United Nations Human Rights, Office of the High Commissioner. [www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org), 21 September 2012, Email: [ie-internationalorder@ohchr.org](mailto:ie-internationalorder@ohchr.org)

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# No security without trust and cooperation

The peace vision of Alfred Nobel: relieve the world from the deadly grip of militarism

by Fredrik S. Heffermehl\*

*cc. People's desire for peace and the commitment of many for peace are again facing strong forces that bank on war. In case you think you can stay in this struggle a mere spectator or bystander, you are very much mistaken. The one who does not work actively and with all his/her possibilities for peace, strengthens the forces that want war. Reports on the war plans of the Great Powers and the fact that once again the whole of Europe will be drawn into the war, are never certain predictions. It can only happen, if ... Especially if there is not enough resistance and commitment to peace. Personalities such as Frederic Heffermehl or Alfred de Zayas lead the way. Frederic Heffermehl's diagnoses do not only apply to Norway. Alfred de Zayas words are not just valid for one day. In fact, "Pax optima rerum" – peace is the highest good – holds true today, as well.*

On a walk, I recently came past a beautiful nursery – or actually I walked through it; it was completely open, and everyone was free to wander among the flowers and spices. The cash register was also there, on a table; I did not check if it contained any money. This reminded me of two things: Nature's wonderful gifts, beautiful and useful – nature must be carefully protected – and the importance of trust. Mutual trust is essential to live a good life, to have a good society – and I also believe that the same applies to the relationship between states. No security without trust and cooperation – and this I discovered was also the vision of peace of Alfred Nobel. This is today even more cor-

rect and important than it was when he drafted his will in 1895.

In our time, the military as a method is a misleading and perilous peacekeeping. The military costs astronomical amounts and threatens life; in a time of nuclear weapons, our survival is highly endangered. Most of the discussions on this issue have serious flaws. They forget the foundation – i.e. international law, whose main and decisive principle is that war is forbidden. The media betray international law when they write about war and war plans, as if war was at all an option, as though it was only a question of practical, pragmatic decision.

After the Second World War, we said: No more war! We set up the United Nations and formulated its Charter, whose main rule is that members refrain from military violence. The media, however, love conflict and controversy and are indeed an important, but erring element of peacekeeping. But many other parties should respect the law in international relations. A friend of mine who is a judge in the German *Ialana*, the Association of Lawyers against Nuclear Weapons and author of the review of my book about Alfred Nobel in a recent edition of *Current Concerns*, has filed a charge against an adviser of the German Government, because he had commented on the war in Syria without mentioning the prohibition of war.

My starting point is that the military nonsense must stop. It is a severe defeat of the state of law that we still tell young people to kill or to die on the battlefield. This is unacceptable, a dystopia in human development. However, we do not only need a starting point, the ban on war, but also ideas and models of how the world without war can be realized as an international state of law. With a goal, with an outlook the discussion changes entirely. We are caught in a system of thought, and most considerations regarding security are full of war rhetoric and military tools, old thoughts: Peace enforcement, enforcing peace with military and violent measures. It is distrust that rules, not trust, one expands one's power to ensure security. But with today's military technology all we achieve is a higher employment in the defense industry. A politically powerful, historically strong tradition and powerful economic interests are doing their best to ensure that citizens do not realize the deception and do not take notice of the alternatives.

I studied law and later worked as an attorney for the industry. And I always thought that freedom of speech and political rights are working well in our country. I believed this until one day I really made use of these rights to express criticism and protest, in order to promote ideas other than those which are within the social stipulation, the mainstream or the general consensus.

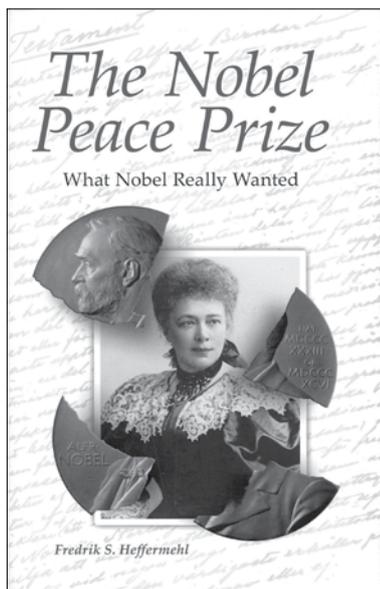
In the following I will give two examples concerning both peace and the rule of law.

First Alfred Nobel: After nearly 30 years in the peace movement I discovered what Nobel had really wanted with his Peace Prize. His will is about a price "for peace advocates", describing them as people trying to achieve a "fraternization of nations" by means of disarmament and through peace congresses. The intention is unambiguously clear: Nobel wanted to foster the anti-militaristic peace movement – in other words, liberating the world from the deadly stranglehold of militarism.

In short: With his will, he intended to contribute to a leap in human civilization and culture, erecting a state of law at the international level.

Five years have passed since I discovered the legally binding content of the Nobel Prize. I took it for granted that the Nobel Committee had to follow the will and its mandate and that it would do so. I could not imagine how little the five committee members elected by the Norwegian parliament would care about Nobel's will and the law. Today the members of the parliament agree that they want to use the prize as a hard currency in the Norwegian relationships and alliances with the United States – the last thing they want to happen is a discussion about Nobel and his original intention.

The name does still exist; the prize itself does no longer have a connection with Nobel. But in the course of these five years, I have not received any response to my complaint. The response is deafness or dullness. The committee is composed of adversaries to their actual task. It is a scandal that the most important prize in the world has now fallen into the hands of its political opponents; an anti-militarist prize has been taken over by politicians worshipping the military. It is really unacceptable: The Norwegian parliament majority has stolen money and attention which was intended for the opposition, the dissidents in the peace movement.



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# International law or ideological jurisdiction?

How EU justice decrees memories and provides side protection for its neo-colonialism – On Hannes Hofbauer's new book

by Tobias Salander

Whom would interested readers entrust with answering questions on how to assess historical processes? Politicians? Those of right-wing orientation? Or of left-wing orientation? Or the clergy? Of Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, or other provenance? Or the Europeans? Or better the Asians or Africans? The Germans



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or French, Romanians and Portuguese? Senegalese and Congolese, Moroccans or South Africans? Palestinians or Israelis? Wahabbites, Shiites or the NATO? China or Russia? – Or? Perhaps better turn to such historians, who are committed to the facts and only the facts, i.e. to the sources, historians who are open to new find-

ings and proceed poly-prospectively and critically towards the sources and ideologies and disclose the interests and issues behind the facts – hence scientists who are committed to the ethos of humanist and enlightened science?

Now the questions: Were the crusades genocides? Was the extermination of the American native inhabitants and the deportation of millions of Africans as slaves to the New World the biggest genocide of all time? How should we assess the uprising in the Vendée during the French Revolution? What did really happen in 1898 on the US battleship “Maine”? What is the background of the Sarajevo shooting in 1914? And of the mass murder of Armenians during World War I? Who helped *Lenin* to go on his comfortable train journey to St. Petersburg? Who set the Reichstag on fire? What happened at Katyn? Why did the allies not bomb the railways to Auschwitz? Why were the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? What did really happen in 1956 in Hungary? And what happened in the Gulf of Tonkin? What if *Operation Northwoods* had not been rejected by president *John F. Kennedy* as immoral? Who attacked the USS “Enterprise”? What do the Stasi connections of the of *Benno Ohnesorg’s* murderer imply? What was the difference between the RAF terrorists of the first and the fourth generation? Who was behind the terrorist attacks in Italy in the 70s and 80s? Was *Gladio* a resistance group or a terrorist organization? The Bloody Sunday in Vilnius on 13 January 1991 – was it another Auschwitz? Who

was behind the “bread-line” massacre in Sarajevo? And behind the Srebrenica massacre? What happened in Darfur? Are the crimes in communist Europe synonymous with the crimes of the Nazi regime? Was *Milošević* the new *Hitler*? How are the inconsistencies in the WTC 7 collapse on the evening of 11 September 2001 to be explained? Did *Saddam* have the A-bomb?

## What does the EU need the Orwellian “rightthink” for?

Questions upon questions each student has to deal with throughout his school years. And how does he get the answers, or at least attempts of answers or even the confession that the question could not be answered at present? By the history teacher, who is trying to compile the latest research and often has to indicate that this question or another one has yet to be answered, since the archives are not open, the documents are subject to retention or do no longer exist?

In case you thought that the clarification of historical questions was an open process, or that in a democracy truth must always be found and must withstand rigorous scientific testing, always open to corrections with each newly emerging source and fact, you have to think again in view of certain processes within the EU of recent time. Proceedings that are (yet?) unthinkable in the US and would make the great work of, for example, an investigative journalist like *Seymour Hersh* impossible (uncovering the truth behind the

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## “No security without ...”

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My book about the Nobel Prize, which was translated into Norwegian, English, Chinese, Swedish and Finnish, was ignored; thousands of newspaper articles were in vain; the committee is working on the assumption that power is law – the exact opposite of the constitutional principle. And the person mainly responsible for this, the chairman of the committee, *Thorbjørn Jagland*, is also General Secretary of the Council of Europe which is meant to foster democracy and the state of law in Europe.

The other example is my friend, the professor of criminal law *Ståle Eskeland* who has been studying international crimes for five years: aggression, torture,

crimes against humanity, war crimes. His book “The worst crimes” came out in June 2011. It contains the well justified statement that, as an accomplice, the Norwegian government has been involved in several international crimes, in the Kosovo, in Iraq, in Afghanistan and in Libya. You might think that this statement might be of some interest – but so far the reaction has been almost complete silence.

What does this tell us about democracy and the state of law in Norway?

I can remember how some 40 years ago the discussion on pollution was an exchange of arguments and standpoints. Then the PR agencies appeared, the spin doctors, disseminating ideas on how the industry accused of causing environmental damage could escape these charges: do

not respond, keep a low profile, tomorrow it will be over and forgotten.

In economic life this cannot cause too much harm. In political culture, however, this approach is devastating. It is undermining democracy and the state of law. In my book about Nobel I have described how crucial a real quest for truth is: debates have to take into account important facts; arguments have to be answered honestly.

As long as this does not happen, the state of law is dead. I consider democracy a kind of non-violent method of solving conflicts, an alternative to authoritarian power. In the new kind of democracy, however, the exchange of words is becoming a new form of violence. •

\* Frederik S. Heffermehl a lawyer and author. He lives in Oslo, Norway.

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massacre of My Lai, the scandals of Abu Ghraib and US troops in Afghanistan etc. etc.) occur and adopt ever more blatant forms in the EU: Court rulings have increasingly replaced research results, since a respective EU framework was decided upon in 2008, and determine under penalty how certain events have to be looked at. Those who do not take note of these judgments and continue research, or express their doubts on the basis of relevant experience with uncovered false flag operations, war lies and propaganda, and want to set up counter-hypotheses, may abruptly be taken to court and sentenced to imprisonment or a large fine. Whether this authoritarian and prescribed Orwellian "rightthink" is to conceal the enormous democratic deficit of the EU or whether the legal use of ongoing conflicts such as in the Balkans of the 90s, where the EU and NATO waged an illegal war of aggression, serve as a side protection – or whether the EU provides assistance to big businesses, which conduct the EU Commission at their discretion, in their acquisition of new markets, consequently give their legal blessings to neo-colonialist practices – all these questions are dealt with in the recently published, well-researched booklet of *Hannes Hofbauer*. It is entitled "Verordnete Wahrheit, bestrafte Gesinnung – Rechtsprechung als politisches Instrument" (Prescribed truth, punished disposition – the judiciary as a political tool). Hofbauer is an economic historian and journalist and an expert on the EU, in particular on its eastward expansion, which he called "return of colonialism" in his earlier work – just think of the absolutist-style practices of the "high representatives" in Bosnia-Herzegovina, who were employed by the UN, but simultaneously acted as the EU Special Rapporteurs.

**The UN Convention's definition of genocide**

Genocide is probably the worst crime in the history of mankind. Historians argue about how many tens of millions of people have fallen victim to such a crime. But what exactly is meant by genocide? According to the *UN Convention of 9 December 1948* entitled "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide", genocide includes "any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical de-

struction in whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." (quoted in Hofbauer, p. 27)

Crucial to the act is not the number of people who have fallen victim to murder, but the politically or religiously motivated desire to kill these people and destroy their livelihoods.

**Two criminal laws – two historical truths?**

But who defines now in what case a crime has to be classified as genocide? What courts are responsible for the jurisdiction, and what role does contemporary history or even geo-political backgrounds play when decisions are taken? Hofbauer: "Who is to judge historical events, leading to a ban on denial with a prospective prison sentence? National courts? The *International Court in The Hague*?" To introduce into the problem, Hofbauer writes in the preface: "The denial and trivialization of court rulings that decree crimes as genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, are punishable in more and more cases, and in more and more countries. Hence loudly voiced doubts about the genocide in Srebrenica have become a case for prosecution in the entire European Union since a respective EU framework decision of 2008. The denial of the Armenian genocide can get you before a Swiss court. Conversely, someone designating the expulsion of the Armenians from Anatolia in 1915 as genocide ends up in court in Turkey (also in the European part). In four East European countries, the denial of communist crimes – whoever defines them as such – is punishable. The 'Holodomor' must in turn be called a crime against the Ukrainian nation between Lviv, Odessa and Donetsk, otherwise a lawsuit is looming." (p. 10)

**Prosecuting undesirable collective memories EU-wide**

With great concern Hofbauer observes the increasing legal orientation of opinion-forming and the prosecution of "false" opinions within the EU. Based on anti-racism paragraphs and paragraphs against the denial of Nazi crimes, which have long been installed in the European countries and perform their function well, Hofbauer realized a tendency to prosecute undesirable collective memories EU-wide. The actors obviously have no problem in accepting that the singularity of the Holocaust is tacitly thrown overboard. "As soon as an international court has defined the criminalization of denial of possible war crimes and genocide, an inflation of penalizing dispositions sets in, which opposes the original special position of the Holocaust (or its trivialization or denial)

and which derides it to some extent." (p. 10)

**Reminder laws as side protection for geopolitical and economic interests**

That the Auschwitz comparison is now called on for all possible misdeeds which Hofbauer indeed recognizes as such, but ranks their importance as disproportionate and above all demands continued research on this issue – Srebrenica as a new Auschwitz, the Bloody Sunday of Vilnius with 14 dead as a new Auschwitz, the conflict in Darfur as a new Auschwitz, Communist rule in Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and others from 1949 to 1989 equal to Hitler's fascism – this situation makes the historian from Austria conclude the following thesis: "The new crimes of opinion and reminder laws serve as a side protection for geopolitical and economic interests. This realization was my motivation to write this book. It struck me for the first time when I observed the Yugoslav disintegration process of the 90s and in particular the ensuing 'reminder policy' by the West. Even the internal factors of the South Slavic disintegration were dynamited from the outside. To justify multiple political and military interventions, particularly in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, vague and differently interpreted human rights arguments were called on to serve as an excuse while the internationally codified international law was being violated. NATO and Western media worked hand in hand. External interests on the disintegration of the multi-ethnic state were played down or entirely buried." (p. 10f.) This happened wrongfully, Hofbauer continues: "For a look at the map in 2011 shows how the external interests have prevailed: US soldiers operate the largest military base in Europe in the Kosovo Camp Bondsteel; so-called 'high representatives' (of the EU and the UN) administer Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo in a colonial manner that seemed long overcome; and the economic heart pieces of the former Yugoslavia, Slovenia and Croatia, are or will be part of the European Union. Therefore, in order to gain maximum benefit from the South Slavic disintegration, Western institutions, particularly NATO, waged war." (p. 11)

**The ruling of truth sets a precedent**

During the war, the Serbian president was taken to an ad hoc tribunal: "The preferment of charges by the Yugoslavia Tribunal extended the political, economic and military means by a legal dimension." (p. 11)

To confirm the neo-colonial conquest and engrave the "right" course of the conflict into the minds of the Europeans, the

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EU adjudicated the truth – and punished those who have never trusted the history of the winner.

This form of truth set a precedent which can be seen with the *International Criminal Court's* arrest warrants against leaders of countries that wage or waged war against the West, such as *al-Bashir* in Sudan and *Gaddafi* in Libya. Hofbauer stressed that the punishment of these two men is certainly justified, however, the Court acted too unilaterally. What about the atrocities committed by the other side? Will those go unpunished who were qualified as the "good" ones by the West? And what is their justification? And the irony of the story? It lies in the fact "that the United States as one of the major operators of these methods have never acknowledged the *International Criminal Court.*" (p. 12) It is known that The Hague would expect a rapid reaction force of US special forces, which would "free" those US war criminals awaiting trial in The Hague due to revelations like those of, for example, Seymour Hersh.

**Italian historian resisted successfully**

Hofbauer's criticism of the emerging ideological jurisdiction in the West comes, as he says himself, from the left, however, every liberal thinker could join in because, "The rebellion begins with the curtailment of freedom of expression, which is a deep rooted civic good." (p. 236) Appeals by Italian and French historians from across the political spectrum against the ideological clauses and the penalization of research confirm Hofbauer's attitude – in Italy the reminder dictatorship

could yet be averted, while France is progressing alertly and imposed absurd dictates, for example, the *Loi Taubira* and the *Loi Mékachéra* with the former convicting certain aspects of the French slave trade, whereas the second law as a reaction to the colonists enacted the washing away of its own colonial history in North Africa and Indochina by court and subpoena. (cf. Hofbauer, pp. 57) A course of events that shows how situational and greatly instrumentalized and representing a mockery of democracy and free inquiry those memory laws are.

**Disposition paragraphs as a result of 9/11 anti-terror hysteria**

Since the legal foundations in Europe have long been sufficient to put extremist groups in their place, Hofbauer is concerned with something else, which can only be understood in the context of the neo-conservative and neo-liberal war alliance since 9/11: "The disposition paragraphs packed in denial inhibitions would be unthinkable without the political anti-terror hysteria spread by the media. Much has been written about the loss of civil rights in this process. The criminalization of opinion, which this book deals with even goes a step further: It threatens the political debate and scientific research, hegemonizes collective memory, legalizes historical events and taboos terminology (for example 'genocide'). The biased ideological justice analyzed here is part of a comprehensive repressive policy, with which the political elites of the European Union want to compensate for their loss of social acceptance. We may doubt that this can be achieved by prohibitions and regulations. The threat of punishment for 'false' convictions has the task of a small but im-

portant wheel, as it is aimed at the intellectual discourse." (p. 264)

**Protecting freedom of expression as the first civic duty**

We should wish for a large readership for Hofbauer's book. If it creates a lively and serious debate, on an honest basis and focuses on the dignity of man, it would certainly please the millions of victims of armed conflicts more than the establishment of a slightly inscrutable opinion dictatorship in Europe and elsewhere in the West. Maybe there are a few Europeans who are impressed by the propaganda roll and do not see the difference between alleged values and effective interests which are to be sold to the world hidden behind euphemistic words like "humanitarian intervention", "responsibility to protect", "bombing campaign for human rights". Certainly, the rest of the world, that is 88 percent, is not as naive as to see through the hypocrisy and the double standards of the West – this is in any case emphasized by the great diplomat from Singapore, *Kishore Mahbubani*, again and again. So if Hofbauer's exact study pushes at an open door outside the western hemisphere with its 12 percent of the world population, we can only wish for a serious reception in the West. The proud West of the Renaissance, Humanism and the Enlightenment should not be in a position to enter with dignity into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and protect one of the fundamental principles of democracy, the freedom of expression? •

Hannes Hofbauer, "*Verordnete Wahrheit, bestrafte Gesinnung – Rechtsprechung als politisches Instrument*", Vienna 2011, ISBN 978-3-85371-329-7

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

# Educating children to help them become responsible fellow human beings capable of living in peace

*You do not give instructions to your child when it returns but when it leaves.*

*South African proverb*

kn. In their environment, at school, at work or neighborhood, everyone encounters people from other countries, cultures and religions. Some are rarely seen, others every day. To some of them you may say hello or exchange a few sentences. We usually know only vaguely, where they come from. We know almost nothing about how they lived in their home country. Most people will hesitate to ask why they are here and how they grew up. How do they feel here with us, how do they live, think and act, how do they raise their children and think about politics? Probably many people are interested in such questions – but ask the foreigners?

I'm sure that most would be willing and happy to give an answer to these and similar questions – and entering into a conversation with those neighbors is worthwhile. In the following article I will try to give answers to the questions on the basis of numerous reports that I have received, and experiences that I was lucky to make. So that we, who live together in our society, are able to understand each other better and to connect easier. The more so because in a time, marked by crises and wars, mutual regard and respect and dignified treatment are an increasingly valuable asset.

## Thinking about role models

Recently an African friend told me, she did not understand that their compatriots, when they live in certain Western countries for some time, change very often. Many of them are almost unrecognizable. The natural solidarity among their compatriots gets lost, the education is much less consistent, with the result that the children no longer listen to their parents and may even oppose them. They stop being industrious and purposeful. Instead, acting on one's own and chasing money and material things become a priority.

This African woman is not an isolated case. So a mother from Yemen asked me, for example, why, in the civilized Western world is a pre-school child allowed to kick his mother in the street. A woman from Tibet observed how a little girl spat at her mother in public, which would be absolutely unacceptable in her home country. A Macedonian does not understand why a five-year-old boy insults his mother, after he was denied the book he wanted.

Particularly the following incident gives cause for consideration: For some time 12-year old Mohammed has been looked after by a social worker, as he attracted attention because of alcohol consumption and hanging around at night. He brushes aside his mother's and her colleague's comment that he is no longer allowed to continue the night out with the response that his mother must not tell him anything. He says he can report her to the police if she wants to force him to stay at home. The social worker supports the boy's statement. The mother's and her colleague's consternation about Mohammed's brazen response and the declining influence of parents is understandably high.

The same question torments many parents from abroad: Why – here in the commendable West – are children permitted to behave like that? If we can witness their everyday family life for a while, we understand even better what is on those parents' minds.

## Education as a basis for the development of values

After one of the many invitations it is time for a visit. I've kept a lot of time free of appointments, because I know that each visit is an intensive experience. The reception of the guest is always very warm and soothing. The joy about his/her coming is connected with great interest in him/her: "How was your day? Are your family, your husband and children, your own parents well?" The questions are never intrusive or disrespectful. Moreover, whether the invitation takes place in the morning, noon or night, the whole family, including the children, are always present. What is striking is the almost always peaceful family atmosphere. While the adults are talking to each other, the children, regardless of age, are listening observantly. Obviously being keen on learning from the adults, with large eyes and ears open, they are happy to take part. If the children participate actively in the conversation, they do so with contributions to the topic or with serious concerns. Even if the children begin to play after dinner, they rarely disrupt the grown-ups' conversation. But if this occurs, the parents react without fuss, straightforward and certain that the child will observe their admonishments. They do not discuss at length or explain why the child must not be loud or must not climb on the table. It is clear that the adults deserve respect. By the end of the often extended dinner invitation with stimulating, open and informative talks the family re-

mains together. When parting, the visitors will be escorted to the street and said goodbye with courtesy and respect by everyone.

The older children of the family do not have the need to go out afterwards. Why should they? Their parents involve them fully in their lives and thoughts, their everyday lives, the necessary tasks and the daily conversations.

If I ask the parents why their child is behaving differently than those they observed, the answer is always the same: We were brought up by our parents in the same way as we educate our children. Our younger generation does not only respect their parents but also every living being and the environment. In our religion we find the foundation for all aspects of co-existence.

Exemplifying and claiming values and virtues such as dignity, respect, courtesy, helpfulness, diligence and discipline – this list could even be longer – really exists and is lived in these families in a natural way. There seems to be no double-minded, hesitant or indifferent behavior of the parents. Acting and communicating with the children is genuine and immediate, without much hesitation. It is the result of their own education, exemplified by their fathers and mothers, supported by the larger family, the village and the society in which they grew up.

Recently I heard a radio report in which experts from other countries expressed their lack of understanding about our students who often declare learning as "uncool". In their countries, they were struggling to be able to send every child to school.

The 15 children, who come to me voluntarily three times a week with great dedication and ask to be allowed to learn, have their roots in such countries. Thus, an experience like the following occurs quite often: One afternoon a child, unknown to me, is standing in the door, unexpectedly. It is about 8 years old and says, "I would like to improve my mathematics, may I learn with you?" When I asked him how he had come and who had accompanied him, he replied: "My mother is waiting downstairs, my friends told me that one may learn here." At the end of the lesson when I ask who would like to take some homework, everyone shouts happily "me", and usually they are not satisfied until they have received two or three worksheets.

Now and then the young people are not too shy to ask for help, and in turn they

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are happy if they can support other younger children. It is natural to them to take also their responsibilities at home and do not leave everything to the mother. In their spare time they want to do useful things and consider the close relation to the parents as natural.

Just as willingly as the children study the parents are open to suggestions and information regarding education. This becomes evident in conversations with parents when they frankly put forward their worries and troubles with their offspring – fathers in particular. And if you talk to the children, who just do not know how to behave clearly and directly in their parents' presence, they are happy about your support – regardless whether they are families from the Balkans, from Arab countries, from Africa, Asia or Latin America.

Now back to the question of integration problems. However, if the situation described demonstrates how parents from other cultures educate their children to become decent people – something that is really in our interest – why then does integration sometimes fail?

**Where integration  
problems have their origin**

Since the spread of the 68-ideologies, that deeply shook our Christian and Western bedrock of values, many people feel insecure. Parents ask themselves, am I too authoritarian if I am expecting cooperation

and help from my child, as well as concern for others and a striving for valuable goals in life? Parents might meet ideas or see results of anti-family or anti-social attitudes, for example on TV, in computer games and mobile phones which their children use – how often do you watch teenagers at a date messing with their mobile phones instead of talking to each other – or evening outings? But what are we doing about it?

And the immigrant parents, as long as they are sure and firmly convinced that their education in the sense described above, is good and the best for the child, will continue to accompany their child on the right track. The children will orient themselves towards positive role models. As soon as the parents feel only a spark of uncertainty and focus on negative role models, the child will feel insecure, often with the result that it is disoriented and then tries to control the disruptive behavior "better" than a part of the local friends. The father, for example, who tells me that his daughter does not help his wife with the cooking, but watches TV instead, responds to my rather rhetorical requests, whether they act the same in their home country, in Sri Lanka: "No, certainly not, but here we want to integrate." With the same argument an Arab mother, whose child is nervous and distracted in school, asks what she can do with her daughter instead of watching TV? In their home country everything was easy, because the kids played outside all year round, which here is not possible at all. Or the mother whose

adult son still goes shopping with her and helps her with the heavy shopping bags. Many native colleagues acknowledge this by saying: He is probably a mummy's boy. If in this case the age group dominates the son will orientate himself there.

**Ways to promote  
a positive integration**

What can be held against demanding of our children, what many immigrant families still take for granted, and putting those virtues again the center of our living together and the education of our children with regard to a future generation that will have to shape the society?

After the mother had limited the child's television consumption dramatically, the daughter calmed down immediately. This would also be possible in relation to the use of mobile phones and computers. And as far as the alternative to playing outside is concerned: In Switzerland, as in other countries, too, there are a large number of associations that are an indispensable part of life for most Swiss people. Associations that serve the common good, such as the *Samaritans* or the *Red Cross*, as well as sports and recreational clubs, children's gymnastics or scouts are not only meaningful leisure activities, they also convey the feeling that I'm important for others and that I can do something positive. In this way children learn to take responsibility, besides home and school, and to take their place as a reliable and honest and active participant in a peaceful society and world. •