

Manifesto for Europe

We want Europe to be based on peace and justice!

We, citizens of some European countries, are worried about the future of our continent. Europe's economic, social, political and cultural development move farther and farther away from what the people, not only in Europe, have hoped for since after the Second World War: Never again war and dictatorship, never again colonial exercise of power and exploitation; instead international understanding and international reconciliation, economic reconstruction and social justice – living in political freedom, cultural diversity and constitutional democracy.

A threat to freedom, democracy and peace

The high level of debt in nearly all European countries, high unemployment rates, especially among young people, the creeping inflation, the weakening and thinning of the SMEs, numerous unresolved questions in connection with the millions of refugees from the Balkans, from Africa, the Middle East and Afghanistan, the state's disregard of civil and human rights and the increase in social and political tensions within and among the states in Europe are threatening prosperity, democracy and peace.

Political and economic crises are being misused to centralize the EU's political power increasingly – at the expense of our sovereignty and liberties. Many citizens notice that there is no longer an honest dialogue with their political representatives. They realize that the rulers with their political decisions ignore the people. They also notice that via the mainstream media a certain feeling of weakness is artificially generated. Severe crises, continuously created anew are to divert from fundamental questions and from what is actually going on. Side by side with the US and in an almost slave-like allegiance the governments of EU-states and NATO have been breaking international law for many years. We, citizens of Europe, sympathize with all fellow-humans and peoples who have suffered and are still suffering from that situation.

The War against Yugoslavia was the Fall. Sanctions imposed on Austria in 2000 and lasting many months aimed at turning over a democratically elected government. In 2004, as well as in 2013 and 2014 the US, together with the EU, massively interfered in the internal affairs of the Ukraine and contributed to a war being waged in that region – in the heart of Europe. The treatment of Greece since 2010 is humiliating a whole people. A people, the ancestors of which lived in a country that has been the birthplace of European thought and cultural creation.

Europe's cultural heritage

The first codified European law originated in Ancient Greece. Politicians of Ancient Greece recognized it as their duty and the duty of all men to stand up against injustice. Greek philosophers laid the foundations of scientific thinking; They struggled for answers to the basic questions of social and political ethics as well as for a systematic theory of education. In the fifth century before Christ, the Kos physician Hippokrates constituted the Medical Ethics, which, throughout the centuries, have had an essential formative influence on medical acting. Greece set standards in architecture and art of Europe, considering the human being the benchmark and thus stimulating developments that are still being drawn on today.

There were those Greeks who developed the basic principles of the European model states already 2,500 years ago: democracy, separation of powers and natural law. They demanded that government action must be measured by an ethic that is based on human nature – so that it would not degenerate into despotism and tyranny.

It was the Greek philosopher Aristotle, who said that in a just state money must not be a tool of power.

Whenever brute power politics wanted to enforce the «law of the jungle», European history was led into the abyss of bitter confrontation and wars.

The acrid manner by which politics and media are again creating an atmosphere against individual countries and peoples today, brings back memories of past disasters on our continent. Given the world's existing nuclear destructive potential, any incitement to military confrontation and war, as for instance acted out against Russia, represents sheer madness.

Europe at the crossroads

Europe's history is a history of injustice and violence, but it is as well a history of overcoming the latter evils from its own moral insight and political strength. The Western and Christian humanist tradition has developed viable foundations for equality before the law, humaneness and respect for human dignity. Whenever in history these basics could wield their influence, human coexistence has been peaceful, just and secure. This was often accompanied by general prosperity, social equity and cultural upswing.

Europe is characterized by a rich diversity of cultures and nations in a small space, from Crete to the North Cape, from Lisbon to Yekaterinburg. People across Europe have contributed much in all spheres of life in more than 2,500 years.

For the people's coexistence in peace and freedom, the development of law and right towards ever greater justice was of fundamental importance for Europe and the world.

Europe has significantly contributed to the fact that human rights and the principles of international law are today guaranteed in international agreements (Charter of the United Nations, International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) and in national constitutions.

We therefore demand,

- that the protection of human life must have absolute priority and that the destruction of decent working conditions, social welfare, pension systems, health care and all steps towards euthanasia be stopped;

because every person has a right to life and freedom of bodily harm. Man's right to life is the core issue of human rights. It is of maximum value. Human life is sacrosanct, inalienable and cannot be balanced against other considerations. The «respect for life» must have absolute priority. Every person has the right to life and physical integrity. He or she has inalienable social rights such as the right to fair working conditions, to social security, to an adequate standard of living for himself or herself and the family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, to education and participation in cultural and political life;

- that all anti-family ideologies in national and international regulations are cancelled;

because the family is the natural and fundamental nucleus of society and should enjoy the greatest possible protection and assistance;

- that all education slashings of our public schools are stopped; that professional content linked to scientific knowledge be promoted again; that social connectedness, social ethics and civic education be strengthened and schools meet their constitutionally vested mission to educate mature and responsible citizens. Education is the most fundamental task of sovereign states. It cannot be that young people are not fit for employment when they leave schools and are thus abandoned to neglect;

because every person has the right to education. It serves the full development of the human personality and makes her capable of taking responsibility for the common good and for peace. In this sense education must foster an awareness of human dignity and enable humanity to acquire and practice understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations;

- that it may not be a self-proclaimed international «elite» from politics, media and (financial) economy that determine the destiny of citizens and peoples;

because the people, the citizens, are the sovereign in the state (sovereignty of the people), and that is why the citizens have all political civil rights and liberties; they have the freedom of speech, the freedom of assembly, the freedom of association, the right to free elections and referenda. Elected officials and governments must be independent trustees of the common good. The citizens' freedom of information and the importance of media for democracy demand that they are committed to truth and the common good as well as objective and balanced reporting; the economy has to serve the people; every state is sovereign over its own economic system, in particular over its currency. Natural resources must be protected and safeguarded for further generations;

- that the intelligence services and police authorities of all states should be limited to their core tasks under the law and put an end to the all-encompassing collecting of personal data beyond all borders;

because every person has the right to privacy. He has a right to be protected against state arbitrariness. Government action is only legitimate and legal if it is bound to uphold statute and law (rule of law);

- that people and countries are not forced into dependencies such as debt bondage («odious debts»); that further the subjugation of countries under the financial domination of the EU, the IMF and similar institutions and the associated loss of state sovereignty be undone;

because all nations have the right that their country, regardless of size, of economic and military power, is an equal member within the international community;

- that any interference in the internal affairs of the states of Europe, be it through political or economic pressure or enforcing voting results, should be refrained from and that all the agreements that were made in this way, be reversed;

because all nations have a right to self-determination and by virtue of that right are free to determine their political status and pursue their economic, social and cultural development;

- that all European countries renounce the use of military force to push economic and political interests, respect and comply with international law. All wars must be stopped;

because all states have a right to territorial integrity and political independence. Every war violates human rights. Conflicts must be resolved by peaceful means and at the negotiating table. Everyone has the right to an international order that ensures a life in peace and freedom.

Human acting must be based on ethics

Good faith must be the basis of all human coexistence and political activity again. Without this principle, there is no confidence in agreements within and between the states, and the floodgates are open to arbitrariness. Control mechanisms (such as «governance») and manipulation techniques of all kinds, which aim at influencing people by the abuse of psychological methods without full and open information, deprive the citizens of the possibility of independently forming their opinion. Thus they violate the dignity of the person and destroy the basis of political dialogue and the legal system.

People are capable, with their reason and their empathy, to recognize the necessary fundamental orientation of a moral and political action, to think and feel in a humane and social way, and to learn to act accordingly. This is the disposition embedded in the human heart. Guided by reason and conscience, these fundamental orientations are intended to form the basis of the whole of the moral, legal and political determinations that guide the life of man and society. They guarantee the dignity of the human person in the face of transitory ideologies.

We will not surrender what has been recognized as right and what is considered to be right; because:

«All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.»

Adopted by the 300 participants of the XXIII International Conference «Mut zur Ethik» which was devoted to the topic of «Freedom, Sovereignty and Human Dignity – A Safeguard against Despotism and War» and took place in Switzerland from 4 to 6 September 2015. Among the participants were the following speakers from Switzerland and abroad: Dr. Zoltan Adorjan (Slovakia), Bob Barr (USA), Prof. Dr. Stanislas Bucyylimwe (Belgium / Democratic Republic of Congo), Katalin Z. Csörszné (Hungary), Nicole Dupras (France), Jürgen Elsässer (Germany), Rev. Dr. Joseph Emmanuel Seemanpillai (Germany / Sri Lanka), Bishop Emeritus Dr. Elmar Fischer (Austria), Dipl.-Ing. Heinz Werner Gabriel (Germany), Dr. Marek Glogoczowski (Poland), Axel Grunow (Switzerland), Dr. Eike Hamer (Germany), Živadin Jovanovic (Serbia), Dr. Germán Muruchi Poma (Germany / Bolivia), Prof. Dr. Velimir Nedeljkovic (Serbia), lic. phil. Nestor Moritz (Switzerland), Manfred Paulus (Germany), Dr. Maria Isabel Pérez de Pio (Argentina), Prof. DI Rudolf Pomaroli (Austria), Inge Rauscher (Austria), Dr. René Roca (Switzerland), Dr. Hans Wilde (Austria), Willy Wimmer (Germany), Prof. DI Dr. Heinrich Wohlmeyer (Austria).

© «Mut zur Ethik», Postfach 756, CH-8044 Zürich, E-Mail: mze@cybermail.ch