

Current Concerns

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Europe and the mass migration – Causes, effects and how to cope

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The mass migration that has descended on Europe is likely to remain a fact for years, and perhaps even for decades.

Refugees from Syria

Albert Stahel
(picture ma)

Food shortages following the 2006 to 2010 drought, the ruling corruption and the “Arab Spring” caused in the Syrian city of Dara Sunni opposition members to protest against Alawite President *Bashar al-Assad*’s minority regime, which had been in power since 1963. The regime then adopted some reforms: for instance, they removed the article stating that the Ba’ath Party was the leading party of society and state from the constitution. In return, the president received even more power. Very soon, the conflict escalated into a real war between the Syrian army and various Sunni fighting groups like the *Free Syrian Army*. Today the Sunni opposition is completely fragmented.

Increasingly, foreign states and groups intervened in these wars. So for instance the US and Turkey supported the Free Syrian Army with weapons, while Saudi Arabia and Qatar funded mainly Islamist groups, supported them and supplied them with weapons. Iran rushed to the rescue of its ally al-Assad, and not only delivered weapons to the Syrian regime but led advisers and combat troops of the Republican Guard and the Lebanese Hezbollah. Since September 2015 even the Russian Federation is involved in the war with bombings of their warplanes stationed at the Air Station Hmeimim.

In consequence of the ongoing war since 2011 not only cities such as Aleppo and Damascus but also sites of ancient times like the Hellenistic Apamea have been destroyed. In addition, Salafist organizations such as the *Islamic State* (IS) have exploited the war in Syria for their own goals and have conquered vast territories. By now the IS ought to be in control of as much as 50% of Syrian territo-

ry. A coalition led by the US is conducting an air war with a modest impact against the IS. In the absence of ground forces of its own, Washington is deploying Kurdish mercenaries against the IS, who are being recruited from the Syrian *PYD* – which is in turn said to be affiliated to the Kurdish *PKK* – and from the Iraqi *Peshmerga*.

In 2012, Syria presumably had a population of 22,597,531 people.¹ 250,000 Syrians are likely to have been killed in the time from March 2012 to the summer of 2015. Millions of – mainly Sunni – inhabitants fled from Syria during this period. The UNHCR registered 4,603,363 of them in Turkey, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon.² At the end of 2015 2 to 2.5 million of these Syrian refugees were living in Turkey³ and 245 022 in Iraq⁴. In Syria, there ought to be more than 7.5 million who have been displaced from their homes and flats.

More than half a million Syrians, and those most notably Sunnis, have probably already migrated to Austria, Germany and Sweden via Greece and the Balkan route.

Iraqi refugees

Since the invasion of the US and its coalition of the willing in March/April 2003 and the fall of *Saddam Hussein* a war between Shiites and Sunnis has been taking place in Iraq. Very quickly, *al Qaeda* was formed in Iraq from 2003 onwards as quasi vanguard of Sunnis who had been ousted from power. The Jordanian *Abu Musab al-Zarqawi* became its leader. When laser and GPS-guided bombs from a US F-16⁵ warplane killed him on 7 June 2006, *al-Qaeda* in Iraq started gradually to mutate to Islamic State. Today the IS under its Caliph *Ibrahim* still controls around 30% of Iraq, despite the losses of territory suffered in recent months at the hands of the *Peshmerga* and the Iraqi army. The Islamic State continues to conduct attacks against Shiite exponents and members of the government in Baghdad. The Iranian Revolutionary Guard advises Iraq militarily. The Shiite militias in Iraq are, amongst others, under the command

Editorial

For months the refugee issue has held Europe in suspense. None of the offered solutions have convinced. The contributions of the strategy expert Professor *Albert Stahel* and of *Thierry Meyssan* make blatantly obvious: the solutions so far have not made the problems smaller – on the contrary. It is equally clear: we have to develop solutions, and this needs to be done soon, because the unresolved conflicts in Europe, West Asia and Africa have the potential for a bigger disaster.

At the very least helpful is the polarization, fuelled by the media, between “hardliners” and “humanitarians” – this pigeonholing is wrong anyway, as it is politically motivated and serves a specific policy that never deserved the name ‘humanitarian’: with the argument that it was necessary to free people from their dictators this policy is simply catastrophic as it bombs functioning states – in which people found a livelihood, were socially protected and could plan their lives with their families and friends – back to the Stone age, bulldozes their infrastructure and plunges them into chaos, which provides the ideal breeding ground for the undisturbed propagation of terrorist groups.

It is not humanitarian, when countless victims of globalization in these countries are called to Europe in order to advance with cheap labour the European “liberalisation of the labour market”. Neither is it humanitarian when Europe – instead of educating enough well-trained graduates in our countries with a reasonable education policy – draws such professionals from the oppressed countries, in which they would be urgently needed for the reconstruction of their country at all levels.

Moreover, the world has been fed up with the double standards: The US-NATO-led policy has always collaborated with dictators, as long as this served their own interests. Saudi Arabia’s war on Yemen is not worth an outcry, and the general repression of the media and the recent crackdown on the Kurds in Turkey do not prevent Europe to see in the Turkish government the main ally of the “solution” to the refugee issue.

An honest humane solution would have to take into account the benefit of the people of all countries concerned. We will in-

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of the Iranians. The US and their allies are rearming and training the Iraqi army. The ultimate aim is to recapture the Iraqi city of Mosul, which is serving as the IS capital. The war in Iraq is likely to continue for some time, also thanks to all US ground forces withdrawing under President *Obama* in late 2011 and the leaving a power vacuum behind.

The population of Iraq was estimated at 32,585,692 in 2014.⁶ In December 2015, the number of Iraqi refugees was roughly 2,019,050.⁷ 1,400,000 of these had been displaced within Iraq and 400,000 were living in Syria. Only 166,000 of them were staying in Turkey. In the meantime some of them have probably emigrated to Austria, Germany or Sweden.

Immigrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and North Africa

The youth of various countries in Asia and North Africa must be seen as willing to emigrate, due to the economic situation, social conditions, the poor supply of food and water, and partly also because of the internal political situation.

One of these countries is Afghanistan. Despite the power struggle between the government in Kabul and the Taliban, many provinces enjoy a certain level of stability. If terrorist attacks by the Taliban occur, they are executed mainly in Kabul against US or Afghan troops. The quantitative increase of these attacks is likely to be the result of the almost total withdrawal of ground troops by the US and its allies at the end of 2014.

On 1 January 2016, the population of Afghanistan was estimated at 33,275,428.⁸ A year earlier the figure had been 32,376,967. This represents a growth rate of 2.78%. Despite emigration, the population is increasing. But what is particularly worrying is the fact that 14,067,852 per-

sons and thus 42.3% of the population are under 15 years old. Of these, 7,209,454 are boys and 6,858,398 girls. Given the economic and social situation and the low life expectancy of 44.8 years for men, a significant part of the male Afghan population at the age of between 10 and 20 years would probably be willing to emigrate. This could be around 2.5 to 5 million young people.

The neighbouring country Pakistan displays a similar situation as that of Afghanistan. Attacks occur here, too, especially in the northwestern part of the country. The attackers are Pakistani Taliban. As in Afghanistan, the economic and social differences between the lower class and the elite are enormous here. On 1 January 2016 Pakistan had a population of 190,814,320.⁹ A year earlier, there had been 187,831,555 people. This represents a population growth of 1.59%. The population of under-15-year olds numbered 67,603,605 young people and so came up to 35.4% of the total population. Of these, 34,726,298 were boys and 32,877,307 girls. The number of those who are willing to emigrate in Pakistan is more difficult to assess. It could well be more than one million.

Iran's government is a theocracy. The determining factors for emigration lie in Iran's lack of economic prospects and an immobile society. On 1 January 2016 Iran had a population of 80,311,566.¹⁰ A year earlier it had been 79,321,632. Accordingly, the Islamic People's Republic of Iran has a growth rate of 1.25%. At the beginning of 2016, the number of young people under 15 was 19,318,947 and thus represented 24.1% of the population. Of these, 9,907,235 were boys and 9,411,712 girls. Even in Iran, there is an overflow of boys. Unlike in neighbouring countries, fewer members from the lower classes are likely to be willing to emigrate. The lower classes are well supplied (with necessary goods) by the regime ruling in Iran. By

contrast, notably academics and students might be interested in emigration due to their own experiences during visits and meetings, especially to the US.

The countries of North Africa provide a mixed picture. Libya is a decaying state, where chaos prevails, and where various militias are fighting each other. Here, too, the Islamic State is active and attempts to acquire a territory of its own. Tunisia has been transformed to a quasi-democracy as a result of the "Arab Spring". However, its internal situation must be described as unstable. Algeria is ruled by a military dictatorship. Demonstrations are not allowed. The Berber population of Kabylia is calling to the Arab ruling class for recognition of their ethnic group or even for a degree of autonomy. The same holds true for the Tuareg in the Ahaggar Mountains of the Sahara. In addition to these ethnic conflicts and these claims, the regime has to face attacks of the North African al Qaeda offshoot. The neighbouring Morocco presents a picture similar to that in Algeria. For far too long, the Arab kings in Rabat suppressed the Berbers of the Atlas and of the area around Marrakech. Add to that the unresolved issue concerning the future of the area of the former Spanish Sahara. The fighters of the Saharawi people still live in refugee camps in Algeria with their families.

The disintegrating state of Libya has a population of 6,678,697 people now, in 2016¹¹ – last year it were 6,543,636 persons. Hence, the growth rate is 2.06%. With 2,188,409 persons under 15 years we have a very young population here (32.8%). Of these, 1,118,081 are boys and 1,070,328 girls. Here, too, there is a surplus of boys. Given the desperate situation of this country, Libya it is likely to have a high percentage of emigrants among the young population.

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evitably have to question an economic policy of deregulation, liberalisation and alleged "market opening", propagated under the label of "globalisation", whose result is not the raising of global prosperity, but an increasing wealth gap, in which a few multiply their wealth obscenely, while the youth of many countries is left without perspective on education, work and hence integration into society, and thus has also no basis for their own self-determined life. It is understandable that young people leave their home, their family and friends, to buy the way to other countries by selling their last possessions, with the hope to find there

a perspective. But it is not understandable that Europe does not manage to provide them with a dignified life in Europe.

It would be more humane to provide these countries with a real chance to develop their economy – an approach the OSCE already had at the beginning of the 1990s, because certain trends were already foreseeable at that time. The US stalled this – according to a German politician who witnessed the process in the OSCE. Europe has yet more to offer than the current idea of chaos and self-abandonment in the field of law, self-determination and social justice. Europe would really have to offer something else, rather than surrender their cultural, political and legal substance to gamblers.

Or, who serves a policy that opens the floodgates for terrorist networks with the dummy argument of humanity? The fact that people flows and visa facilitation do not only help young people who are willing to work but also terror prone groupings, is a concern of all European border guards, police forces and intelligence services. Cui bono?

Nobody is served with the gradual abolition of European law and its social fabric: Law is – given that it is based on reason and human rights – codified human dignity which is founded on state fundaments. First and foremost task of the state is to provide protection for that.

Erika Vögeli

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On 1 January 2016, Tunisia had a population of 11,205,342 people with a growth rate of 0.98%.¹² As 2,601,208 young people (1,343,408 boys and 1,257,800 girls) were under 15, their proportion of the total population was 23.2%. Tunisia has the highest proportion of foreign fighters who serve the Islamic State. A high proportion of emigrants is to be expected also in the case of Tunisia.

Algeria had a population of 40,319,284 people and a growth rate of 1.17% on 1 January 2016¹³. 24.2% of the population (9,752,025 persons), were under 15, namely 4,976,609 boys and 4,775,416 girls. Given the fact that the military dictatorship restricts the freedom of movement of its young people, many of them are likely to be willing to emigrate.

In terms of the population structure Morocco does not significantly differ from Algeria. On 1 January 2016, Morocco had a population of 33,931,519 and a growth rate of 1.07%.¹⁴ 9,443,481 young people were under 15 years old (27.8% of the total population). Of these, 4,791,809 were boys and 4,651,672 girls. As the Moroccan royal family exerts a milder repression against the opposition in comparison to the military dictatorship of Algeria, the percentage of emigrants is likely to be lower compared to Algeria.

For the assessment of the three states Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco it also has to be noted that, due to their historical past, they still have a close relationship with France, their former colonial power. This includes their language and their culture in particular.

Impact of Mrs Merkel's open-door policy

With her call to allow Syrian refugees to enter Germany without restrictions, German Chancellor *Merkel* has violated in-

"Stubbornly Mrs Merkel refuses to introduce border controls and limits for Germany. At the same time, she is still talking about a European solution to the mass migration, which is in view of the events no longer feasible. She is increasingly compromising Germany's future and in principle also the future of the whole of Europe."

dividual regulations and triggered several implications. In the first place, she has not only overridden the right of control of the German parliament with her one-sided exhortation, but she has also arbitrarily rendered the two agreements of Schengen and Dublin inoperative. Both agreements state that asylum seekers' immigration to Europe has to be implemented by controlled means and that they have to be registered. In case that they are rejected they must be deported to the country where they were registered first. This measure, above all others, has ceased to be in force.

Moreover, with her call she has triggered a pulling effect on Syrian refugees living in Turkey and on potential emigrants from the mentioned countries. In this way she has brought about an uncontrolled mass migration, which has now befallen Europe. Not only are the states on the Balkan route such as Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, and Slovenia overcharged with the task of curbing the migration of nations, also a downright refugee and asylum chaos has erupted in Germany. As proved by current reality, police and administrative bodies in Germany are unable to cope with the processing of applications and the control of more than one million immigrants. In principle, a refugee chaos reigns in Germany, which is in addition complemented by minor crime committed by various immigrants.

Add to that the fact that the integration of many of these immigrants, who

do not come from war zones, will overtax Germany very soon. Therefore, there are many young Afghans who have at best not finished school or are even illiterate. This means that they cannot even read and write their own language. Added to this, there are cultural problems, as events in Cologne on 31 December have demonstrated. Many of these young men, so especially those from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and North Africa, live in societies where women count for nothing or are at most seen as commercially available products. This has only partially anything to do with Islam as a religion. The societies, from which notably these young men originate, are archaic.

Another problem is the fact that mainly young men have migrated to Europe. In the future Germany will have to face the fact that this immigration will lead to the rise of an unstable parallel society.

With her call Mrs Merkel has not only affected the future stability of Germany, she has also affected the future stability of Europe as a Union with her one-sided abrogation of the agreements of Schengen and Dublin. One state after another is introducing border controls. Thus, the two agreements are no longer even worth the paper on which they are written.

Stubbornly Mrs Merkel refuses to introduce border controls and limits for Germany. At the same time, she is still talking about a European solution to the mass migration, which is in view of the events no longer feasible. She is increasingly compromising Germany's future and in principle also the future of the whole of Europe.

Possible causal agents of Mrs Merkel's call

Two years ago, Mrs Merkel still uncompromisingly refused any German concession to Italy in receiving refugees from Africa. Her turnaround is rather strange. Unfortunately, at this time we can only speculate about what caused this turnaround. It is conceivable that the Obama administration recommended her to make her call. Through its wars in the Middle East, the US is responsible for the suffering, the tragedies, and the refugee drama in this region. Perhaps



History is about to repeat itself

Europe kneeling before Turkey

by Thierry Meyssan

By signing an agreement with Turkey to slow the influx of refugees – which happens to be illegal in international law – the leaders of the European Union have taken a step further in their pact with the devil. A large part of the 3 billion Euros annually allotted to Ankara will serve to finance support for the jihadists, and as a result will increase the number of migrants who are fleeing the war. Above all, by repealing the visa regulations with Turkey in the next few months, the Europeans are establishing free circulation between the Al-Qaïda camps in Turkey and Brussels. By crushing the Iraqi and Syrian people under the pressure of the jihadists whom they are indirectly financing, and abandoning the Turkish people to the dictatorship of President Erdogan, they are preparing the foundations for a vast confrontation of which they will themselves be the victims.

The European Council of the 17th and 18th March 2016 adopted a plan which aimed to solve the problems posed by the massive influx of migrants from Turkey¹. 28 heads of state and government submitted to the demands of Ankara.

We have already analysed the way in which the United States wanted to use the events in the Near East in order to weak-

en the European Union². At the beginning of the current “refugee crisis”, we were the first to observe that this event had been deliberately provoked and the insoluble problems that it was going to cause³. Unfortunately, all our analyses have been verified, and most of our positions have now been widely adopted by our erstwhile detractors.

Going further, we would like to study the way in which Turkey has seized control of the game, and the blindness of the European Union, which persistently remains one step behind.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s game

President *Erdogan* is unlike other politicians. and it seems that the Europeans, neither the people nor their leaders, have realised this.

First of all, he came from the *Millî Görüş*, a pan-Turkish Islamic movement with connections to the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt, and favourable to the restoration of the Caliphate⁴. According to him – and also to his allies of the *Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi* (MHP) – the Turkish people are the descendants of *Attila*’s Huns, who were themselves the children of the Steppenwolf of Central Asia, with whom they share endurance and cold-heartedness. They form a superior race

who are destined to rule the world. Their soul is Islam.

President *Erdogan* is the only head of state in the world who proclaims an ethnic supremacist ideology, perfectly comparable to Nazi *Aryanism*. He is also the only head of state in the world who denies the crimes of history, notably the massacres of non-Muslims by *Sultan Abdülhamid II* (the Hamidian massacres of 1894–95 – at least 80,000 Christians murdered and 100,000 Christians incorporated by force into the harems), then by the Young Turks (the genocide of the Armenians, the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, the Syriacs, the Pontic Greeks and the Yezidis, from 1915 to 1923 – at least 1,200,000 dead) – a genocide which was executed with the help of German officers, including *Rudolf Höss*, the future director of the camp at *Auschwitz*⁵.



Thierry Meyssan
(picture wikipedia)

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the Obama administration was hoping to evade the United States’ responsibility for the disaster it has caused, if Germany received the Syrian refugees from Turkey.

At the same time, it may have been suggested to Mrs Merkel that Germany would be able to purchase forgiveness for the crimes of the Nazi regime and simultaneously regenerate its increasingly old society by means of the reception of refugees. Fact is that with her call, she has generated mass migration, and this may even shake Europe to the very foundation.

How to cope with this mass migration

How can we master this mass migration and curb it in the future? As recent events with refugees and immigrants from Africa have shown, the expulsion and rejection of refused applicants is almost impossible. The only method possible is to stop the migration in its preliminary stages. For this, the three countries Germany, Austria and Sweden have to stop financial support of immigrants as a

first step. As compensation for this, they would provide only material support. In addition, the free delivery of mobile phones and the liberal support services supplied by social workers and lawyers must be stopped. Charities for refugees should receive no more financial support by the state as of now. Forcing immigrants to live in camps outside the urban centres would be a further step towards deterrence. In addition, it is crucial to punish to the full force of the constitutional state infringements of the law, such as the feeling up of women or even rape.

In a further step, the Member States of the Schengen area must introduce their own border controls again. Mass migration cannot be stopped without this measure. When these controls are carried out, emigrants from Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran and North Africa should be sent directly from the checkpoint at the border to the camps and should be deported as soon as possible. States that do not take in their citizens would have to be punished by European countries.

The measures described above have to be taken immediately by the understanding leaders in Europe, even if they are de-

nounced by Mrs Merkel and her left-green orbit. Europe has only a very little time left to ensure its survival as an economic and cultural area.¹⁵

- ¹ The Military Balance 2015. *The International Institute for Strategic Studies*, London, 2015, p. 352
- ² <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>
- ³ *Stratfor*. How German Politics will Change Europe, 22 January 2016, p. 3
- ⁴ <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>
- ⁵ McChrystal, St., General, U.S. Army (ret), *My Share of the Task* A Memoir, updated with a New Preface, Portfolio/Penguin, New York, 2014, p. 230
- ⁶ *The Military Balance* 2015, p. 330
- ⁷ <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e486426.html>
- ⁸ <http://countrymeters.info/en/Afghanistan>
- ⁹ <http://countrymeters.info/en/Pakistan>
- ¹⁰ <http://countrymeters.info/en/Iran>
- ¹¹ <http://countrymeters.info/en/Libya>
- ¹² <http://countrymeters.info/en/Tunisia>
- ¹³ <http://countrymeters.info/en/Algeria>
- ¹⁴ <http://countrymeters.info/en/Morocco>
- ¹⁵ *Stratfor*, How German Politics Will Change Europe, January 22, 2016, 09:15, p. 5

Source: www.strategische-studien.com of 13 March 2016, first published in the *Portas Capital Newsletter*, February 2016

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

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While celebrating the 70th anniversary of freedom from the nightmare of Nazism, President *Vladimir Putin* emphasized that “ideas of racial supremacy and exclusivism [elitist thinking] provoked the bloodiest war in History”⁶. Then, during a march – and without naming Turkey – he called on the Russian people to be ready, if necessary, to renew the sacrifice made by their grand-parents in order to save the very principle of equality between all humanity.

Secondly, President Erdogan, who is supported by only one third of the population, governs his country alone and by force. It is impossible to know precisely what the Turkish people are thinking, because the publication of any information questioning President Erdogan’s legitimacy is now considered as an attack on state security, and leads immediately to prison. However, if we refer to the latest studies published, in October 2015, less than one third of the electorate supports him. This is much less than the Nazis in 1933, who could count on 43% of the votes. This is why President Erdogan was only able to win the general elections by means of outrageous trickery. Amongst others:

- The opposition media were gagged – the major dailies, *Hürriyet* and *Sabah*,

key to help “convince” the electorate to support President Erdogan (about 2 billion Euros).

- 128 political headquarters of the *left-wing party* (HDP) were attacked by thugs from President Erdogan’s party. Many candidates and their teams were beaten up. More than 300 Kurdish businesses were destroyed. Several dozen HDP candidates were arrested and placed in provisional detention during the campaign.
- More than 2,000 opposition figures were killed during the election campaign, either by direct attacks, or else by governmental repression against the PKK. Several villages in the South-East of the country were partially destroyed by army tanks.

Since Erdogan’s “election”, an iron veil has fallen over the country. It has become impossible to find information concerning the condition of Turkey in the national Press. The main opposition daily, *Zaman*, has been placed under supervision and now restricts itself to praise of the greatness of “Sultan” Erdogan. The civil war, which is already raging in the East of the country, is spreading, by means of terrorist attacks, to Ankara and as far as Istanbul, to the total indifference of the Europeans⁷.

Mr Erdogan governs almost alone, accompanied by a small group which in-

ti-constitutionally – to transform the Turkish state into the godfather of international jihadism. In December 2015, the Turkish police and legal system were able to establish the personal connection between Mr Erdogan and his son *Bilal* with *Yasin al-Qadi*, Al-Qaida’s global banker. He fired the policemen and the magistrates who had dared to “damage the interests of Turkey” (sic), while Yasin al-Qadi and the state sued the left-wing newspaper *BirGün* for having reproduced my editorial, “Al-Qaeda, NATO’s Timeless Tool”.

Last February, the Russian Federation presented a report to the Intelligence department of the UN Security Council which attested to the support by the Turkish state for international jihadism, in violation of numerous UN Resolutions⁸. I published a precise study of these accusations which was immediately censored in Turkey⁹.

The response of the European Union

The European Union had sent a delegation to supervise the general elections of November 2015. It held back the publication of its report for a long time, then decided to publish a short, diluted version.

Panicked by the reaction of their populations against the massive entry of migrants – and, for the Germans, the abolition of a minimum wage which resulted – the 28 heads of state and government of the Union worked out a procedure which would leave Turkey to solve their problems for them. The High Commissioner of the United Nations for Refugees, *Filippo Grandi*, immediately pointed out that the solution chosen was in violation of international law, but even supposing that this may improve, it is not the main problem.

The Union agreed to

- pay 3 billion Euros annually to Turkey to help it deal with its obligations, but with no structure for verifying the use of this funding,
- end the visa requirements for Turkish nationals who enter the Union¹⁰ – it is only a question of months, even weeks,
- accelerate the negotiations for Turkey’s accession to the Union – this will take a lot longer and will be a more random process.

In other words, blinded by the recent electoral defeat of *Angela Merkel*¹¹, the European leaders have settled for applying a temporary solution to slow the flux of migrants, but without seeking to resolve the origin of the problem, and with-

“By signing an agreement with Turkey to slow the influx of refugees – which happens to be illegal in international law – the leaders of the European Union have taken a step further in their pact with the devil.”

as well as ATV television, were attacked by thugs from the party in power, and investigations targeted journalists and Press organs accused of supporting “terrorism” or having published slanderous criticisms of President Erdogan. Web sites were blocked, Internet service providers cancelled the offers of opposition TV channels, and three out of five national TV channels, including the public channel, broadcast programmes which were clearly in favour of the party in power. The other national TV stations, *Bugün TV* and *Kanaltürk*, were closed by the police.

- A foreign state, Saudi Arabia, poured 7 billion pounds of “gifts” into Tur-

cludes Prime Minister *Ahmet Davutoglu*. During the electoral campaign, he declared publicly that he was no longer applying the Constitution, and that all powers were now in his hands.

On the 14th March 2016, President Erdogan declared that as far as the struggle with the Kurds was concerned, “... democracy, liberty and the rule of law no longer have the slightest value”. He announced his intention to expand the legal definition of “terrorist” to include all those who are “enemies of the Turks” – in other words, those Turks and non-Turks who are opposed to his supremacy.

Thirdly, President Erdogan uses powers which he has given himself – an-

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out taking into account the infiltration of jihadists among the refugees.

The Munich precedent

In the 1930's, the elites of Europe and the United States considered that the USSR, by its model, threatened their class interests. They therefore collectively supported the Nazi project for the colonisation of Western Europe and the destruction of the Slavic people. Despite repeated appeals by Moscow for the creation of a vast alliance against Nazism, European leaders accepted all the demands of Chancellor *Hitler*, including the annexation of the regions peopled by the Sudetes. These were the agreements of Munich (1938), which forced the USSR, in order to save its own skin, to conclude, in turn, the Germano-Soviet Pact (1939). It was only too late that certain of the leaders of Europe, then the United States, realised their error, and decided to ally with Moscow against the Nazis.

Now, under our very eyes, the same

that by repealing the visa regulations for Turkish citizens, they have authorised the free circulation to Brussels from the Al-Qaïda camps in Turkey¹³.

The comparison with the end of the 1930's is all the more pertinent since during the Munich agreements, the Nazi Reich had already annexed Austria without provoking any particular reaction from the other European states. Today, Turkey already occupies the North-East of a member state of the European Union, Cyprus, and a strip a few kilometres wide in Syria, which it administrates via a specially nominated wali (prefect). Not only does the European Union let that pass, but by its attitude, encourages Ankara to pursue its annexations with no regard for international law. The common logic of Chancellor Hitler and President Erdogan is based on the unification of “race” and the cleansing of the population. Hitler wanted to unite the populations of “German race” and cleanse them of “foreign elements” (the Jews and the gypsies),

“By crushing the Iraqi and Syrian people under the pressure of the jihadists whom they are indirectly financing, and abandoning the Turkish people to the dictatorship of President Erdogan, they are preparing the foundations for a vast confrontation of which they will themselves be the victims.”

errors are being repeated. The European elites consider the Syrian Republic to be an adversary – either they are defending the colonial point of view of Israël, or they hope to recolonise the Levant themselves and appropriate the gigantic and still unexploited reserves of gas. They therefore supported the secret operation by the United States for “régime change” and pretended to believe in the fable of the “Arab Spring”. After nearly five years of proxy war, noting that President *Bachar el-Assad* is still there despite the fact that his resignation has been announced a thousand times, the Europeans have decided to finance – to the tune of 3 billion Euros per year – Turkish support for the jihadists, allow them victory and the end to the migrations. It will not be long before they realise¹², too late,

while Erdogan wants to unite the populations of “Turkish race” and cleanse them of “foreign elements” (the Kurds and the Christians).

In 1938, the European elites believed in the friendship of Chancellor Hitler, today they believe in the friendship of President Erdogan. •

¹ “Next operational steps in EU-Turkey cooperation in the field of migration”, *Voltaire Network*, 16 March 2016.

² “The European Union is blind to the military strategy of the United States”, by Thierry Meyssan, Translation Pete Kimberley, *Voltaire Network*, 14 May 2015.

³ “The phoney ‘refugee crisis’”, by Thierry Meyssan, Translation Pete Kimberley, *Voltaire Network*, 7 September 2015.

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Source: <http://www.voltairenet.org/article190869.html>

(Translation: Pete Kimberley)

Current Concerns

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A distinctive light on the inner state of Germany

by Karl Müller

In the past two weeks, three events have shed a distinctive light on the state of things in Germany and the bearing of the country's political class. The first was the result of three state elections on 13 March, the second the EU-Turkey summit on 17 and 18 March... and the third was the Leipzig Book Fair, 17-20 March.

The state elections in Baden-Wuerttemberg, Rhineland-Palatinate and Saxony-Anhalt have led to shifts in the votes hitherto unknown in the history of the Federal Republic of Germany. A new party, the "Alternative für Deutschland" AfD (Alternative for Germany), has entered all three State Parliaments for the first time. It won 15.1% of the votes in Baden-Wuerttemberg, 12.6% in Rhineland-Palatinate and 24.2% in Saxony-Anhalt. In Baden-Wuerttemberg and in Saxony-Anhalt the new party received more votes than the SPD (Social Democratic Party).

Elections in three federal states

In a democracy one might assume that after such a result the other parties would start to wonder their politics went wrong and how they could more reflect the will of the voters of the new party. Far from it: Grotesquely, the first reactions of the other parties were that they felt confirmed in their politics. This even included statements that the large majority of the voters had fully confirmed the chancellor's migration politics which are, with some restrictions, also the migration politics of SPD, the Green Party and Die Linke (The Left). Only the CSU saw this differently, however, theirs was also an emphasis on self-praise – after all they had been warning of the chancellor's misdirected migration politics for a long time.

The question what the AfD's voters really wanted did not play a role, just the appeal to lead the lost and confused AfD voters back to the path of the politically correct parties. For a long time, the position that these citizens "had fears" which had to be cured by "education", has been repeated again and again. There was no consideration that there might have been factual reasons for their vote against the current parties.

This reminds me of the end of the German Democratic Republic (GDR). While many people were fleeing from the GDR to the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG), there was no self-criticism in the GDR leadership. But on 2 October 1989 we could read in the SED's [the GDR's leading party's] newspaper "Neues Deutschland" about these people: "They all have treated our moral values with con-

tempt, ostracizing themselves from our society. We should not shed any tears for them."

Is there now a fundamental difference from the hateful style in which the propaganda machine of the government and Angela Merkel's mantra "Wir schaffen das" [we can handle it] denounce their opponents? This perfidity is even bigger than during the final days of the GDR – also due to the still unbowed will to power, the application of all kinds of mechanisms of maintaining power and the backing from the power beyond the Atlantic. The polarization of the German society has progressed far; the country's citizens are fragmented in many respects.

EU-Turkey summit

On 18 March, the EU government heads and the Turkish Prime Minister have agreed on a common declaration. In the German leading media, this declaration has been described as mostly successful, containing only a few points open to criticism. It has also been described as mostly a success for Angela Merkel and her politics. However, it is worthwhile to study this declaration (<http://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2016/03/18-eu-turkey-statement/>) in detail and to think about its consequences. The declaration contains many critical points so that it can already be claimed that it is not solving problems but rather adding new ones.

One example: the declaration has little to do with our legal principles. Thus, point 1 of the declaration stipulates: "All new irregular migrants crossing from Turkey to the Greek islands from 20 March 2016 will be returned to Turkey." This is actually a matter of course and coincides with current law; we are dealing with "irregular" migrants and one may ask why this has not been practiced before. Or, in other words: Why is the German government continuously polemicizing against those who speak about breaches of migration law if they are now so openly admitted? Point 2 of the declaration also adds: "For every Syrian being returned to Turkey from Greek islands, another Syrian will be resettled from Turkey to the EU [...]". In plain text this means: For each migrant from Syria coming to Greece illegally, one Syrian from a Turkish refugee camp is allowed to immigrate to the EU, not for a limited period but permanently. The crucial word is "resettlement". We could also say: Turkey is rewarded for its breach of law. But even if we overlook this violation, hoping that this might decisively reduce the number of migrants, we are surprised by a

further reading of point 2. The "human trafficking" with Turkey in 2016 has an upper limit to the sum of 72,000. They should be shared among all EU states, excluding Hungary and Slovakia. But what is this figure, compared to the 1.1 million migrants who came to Germany in 2015 alone... and the 60 million people who are on the move. And the provision is only valid for Syrians. Nothing is arranged for the other countries.

"Protected zone" – what for?

Highly problematic is the last point of the agreement: "The EU and its Member States will work with Turkey in any joint endeavour to improve humanitarian conditions inside Syria, in particular in certain areas near the Turkish border which would allow for the local population and refugees to live in areas which will be safer." For a long time, the Turkish government has been demanding so-called "protected zones" on Syrian territory along the common border. The purpose of this became obvious in the last months: military action against the Kurds living in the area. Is the EU now going to support this? And of course it is not a question if the Syrian government would agree to these "protected zones". Is international law to be ignored again?

These references regarding the problematic content of the agreement between the EU and Turkey should suffice. Much more important is another aspect: the unanimous adulation for the German Chancellor and her migration politics ignoring all facts. Just as a reminder: The fact that the number of migrants coming to Germany has actually dropped during the past weeks has not been caused by the Federal Government's politics but by the governments which are being harshly criticized by Angela Merkel, that is, the Balkan states which have closed their borders to Greece.

And: the problem of a mass migration of 60 million people can indeed not be solved by a single state, and also not by the EU. Neither a German "Welcoming Culture" nor a "Fortress Europe" will offer a solution. The problem is concerning the global community as a whole. Peace and justice? Or moving on with globalization, imperialism and war – and millions of migrants? We cannot do justice to this topic here.

Not just "Café Europe" at the Leipzig Book Fair

Leipzig Book Fair: under the headline "Europe 21. Area of reflection regarding the society of tomorrow" the German

0.0% interest rate – The suppressed financial crisis returns

by Prof Eberhard Hamer



Prof Dr Eberhard Hamer (picture ma)

When playing the blame game, it is important not to have the black man at the end – in the large monetary poker, it is essential now not to remain seated on devalued money when the Euro monetary system collapses.

Nobody currently is betraying the markets more than the Italo-clique around the Goldman Sachs gambler *Draghi*. Under the Statute of the ECB, the Executive Board has to guarantee the solidarity with the Euro-currency, which means not to extend the currency more than productivity, hence to keep monetary value and goods value balanced. The ECB does exactly the opposite:

- It has expanded money supply uncontrolled; which is with respect to the quantity of goods a multiplication, thus creating an enormous potential of inflation currently only artificially dammed up.
- The ECB actually is neither allowed to finance the growing state debt nor the gambler's banks – both done by the Draghi-clique for already one year by 60 and in the future even 80 billion euros monthly with growing indebtedness, but without economic success. 1.74 trillion euros aid money is distributed and remaining as debt and went down like a lead balloon.
- By its zero interest rate, the ECB has de-enriched savers and institutional buyer annually by more than 34 billion

euros, betrayed and driven into existence difficulties. Instead, they should have met their obligation to maintain the interest rate as a reliable market price for sound money.

Now we see the avenged for not tackling the root cause of the Euro crisis after 2008, but by a continued wrong track – with the help of *Merkel's* comprehensive guarantee for all European countries (ESM) – with a rising debt of bankrupt states and gamblers banks. This takes place on the cost of Germany. The fallacy of unrestrained money expansion has to the same extend multiplied the problems so that we now face a much stronger need for correction than in 2008.

Like the Sorcerer's Apprentice, the ECB now has no way back without a currency bang. They cannot increase the interest rate by a mere single percent without leading to an state bankruptcy of the over-indebted southern European countries – they had to pay back their towering debt piles at higher interest rates taking on even more debts at even higher interest rates – which is impossible.

Draghi and his troupe, who are subservient to the US finance syndicate, cannot even raise interest rates in Europe without FED approval, because then the Euro currency would give a higher profitability for speculators than the dollar which in turn would lead to massive dollar outflows from the US to Europe. Consequently, the ailing and heavily indebted US dollar empire would become insolvent.

Normally, an unrestrained multiplication of money and over-liquidity leads to inflation. This, however, is prevented by

Bank speculators who are instructed by the ECB by not investing the money in the real economy but almost exclusively in debt hungry bankrupt states such as Greece. This in turn is no risk for the banks because the bankrupt states are backed by the ESM and Germany itself.

Since the ECB is pumping 60 to 80 billion euros monthly in public, debt there is no longer a financing of economic growth, but only an unproductive redistribution of debt:

- With financial guarantee assistance of solid states, the unsound southern European states can proceed to finance bloated state apparatus and social systems by ECB-euros.
- The gamblers banks do not need to consolidate, but still stoke up stock exchanges and speculation on free ECB money.
- Even former economical countries now have enough money to invite the world's poor as permanent social guests and to carry the social burden permanently that nobody can pay after the end of the ECB's monetary flood.

What alternatives does the ECB have now?

The ECB cannot increase interest rates for the above-mentioned reasons without risking government and bank bankruptcies.

But it cannot stop the money flooding either without causing sovereign defaults – especially due to missing follow-up financing by the state in the already bankrupt southern European countries.

If the ECB would introduce negative interest rates, this would only lead to an

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"A distinctive light on the state ..."

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Robert Bosch Stiftung, the direction of the Leipzig Book Fair and the German Foreign Office were offering a number of events on questions on "migration and integration" in the "Café Europe", which was established for this purpose. Those who expected an open forum for discussions were disappointed. The spokesmen of the political class were among themselves. The enemy stereotypes were unambiguous: all those who were criticising the German Chancellor's mantra, all those who stick to the idea of sovereign or democratic nation states... and – who would be surprised – Russia. Nicely fit-

ting into this setting was the announcement that this year's "Leipzig Book Award for European Understanding" was awarded to the intellectual prototype of the German Transatlantic, *Heinrich August Winkler*, for his work "History of the West". One might wonder about the connections between transatlantic ties, migration politics and enemy stereotype Russia. But these questions were not asked in the "Café Europe". It would have put the inquirer among the enemies.

However, also this year the Book Fair, with its 2000 exhibitors beyond the questionable "manga" youth cult, some 3,500 readings, talks and discussions and its nearly 200,000 visitors was

a place for meeting people and for open and free conversation. Attempts from influential circles, ahead of the Fair, for censorship against a German political magazine (*Compact*) were justifiably rejected by the Fair's direction pointing out the freedoms of opinion and press. The price for this was some broken windows in one of the exhibition halls and loud bawling next to the booth of the magazine mentioned. The majority of visitors and the majority of citizens, however, do not want to be associated with these kinds of methods. More than ever the people appreciate equal, open and free conversations on an honest and well-founded basis. This is a chance for our country. ●

Science in the service of “profit maximisation”?

Increasing influence on science

RI. Research findings affect commercial decisions and even far-reaching political determinations. If such findings are partial, they may actually cause harm. A striking example for this mechanism was the medical research about smoking. Only after decades, it had been revealed that important projects had been secretly financed by the tobacco industry. Public health policies were significantly influenced and hence effective information campaigns about the consequences of smoking were. This still causes severe health implications for millions of smokers. Researchers who had been pointing at the dangers of smoking in those days had been purposefully marginalized or discredited.

The tobacco industry in contrast went nearly unpunished for their activities!

In his book “Gekaufte Forschung. Wissenschaft im Dienste der Konzerne” (Bribed Research. Science in the service of corporations) the economist Christian Kreiss* provides many more examples like that of the tobacco industry (p. 22ff.) and analyses the consequences of biased research. He considers the question to what degree economic interests may influence content and results of research. His experience in university and higher education politics enables him also to trace hidden influence mechanisms. Kreiss focuses the widespread practice of third party funding in pharmaceutical and car manufacturing industries, education, financial, insurance, biogenetics, and media corporations. At the same time, he explains the influence of financially strong corporate groups on science via private endowments, sponsored professorships and the allocation of research funding.

– What do research results of a certain professor of medicine mean who found

out that eating chocolate might be good for your heart? This could be true. However, what if this study had been funded by Mars Inc., and this very same professor proceeded to occupy the Mars Chair in Developmental Nutrition at the University of California? (p. 73)

- Better known is the case of Arpad Pusztai/Monsanto. Bill Clinton intervened directly on behalf of biotech corporation Monsanto by phoning Tony Blair in 1998 in order to suppress genetic engineering research results. The researcher Arpad Pusztai found out that the feeding of genetically engineered potatoes had a negative impact on rats. Supported by his employers he introduced his findings to the British public. These same employers, however, asked him to hand in his lab keys after the phone conversation between Clinton and Blair. A little later, his research materials had disappeared from the lab after a burglary. Others have confirmed Pusztai’s findings in the meantime, though (p. 66ff.). Surely, not all corporations will go that far when their business interests are affected.
- The fact that “ghostwriters” write many scientific papers is less spectacular. Employees of pharmaceutical companies for instance conduct studies that are officially published under the names of “independent” scientists. (p. 62f.)
- Scientists who did research on medication paid for by the pharmaceutical industry, which then produce unexpected results, ran into big problems. They had to sign confidentiality agreements even though in some instances their results suggested potentially consequential health damages of the medicines. (p. 53ff.)



- More and more corporations proceeded to provide schools with teaching materials. Due to what is referred to as an “opening” of the schools these materials are actually getting used in classes. But what can one expect from teaching materials about “public transport”, sponsored by a car manufacturing company? What would “healthy nutrition” look like seen through the lens of a leading chocolate producer? (S. 133ff.) Kreiss addresses these problems in his book, too. In connection with the increasing influence of electronic media and their contents in kindergartens and schools, he refers to Manfred Spitzer’s distinguished publications. (S. 134)
- In addition to such more obvious examples, Kreiss also explains many more

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“0.0% interest rate...”

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acceleration of the state-debt-game and bank speculations.

The ECB has exceeded the point of no return and now can literally go no way back without a Euro-crash.

What would otherwise be possible?

The FED’s unrestrained dollars proliferation operation has worked in the same manner as the ECB; financing US government debt and other bubbles such as the real estate, derivatives, and others. In case of bursting of one of these bubbles, a burst of the Dollar and hence of the Euro

would collapse the complete western currency House of Cards. Then we are going to have a global economic crisis, which is much more severe than in the 30s.

It also could be that the Draghi clique is even preparing a currency correction: The push for abolition of cash could be preparing the Euro currency reform. Indeed, if cash is abolished and then there would be only a digital currency in the computers of banks, companies and private accounts, a devaluation or a total currency reform would be possible in seconds by the click of a mouse without the need to coin or print new money.

This would also be a new redistribution: the monetary values would be de-

stroyed and the property values would still be present. The states will then take draconian actions to avoid shrinking their expenses and trying to grab the property values of its citizens, allegedly for reasons of justice, but in reality only, because they would want to avoid draconian austerity measures they could not bear politically.

Therefore we should understand the zero interest rates of the ECB as the last shot of a sinking warship and as an indication that it is high time for us to act (exit money and move into property values). •

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

Spring session 2016

Decisions concerning State and (foreign) economic policy in the two chambers of (Swiss) parliament

A synopsis

by Dr iur Marianne Wüthrich

On 18 March, the three-week spring session in Berne came to an end. The most important State and foreign-policy decisions of the spring session are briefly introduced and commented here. In direct democratic Switzerland, the work of our Parliament means also work for us citizens. As for the negotiations with the EU or other major powers, it is important to follow them with open ears and mind and to be in contact with many people.

Already during the session, we are thinking and discussing whether we want to take the referendum against a law or a treaty. In the spring session, the final votes of both Councils were held on 18 March, from this date onwards, a period of 100 days starts in which the citizens can collect 50,000 signatures to demand a federal referendum on a proposal adopted by the Parliament. So, the Giardino group has already started the referendum against the further reduction of the Swiss army. We are looking forward to another opportunity to collect signatures and to get in discussions with the citizens.

Yes to the withdrawal of the EU membership application

Since 1992, the request for Switzerland's EU membership remains lying in Brussels. Thanks to this unauthorized step of the then Federal Council the accession to the EEA – declared openly as a step towards full accession – was rejected on 6 December 1992 by the Swiss people. As a result, the Federal Council has been expressing for years to a formal withdrawal of this request: “La demande d'adhésion



Session in the chamber of the Council of States. (picture keystone)

dont vous parlez n'existe plus sur la carte politique. [The membership of which you speak no longer exists on the political map.] Elle est devenue sans objet. Elle est 'gegenstandslos.'" (Federal Councillor *Didier Burkhalter* on 1 March 2016 before the National Council)

Nevertheless, National Council *Lukas Reimann* (SVP SG) insisted rightfully on the retreat. His motion was adopted by the National Council with 126 votes against 46 with 18 abstentions and is now in the Council of States (Official Bulletin of the 1.3.2016, motion 14.3219).

One thought clouds the joy of this unique result: A part of Yes voters probably will clear the way for the expansion

of Bilateral Treaties, including an “institutional framework agreement with the EU” hostile to our sovereignty.

State initiatives call for sovereignty of the cantons in the formulation of the cantonal election law

Every canton can apply to the Federal councillors by a State initiative and demand a decree of the Parliament.¹ The cantonal governments and parliaments and the electorate make frequent use of this facility.

Currently two State initiatives of the canton of Zug (14.316) and the canton of Uri (14.307) demand a modification of the Federal Constitution for the purpose of “Restoring the sovereignty of the cantons on election issues”. Here, it can be shown

“Science in the service of ...”

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subtle influencing strategies used to promote economic self-interests in the name of science. Among other things, these include biasing research foci, allocation of funds, the appointment of professorship, or the manipulation of public endowments.

Kreiss concludes: “The consequences of these insights are obvious: financial interests have to stay out of science, they make mischief here. Schooling and higher education are the public society's business, not corporate lobbyists'. One can

only hope that in the long run research will be conducted increasingly for the sake of the commonality and that trust in science may grow once again.” (S. 190) He ends with several ideas how to counter the massive influence of private interests in colleges and universities so that absurdities like a lecture theatre “Aldi-Süd” (a branch of the German “Aldi”-Discounters in Switzerland) or “EasyCredit” may be prevented in future.

* Christian Kreiss teaches finance and economic policies at Aalen College.

Christian Kreiss. Gekaufte Forschung. Wissenschaft im Dienste der Konzerne. Europa Verlag. Berlin 2015. 978-3-944305-72-1

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A note for easy retrieval of the individual submissions: Each parliamentary business has a number, for example, 14.3219. The first two digits indicate the year in which the submission was launched, in this case 2014. By entering the number via internet, one can get directly to the documentation of the transaction concerned, along with the current state of its treatment in the councils. By the way, the whole session can now also be witnessed by video.

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only briefly what it is about, a closer look will follow on occasion.

The facts: In December 2002, the federal court blamed the city of Zurich, because their proportional electoral procedure for the elections put smaller parties at a disadvantage in the distribution of seats. This judgment was the issue of a flood of constitutional and electoral law changes in the cantons on the one hand, on the other hand several complaints to the Federal Court. Because, especially in smaller rural and mountain cantons there are electoral laws which are in force for over 100 years and in which the diversity of a federalist political system is wonderfully expressed. Some of these cantonal rules said the Federal Court to be legal but others violate Article 34 of the Federal Constitution considering the protection of free forming of political opinions (!) and of the genuine expression of voters' will (!).

To this, it should be noted: the increasing inclination of the highest Swiss Court to stretch the clear wording of legal provisions, can obviously not be explained alone with external pressure (*European Court of Justice*, ECJ, *European Court of Human Rights*). Or maybe yes? Should federalism be gradually reduced this way to a minimum so that the great powers can deal with Switzerland with a tightly-run central power?

Back to the State initiatives by Uri and Zug: The *Political Institutions Commit-*

tee of the Council of States has given on 23 June 2015 result to the two State initiatives and has accepted a constitutional amendment so that the cantons can again independently control their elections. However, the Political Institutions Committee of the National Council demanded on 15 January 2016 for not to follow the State initiatives.

The initiative is now back in the Political Institutions Committee of the Council of States and then goes to the Council of States. We can hope that this committee exercises its role as representative of the cantons.

Attacks of representatives on people's rights

Some readers may remember the initiatives from the Parliament demanding the Federal Council to establish a report on "measures to improve compatibility of popular initiatives with fundamental rights" – that means measures to restrict the people's rights.²

Already in the consultation the Federal Council's suggestions have failed at that time. Therefore, the Federal Council now requests the depreciation of two motions of 2011, approved by the National Council on 3 March 2016 (Federal Council 14.024). Most disconcerting, however, is the fact that the *Political Institutions Committees* of both Councils despite the clear opposition of cantons, political parties and civil society groups, launched further attempts to restrict the validity of popular initiatives.³

The displeasure of some parliamentarians against direct democracy culminates in an emergency interpellation from the ranks of the National Council that requires answers by the Federal Council to the following questions, including: "1. Is it the opinion of the Federal Council that the many business-hostile people's initiatives and their flood of votes (1:12-, minimum wage-, mass immigration-, basic income-, solid money-, rip-off-, inheritance tax-, enforcement initiative, etc.) endanger the domestic investment activity as well as the legal certainty and stability of the business location Switzerland? 2. Does the Federal Council have the opinion that the implementation of the mass immigration initiative is damaging the legal certainty and attractiveness of the business location Switzerland? [...]" (Urgent interpellation 16.3025)

The worst is yet to come! Does the electorate have to write its own initiative texts according to the dictates of corporations and investors? All other concerns of citizens are to prohibit – or what? Who serves the direct democracy? Must we really remind our "representatives" that they are elected by the people – by the same

people who launches national initiatives and votes about them?

Free movement of people and other sticking points between Berne and Brussels

Main issue in the foreign policy of the Federal Government is currently the implementation of the mass immigration initiative dated 9.2.2014. At the press conference, 4 March 2016 the Federal Councils *Sommaruga* and *Schneider-Ammann* brought little new: so far no agreement with the EU; the Federal Council wants to determine threshold levels of immigration with a unilateral safeguard clause; an "Immigration Commission" should support; the domestic labour force should be promoted; also a change of the Aliens Act is planned, according to which foreign job seekers can't collect welfare in Switzerland anymore; the negotiations with the EU will continue (press release of the Federal Council 4.3.2016).

It is to add that the EU is still refusing to conduct negotiations with Switzerland on the modification of the Agreement on Free Movement of People (FMP), but remarkably is now ready to discuss issues of the "application of law on the Free Movement of People" – probably referring to the negotiations with the United Kingdom? The extension of the bilateral way as desired by the Federal Council, is stuck for a long time due to the disagreement over the jurisdictions: So there's still some hope ... (see Foreign Policy Report of 2015).

To demonstrate, that the Federal Council is "serious" about the implementation of mass immigration article BV is 121a, it presented by the way a submission to the Parliament to extend the FMP on Croatia (!) on 4 March.

There are various initiatives from Parliament:

- Postulate 13.4022 by *Karin Keller-Sutter*, Councillor of State, free Democratic party Canton of St Gall: the Federal Council is asked to issue a benchmark of the Free Trade Agreement with the EU and the Bilateral Agreement. This postulate was accepted on 17 March in the Council of States, also on recommendation of the Federal Council. As expected, the Federal Council concludes, a "comprehensive free trade agreement" would be a "clear step backwards" for the Swiss economy compared to the Bilateral Agreement. Interesting is the reasoning of the Federal Council: "The examined scenario of a 'comprehensive free trade agreement' assumes market access concessions, which can be implemented with-

Foreign Policy Report 2015 of the Federal Council from 13 January 2016

This report is presented before both councils annually. The National Council took note of the report on 1 March, after a long debate, the Council of States did so on 17 March. Anyone who wants to learn about the foreign policy activities of the Federal Council and its departments can read the 196-page report (Federal Gazette Bbl 2016, from page 593 onwards) or inform himself by reading or by listening to the debate in the National Council of 1 March (business of the Federal Council 16.009). One of the key issues was also last year's commitment to peace and security in many war and crisis regions of the world, whether by humanitarian aid or diplomatic activity, including the intake of refugees. The second key issue concerns the relations with the neighbouring countries and the ongoing negotiations with the EU – 160 meetings in 2015! (See "Free Movement of Persons and other disputed points between Berne and Brussels") (Translation *Current Concerns*)

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out legal harmonization – without the assumption of EU law and without contractual and monitored equivalence rules –."

Or in other words: according to the Swiss Federal Council, the acceptance of EU legislation by Switzerland is almost the essence of the Bilateral Agreements and brings "legal certainty" to our economy. Such has already become a given fact that "legal certainty" could be reached only by taking over the legal system of the "big brother"...

- Postulate 15.4009 by *Fabio Regazzi*, National Councillor, Christian Peoples Party CVP Ticino: What are the consequences for the Swiss economy in case of a potential termination of the Freedom of Movement Agreement?

Regazzi assumes that also the other six agreements grouped as "Bilateral I" and possibly also the Schengen/Dublin and the Education Agreement would be terminated. He suggests a study similar to an expertise issued in April 2015 on the economic consequences of an exit of Britain from the EU: The study tries to prevent the British from leaving the

EU, by predicting a decline of the GDP by 13 percent until the year 2030!

Federal President *Johann Schneider-Ammann* stated in front of the National Council on 29.2.2016, that he has initiated already two studies, according to which the costs for the Swiss economy in case of an exit would be considerable.

However, *Luzi Stamm*, National Councillor Swiss Peoples Party, Canton Argovia, stated in the debate, that these studies were limited to the negative consequences of the termination of the bilateral although there would be many positive aspects for Switzerland: for example, it could claim higher lorry toll on the transalpine roads compared to the Land Transport Agreement, or after termination of the Schengen/Dublin agreement it would immediately issue direct and efficient agreements with the police authorities of each EU country separately. In addition, *Luzi Stamm* doubted that the EU would really apply the «guillotine clause», i.e. cancelling all of the seven bilateral agreements I and eventually some of the bilateral II.

One can only agree on this positive perspective. In fact, it is not very likely that

the EU would cancel the FPM agreement, from which in particular the neighbouring countries of Switzerland benefit greatly, even more as we do. With regards to the agreement on land transport, it is fully in the EU's interest. And not only Switzerland can do without a contract, such as Schengen/Dublin, which works (more or less) under fair weather, but turns out to be quite unfit in a crisis when the wind becomes rough. The education agreement has given us blessings such as Pisa and Bologna, and participation in EU research projects turned out to be more expensive compared to cooperation with foreign research institutions on an autonomous basis. These are just a few examples.

Special topic: Ticino safeguard model

Three days after the Federal Council the Government and the Parliament of the Canton of Ticino introduced its own model of a safeguard clause and it rightly expects understanding and accommodation of the Confederates for its precarious situation now: "The Canton of Ticino suffers for a long time the downsides of the FMP. Daily over 60,000 Italians commute as cross-border workers into the Ticino – more than every fourth employee comes from the southern neighbouring country."

To remedy this, the Ticino Government has hired the former Secretary to the Federal Government and now ETH Professor *Michael Ambühl*, who has presented a "bottom-up protection clause" on 7 March in a press conference. This is not based on immigration, but on the regional labour market, on measurable indicators like wages and unemployment rates (source: SRF from 7.3.2016).

An interesting idea, that could be applied according to *Ambühl* in heavily affected regions or if necessary in the whole Switzerland.

How to get to more engineers in Switzerland?

In short referring to an initiative that banks on more training of lacking professionals living inland, in order to make better use of the priority of nationals in the recruitment and so to oppose in a positive way against the mass immigration. ("Residents" are not only Swiss citizens, but also foreigners living in Switzerland.)

- Interpellation 15.4262 by *Pirmin Bishop*, State Councillor CVP, on 10 March in the Council of States: "Missing engineers, import or educate them?" *Pirmin Bishop*: "If you believe in data of the Swiss Engineers and Architects Association, the concerned companies need per year 3,000 new qualified employees – 3,000. Currently, and for years now, a quarter of these, so 750

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Briefly about things to know concerning the legislative procedure

The *National Council* (200 seats, according to population of the cantons) and the *Council of States* (46 seats, two for each canton/1 per half-canton) are absolutely equal. Both discuss and decide separately on all businesses in the National Council chamber respectively in the chamber of the Council of States.

First Council and Second Council: The presidents of the two councils are authorized to determine which of both councils shall deal with a business as first Council or as second Council.

The sessions take place four times a year which in total mean twelve weeks. Both, the members of the National Council and the members of the Council of States are militia parliamentarians. During the rest of the year each of them pursues a profession. This is an invaluable benefit as it makes them more independent: Those who are not elected any more by the people will not be without jobs.

Commissions: Commissions consist of a certain number of members of the Councils. Their task is to discuss the businesses intended for the session in advance. Both, National Council and Council of States, have a Foreign Policy Committee (APK), a Committee for Legal Affairs (RK), etc., in which the political parties are represented according to their numbers of seats.

"Differenzbereinigungsverfahren" (procedure for reconciling the versions

of the two chambers): If the two Councils do not agree on a question, the question goes three times back and forth. If there are still differences, a conciliation committee is convened, in which each Council sends the same number of members. The compromise found by the conciliation committee is submitted separately for vote to the National Council and the Council of States. If again they should disagree the bill fails. An example: The Council of States kept on rejecting the Prevention Act after the conciliation committee and by this the act was off the table.

Parliamentary means (virtually the tools of the parliamentary trade), *Parliamentary Initiative*: Each member may propose constitutional articles, laws or federal decrees.

Motion: A Council member, a political group or a parliamentary commission give mandatory order to the Federal Council, for example, to present a draft act. In order to let this happen both Councils must agree.

Postulate: An order to the Federal Council to check whether a draft act has to be presented or a measure to be taken. Only the postulant's Council must agree.

Interpellation: The Federal Council is requested written information on important events or problems, followed by a discussion in the Council of the questioner.

"Decisions concerning State..."
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people are coming from abroad, plain and simply spoken because there is not a sufficient number of correspondingly qualified and trained professionals in this country." To do so, the Federal Council has launched a *Specialist Initiative* (FKI): Among others, measures are planned to promote the professional baccalaureate; projects are already started at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zürich (ETH) to raise at the elementary schools "awareness and motivation of children and adolescents for the MINT areas". (MINT = mathematics, Information Technology, Natural sciences and Technology)

Discussions like these motivate me, and surely some of the readers of this article as well, to inform the National Council and the Council of States as well as the politicians in the cantons and communities about the catastrophic consequences of the ongoing educational reforms (Curriculum 21, teacher training, etc.), which will by no means bring forth more engineers and other MINT-professionals, but more and more professional beginners which were not taught in reading, writing and calculus by teachers, not speaking of focussed learning habits and the necessary perseverance. Contributing something useful to the education of natural scientists, engineers and technicians means to get active in his own canton to set up a suitable curriculum and respectively educated teachers.

TTIP and TiSA:

Should Switzerland step on a train with a questionable destination?

On 29 February 2016, the National Council debated about two postulates regarding Switzerland's stand on TTIP and TiSA.

– Postulate 14.4186 from *Gerhard Pfister*, member of National Council CVP ZG, which demands a report on a strategy regarding TTIP and TiSA from the Federal Council: "The strategy should focus on chances and opportunities which could come out of both of these agreements for the Swiss economy."

Jacqueline Badran, SP ZH, turns against this: "Mr Pfister, you say that you don't want any taboos, but anticipate the outcome of the report by saying: I am focussing on chances and opportunities. [...]"

And all this upon a bill which could mean massive damage to Switzerland, namely dumping, namely Freeze of Legislation. These are serious demo-

cratic problems! I really want to hear something about that."

We as citizens kindly affiliate with this demand. Federal president Schneider-Amann created a masterpiece in his following plea to the National Council about consenting with the Pfister postulate by not losing a single word about the content of these two planned agreements, which are controversial throughout the whole of Europe. Federal Council Schneider-Amann to TTIP: "I note that eleven rounds of negotiations have taken place. We have our information from first-hand: from the part of the European Union by the responsible Commissioner *Cecilia Malmström* and her direct surroundings and from the Americans by *Michael Froman*, the *Trade Representative*, who leads the negotiations under mandate, and his surroundings. So we know that progress has been made in these eleven rounds of negotiations. We also know that a termination of the *Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership* (TTIP) is still sought in the 'term of office' of President *Obama*. We also hear from those chief negotiators that it happens like everywhere when negotiations are carried out: that the most sensitive points come on the table only at the last moment and only in the very last moment an attempt is made to reach an agreement." He continues in this tenor and leads to the statement that Switzerland must unconditionally participate in time, but of course cannot expect to take any influence.

Hearing these fatalistic tones from the Federal Council we should remember the negotiator *Walter Stucki*, the "great Stucki", who has taken it up in the 20th century with the great powers, especially the US and achieved amazing results of negotiations for Switzerland, because he knew for whom he took a stand: for the interests of Switzerland.

The National Council approved the postulate Pfister with 142 to 49 votes. The votes against came from all 11 Greens, from the majority of the Social Democrats (30) and from 8 SVP Councils.

From the green faction then came the second motion on which the National Council voted also on 29 February.

– Postulate 14.3314 of *Adele Thorens Goumaz*, calling the Federal Council, to examine by which measures Switzerland can "preserve Switzerland's environmental and social standards" in the case of the conclusion of TTIP.

Here is an excerpt of the worth reading commentary of the Greens, which is recommended to be read as a whole: "The EU and the US are currently negotiating a transatlantic trade and in-

vestment partnership. This agreement is sharply criticised in Europe because of the lack of transparency of the negotiations and because the European standards could be affected. According to Federal Councillor Burkhalter the agreement could also lead to a deterioration of standards for food production and agricultural production in Switzerland."

The National Council joined the recommendation of the Federal Council and rejected – without discussion! – the postulate with 129 to 63 votes. (No votes with one accord of the factions of the Greens, the Social Democrats and the Green Liberals and two CVP-votes.)

Concerning the handling of the National Council of these two postulates raises the urgent question: Does the bourgeois majority in all seriousness believe that Switzerland should blindly jump on the questionable TTIP train, against which especially the highly alarmed farmers oppose across Europe? For example in Austria: "Nearly two-thirds of farmers in Austria are critical against the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) sought for by the European Union and the US."⁴ Also in "Schweizer Bauer" from 16 January 2016 fears in European agriculture are recited under the title "Farmers warn: TTIP is our decline" and a study is referenced that concludes, among other things: "Small and medium farms cry [...] havoc: the planned transatlantic free trade agreement TTIP means for Europe more genetic engineering, more hormones in meat – but especially the end of an agriculture as we know it so far".⁵

May we sell our country – and of course the other European countries too – may we sell the people's health and our environment without discussion to an agreement of the US and the EU? Without that we will be informed in concrete terms? If across Europe farmers are protesting our politicians actually need to take this very seriously, rather than trying to jump quickly quickly, on a train, only that we are also there. •

¹ *Bundesgesetz über die Bundesversammlung* from 13 December 2002, Art. 115

² cf. "Keine Ausbeutung der Volksrechte", *Zeit-Fragen* Nr. 38 from 19.9.2011

³ cf. *Bericht der SPK des Ständerates* vom 20.8.2015 and *Medienmitteilung der SPK des Nationalrates* from 5.2.2016 under the title: "Gültigkeit von Volkssinitiativen: Auch Nationalratskommission sieht Handlungsbedarf"

⁴ www.bauernzeitung.ch/news-archiv/2015/oes-terreich-landwirte-kritisch-gegenueber-ttip/

⁵ www.schweizerbauer.ch/politik--wirtschaft/international/landwirte-warnen-ttip-ist-unser-niedergang-26542.html

Radical school reforms are not introduced in the Canton of Appenzell Inner Rhodes

cc. More and more citizens are seeking ways to prevent Curriculum 21 because they are seriously worried about the quality of the Swiss educational system. Therefore popular initiatives were launched in 13 out of the 21 German speaking cantons and supported by a large range of citizens – teachers, parents, entrepreneurs, politicians of all parties and the like.

In this way an unstoppable public educational policy debate has got under way, and it opens the way for members of the cantonal governments to find independent and meaningful ways of dealing with unusable education reforms such as Curriculum 21.

The “Ten Theses about school” by Valais Director of Education *Oskar Freysinger* are the first outstanding example. These theses deserve to be broadcast throughout Switzerland, although for the time being they are but a kind of educational preamble of a curriculum for the bilingual canton of Valais. The Director of Education said that Curriculum 21 will not be simply

adopted in Valais. Instead, it will be determined according to his theses what will be adopted as useful and fitting.

Now Appenzell Inner Rhodes is going to follow a similarly independent path. In the summer of 2015, *Paul Bannwart* submitted a single initiative that was aimed at preventing the curriculum 21. However, the public debate did not move into gear for some considerable time. Even when the Appenzell Great Council decided in November 2015 not to support the initiative against Curriculum 21, there was no broad substantive discussion on the problematic aspects of that reform work.

Only a few weeks before the “Landsgemeinde” was to decide on the initiative on 24 April, some worried Appenzellers finally succeeded in getting a discussion going – brochures were sent out, talks and events were organized. Also articles dealing critically with the curriculum’s content were published in the local media. In the “Landsgemeindemandat” – that is the

message to the assembly of the canton’s electorate – the Ethics Committee already made it clear that the canton would continue to pursue many peculiarities of its educational policy and that it would not implement any exaggerated reforms.

Finally, personal conversations with the “Landamman” [head of the cantonal government] and Director of Education *Roland Inauen* brought about the breakthrough to a good solution for everyone. Paul Bannwart agreed to withdraw his initiative (see the media release below), having received far-reaching substantial assurances that most central reforms of Curriculum 21 would not be implemented in the Canton of Appenzell Inner Rhodes, and that instead there would only be moderate adjustments of learning goals.

The arising public debate on Curriculum 21 bore fruit because it is not possible to get around the beliefs and wishes of the people concerned in a matter. This is encouraging and cause for hope. •

Withdrawal of the initiative “For a strong primary school”

Hereby I withdraw my initiative “For a strong primary school”, which I submitted last summer, provided that this is possible at the present time. By means of this initiative I wanted above all to prevent the introduction of the Curriculum 21. The talks, events and discussions with various exponents gave me the assurance that the new curriculum will be implemented in a pragmatic and moderate way and in the light of the specific Appenzell characteristics. The aspects that I regarded as problematic have been put into perspective.

Over time I was able to ascertain that culture, tradition and Christian principles would be given due consideration in schools even after the implementation of the new curriculum.

I was also assured that there is no intention to prefer self-directed or individualised learning to other methods in class. I had feared that classrooms would have to be rearranged into so-called

learning environments, where the students were to learn alone using the computer or other resources provided by the teacher, but this fear proved to be unfounded. Teachers will continue to be responsible for the management of their classroom. I was told that a change in the role of the teacher in direction of a mainly accompanying coach was not envisaged.

It also became clear that the introduction of the so-called *mixed-age learning* is also not an issue for our schools. They will continue to be led in age-group classes or – in the smaller school communities – in the proven way of several classes at the same time, for example first and second class together. An introduction of the first level (kindergarten and the first and second class together) was not intended at any time. At the same time, the electorate’s decision at the “Landsgemeinde” of 2008 is also to be respected, i.e. the first year of kindergarten will remain voluntary.

In the language question the Canton of Appenzell Inner Rhodes has taken a clear public stance. According to the Landamman and the Director of Education this strategy will not be affected in the least without specific need: only one foreign language is to be taught in the first three years of primary school, the second language will follow later.

I welcomed the fact that the Canton of Appenzell Inner Rhodes remains reluctant about annual standardised tests at the federal level.

By means of the open discussions I took part in, I hope to have contributed to a moderate development of our educational system, and I thank you for our constructive conversations.

*Paul Bannwart, 24 March 2016
9050 Appenzell Steinegg*

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

The Saline of Ulcinj

by Dr phil Niels Peter Ammitzboell

The dispute over a jewel of nature in the south of Montenegro has lasted already several years. The tug-of-war is the preservation of one of the largest salt production facilities in Europe as staging and wintering area for migratory birds, the Saline of Ulcinj (*Ulcinjaska solana*). The fate of the Saline seems indeed to be sealed already as the area was sold and the salt production lies idle. Without salt extraction activities the large area is not flooded any longer with seawater. The pools are drying up and the birds, as numerous and varied as they are in their appearance, stay out.

Anyone who has ever spent a day in the Saline and who could closely observe the ornithological features like the ones of the Stone Curlew, who has experienced the wind over the shallow water areas and

the incessant cries of waders and terns around him, shall never again forget these fantastic impressions. The Osprey gets his victims, large groups of Greater Flamingos fly up again and again to soon stand back in the water, Kingfishers hunt the narrow water channels, small herds of sheep graze on the narrow dikes which separate the basins that are flooded regularly. Cows find their food on the



Ulcinjaska solana (picture npa)



Flamingos, Ulcinj Salina (picture ©Center for Protection and Research of Birds of Montenegro)

wide grass edges of the Saline. The unique biotope of the Saline of Ulcinj is visited by touristic, ornithologically interested groups every year in spring. It is an integral part of an ornithological trip in Montenegro.

Unfortunately, this gem shall die. It shall give way to a large hotel complex, that recommends the mud and the

salt from the Saline for “ecological” applications. That sounds nice, however, smells of pure moneymaking. Montenegro has hotels and beaches enough. The beaches could be better maintained especially in the south. More tourists would come and bring some money to the poor residents. Others, huge hotel facilities that call themselves ecological, such as the one in the north of Lake Skadar are empty. They are overpriced swank facilities, from which the residents hardly benefit.

With a good water management and some facilities for visitors as well as friendly tourist guides with bird knowledge the saline could be made again a wonderful place of recreation for men and birds.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)

European Breeding Bird Atlas

npa. Currently, extensive monitoring of Europe’s breeding bird population – which was launched in 2013 and will run until 2017 – is being done in order to gain a full-scale scientific overview of the species.

First of all, the species’ distribution and abundance are to be examined – an acquisition of data meant to enable the exact collection and depiction of breeding occurrence.

In order to be able to systematically examine the data, the respective countries are being divided in a grid of 50x50 km squares. Ornithologists and knowledgeable volunteers familiar with the birds and their voices are to patrol within one of these squares for two hours each whilst observing, listening and recording.

Switzerland itself is famous for its high-quality national atlas of breeding birds, which is periodically renewed. Consequently, *Swiss Ornithological Institute* in Sempach assists countries with fewer financial resources and fewer volunteers for data collection.

In Albania, for instance, Mr and Mrs *Ernst* of Klingenthal, Germany, undertook several expeditions for the second European Breeding Bird Atlas, EBBA 2. Due to hunting and deforestation, Albania does not have much of a bird population. Within a time period of three weeks, the Ernsts were able to record a total number of 132 species only.

The situation does not look quite as bleak in Montenegro. Here, the salines of Ulcinj and Tivat, the wetlands of Bul-

jarica as well as the sand dunes of Bojana’s estuary play an important role as a breeding ground. European Rollers, Eurasian Stone-curlews, Common Kingfishers, Collared Pratincoles, Pygmy Cormorants, Black-winged Stilts, Long-eared Owls, Little Terns, Common Terns, Little Owls, waders, Eurasian Hoopoes, Spanish Sparrows and many more are breeding regularly in the saline of Ulcinj. Without the flooding by water, these birds would most certainly disappear.

Lastly, a high number of breeding birds is also a good indicator of a country being conscious of its ecological goals. Montenegro has made those goals a priority by writing them into their constitution.

(Translation *Current Concerns*)