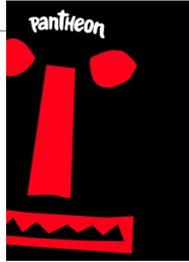


# Problems of capitalism, the cumulative interest principle and the equity-based pension scheme

. . . examined by political cabaret artist **Volker Pispers**.

Presented in the [Pantheon Theater](#) in Bonn 07.02.2011, recorded by 3Sat TV.



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*[translation, subdivision, headings, text adornments: Eulenspargel]*

☺ ~ applause

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## Footnotes:

- 1) Former soccer trainer, weighed 162kg
- 2) Premier of North Rhine Westphalia
- 3) Foreign Minister, FDP
- 4) "Pension gap" [Rentenlücke] = the difference between what you get and what you need, supposing you need more than you get, and however your need is defined
- 5) Family minister, CDU
- 6) Fashion designer, artist and photographer
- 7) Socialist Unity Party (GDR ~ German Democratic Republic ~ East Germany)
- 9) The 'Iron Curtain'

CDU~conservatives, FDP~liberals, SPD~socialists

## 1. Climate endangers jobs

Jobs - the killer argument in every discussion. That's why we cannot stop the climate change. Because all measures would put jobs in jeopardy this climate change thing just doesn't fit in. Some other time maybe. Of what use is a rescued planet if we have no jobs any more? Then better the other way around ☺ Yes, first and foremost we have to save the jobs. Whether we really need the planet has not yet been scientifically proven ☺ Those studies are just a bunch of computer simulations.

Back in the 70s the Club of Rome predicted what is happening today. Capitalism exploits the resources of the planet without restraint, robs us of the basis of our existence. And the people themselves are being exploited as well. And you don't even have to be a Marxist to understand that. You just have to at last take capitalism seriously.

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## 2. The new religion

Capitalism is our new religion. At bottom our substitute religion. We have lost all belief. Except that we still believe in the liberal market economy. And because by now the liberal market economy, i.e. capitalism, really is our religion today you are no longer allowed to say anything against it. If you do, it's classed as blasphemy. You are immediately branded a heretic and screwball. And the gods that we worship in capitalism are Growth and Productivity. Those are our gods. Employment through growth, the mantra of our politicians.

Employment is only possible through growth. Ever more and more. And that makes people happy and satisfied. More and ever more ...

Since the last 25 years in this country we have the situation of producing more than we can consume. We throw away a third of all the food that we produce. We throw away a third of all the medicines we produce and get prescribed. And there is a surplus of everything. There is even too much money. That's the crazy thing about this economic situation. Some people sit around and don't know how to make ends meet, while others possess so much money that they don't know where to invest it. The frantic search for investment opportunities is pushing so much money around the globe that ever new finance products have had to be dreamed up to absorb it. The interest rate [today] is at basement level. And interest is the price for money. If too much of something is available, the price sinks. And the interest rates are at rock-bottom - but not for the Greeks. ☺ And there you can see that it's all completely cockeyed, and has no contact with reality. Too much of everything is available, but we need growth. The gravestone of capitalism will one day carry the inscription: Too much was not enough. ☺ ☺ Eternal, everlasting growth is what we need. That's not easy - ask Reiner Calmund<sup>1</sup>. ☺ We have to keep going.

It has to be ever more. Every year businesses must earn more than the year before. If an enterprise earns the same sum three years in a row, the analysts indicate thumbs down - the shares are devaluated. And with that your capital-funded pension goes down the toilet quicker than the sea level can rise. The Deutsche Bank has now arrived at 26% return on equity just because it has to be continuously more than the previous year. And we achieve that through [higher] productivity.

Productivity - the second of our gods: producing ever more in ever shorter time with ever fewer workers. And in this we Germans have always been world champions. We are way up in front when it comes to productivity. But meantime even the German workaholics are nearing their limits. We

have now reached a level of productivity that the people who still have jobs become ill. Everywhere in Germany psychosomatic diseases are on the increase. A while back, burnout was something quite exotic. Today it's present across the board in all occupations. People become ill because they have work. The rest becomes ill because they don't have work. In this way capitalism does something for everybody. ☺ But you can't escape it: once you have adopted this religion then you have to live it, you have to work and fight and be productive and push growth ever more and ever more ...

### **2a. Example auto industry**

VW said: We need 7% yearly productivity growth in order to maintain our industrial location here. VW alone. 7% yearly productivity growth - how do you achieve that? You could, for example, yearly produce the same number of cars but with 7% fewer workers. How often can you lay off 7% of the workforce until no-one is left? ☺ Not really future-proof, or...? In 20 years from now you will want to have your equity-based pension secured with your VW shares. Until then you have to sit it through. The other variant would be: produce with the same number of workers but pay them 7% less every year. Until they can't come to work any longer - That doesn't work either. The only viable possibility is: with the same number of workers and the same pay produce 7% more cars. That's how VW manages it. But this is not really the problem. The problem is selling these things. In Europe we already produce 20% more cars than can be sold. And on top of this VW wants 7% gain in productivity - annually! That's exponential growth. Already your grandchildren will have to buy a new car every second month. ☺

### **2b. Example mobile phones**

With mobile phones we have already reached this point. ☺ For years now we have more mobile phones than Germans. Above all, more mobile phones than Germans who know how to use them. ☺ ☺ But aren't mobile phones the growth market per se? Incessantly new mobile phone corner shops are opening up everywhere. I have the impression that in pedestrian precincts only two kinds of businesses open up: tanning salons and mobile phone shops. That's the climax of Western civilization. You let your brain be fried as preparation for your next mobile phone purchase. ☺ ☺ And with a trained eye you can judge from a person's skin tan how many mobile phones he has in his pockets. ☺ ☺ And you have to play along, you have to keep buying, buying, buying ... Especially mobile phones, it's a growth market - you have to keep pace, and buy a mobile phone every month. And don't come up with the that old excuse - you only have two ears. That's absolutely no argument. You possess 20 pairs of shoes and yet only have two feet. There you got the message. ☺ Yes, in that area women at least have a natural capitalistic intelligence. ☺

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## **3. The driving force**

Capitalism is like the fairy-tale of the fisher and his wife. Still remember that old story? The fisherman was at sea and caught a flounder, and the flounder fulfilled a wish for him. He comes home and his wife says: where did you get that? That's a present I got from a flounder. His wife says: not bad, but go back out, because I could do with this and that. He goes to sea once more and tells the flounder: flounder, I'm very sorry, it's quite unpleasant for me, but my wife isn't satisfied yet - she also wants such-and-such. OK, no problem, you will also get that. The fisher comes home. His wife says: it's working fine. Listen, I also need this and that. And she sends him back out to sea. And always the same story, on and on -

“Flounder, flounder in the sea,  
Come, I pray thee, here to me;  
For my wife, good Ilsabil,

Wills not as I'd have her will . . ."

She sends him out again and again, the woman just can't get enough. She is never satisfied or happy, she wants still more, more, ever more. Eventually the flounder says: As far as I'm concerned, you two can stuff it - I'll take everything back. That's the fairy-tale of the fisherman and his wife, and the fairy-tale of capitalism. We have ever more, more, more, more, more. And no-one reaches satisfaction, and everything breaks down. And the driving force in the system just happens to be the women. Look, I didn't write the tale, ☺ ☺ I'm only the bringer of the bad news. Well, [*towards the audience*] when does your husband buy a new pair of trousers? It's when you say: you can't wear *those* pants any longer. ☺ ☺ We men replace things unwillingly when they're so out of order that they have become physically impossible to wear. That's what you call *sustainable economy*. If women were to only buy those trousers they need, our industry would go broke. If women were to buy only those clothes and the stuff they really need, then Karl Lagerfeld<sup>6</sup> would starve. And he isn't looking all that good right now ... ☺ ☺

[←](#)

## 4. Prosperity needs slaves

### 4a. A german myth

Ever more, ever more. Productivity, growth. And then, our third god: our diligence, the myth of hard work in Germany. Especially West Germany. The German was always proud of his diligence. And as the Wall<sup>9</sup> fell, many West Germans said: See what the East looks like. Look over there how appallingly shabby everything is. They couldn't have done any work at all. It's just as ruined as it was at the end of the war. Over here everything was also broken down. And now? What do you see here, and what does it look like there? We were diligent. We rolled up our sleeves. And no-one gave us anything for free. And now we're supposed to feed *them* - *they* must have loafed around the whole time. The country there still looks like the worst areas in the south of Italy. Only difference: the shitty weather. ☺

No, misery in the rain is something that the German despises. ☺ ☺ Misery in sunshine is quite relaxing. Wretchedness at 40 degrees in the shade, with beach and palms. That's what the German is fond of, that's where he can relax. Wretchedness in the rain he doesn't like at all. We were always proud of our diligence. The West German regulars' table was always diligent. And rolled up the sleeves. The Germans declare: All people in the world could have a life like ours if they would only work hard. That's the myth: be diligent and reap your reward. Africa is so rich in natural resources. If he would pull himself together the African could lead a totally different life. ☺ But here we are out of luck.

The Chinese is not so lazy. ☺ Neither is the population in India. And there are more disasters to come: the Romanian has decided to start working. ☺ Now that isn't exactly the role of the Romanian, is it? The Romanian is supposed to run around in the woods as a gang of thieves. We construct mobile phones, the Romanian pilfers mobile phones. That was the agreement. And now they steal whole mobile phone *factories*. Nokia moved from Bochum [Ruhr] to Romania. And the Germans, who were always proud of the free market economy, suddenly moan about *predator* capitalism.

All of a sudden talk is of *predator* capitalism. Now what might that be? capitalism -> *predator* capitalism, water -> *wet* water? ☺ What was it that Nokia did? Did the Nokia Board of Directors meet to conclude: Which is the most beautiful city in the world? ☺ ☺ Where is it absolutely essential that we build a plant? Not at all. Nokia was forced to come to Bochum by the offer of a

check, with a €70 million bribe. In plain language: a subvention. We paid Nokia €70 million. *That's* why Nokia came to Bochum. And two years ago the sum was used up. And then Nokia asked: is any more coming? And Rüttgers<sup>2</sup> answered: nope. We have nothing more to offer. That was in 2008, do you remember? At that time we still had an economic boom. Then you don't give money away. Were we already in the crisis, then we would have found a way to help Nokia. ☺ ☺ The Nokia employees would have all been given a free Opel [car]. But in a boom period? And so Nokia said: good, then we'll go to Romania, they are giving us €20 million for the 200 jobs. First we'll transfer the jobs there, and then we'll see further.

And all of a sudden, as Nokia moved to Romania, the West Germans realized for the first time: The Wall had been our *friend*. Clearly, we in the West profited from the Wall. The greater part of our prosperity has been thanks to the Wall. We became prosperous not because of our diligence. We have so much because we could buy so much for our income. We were *a high-wage country with cheap imports*. For this situation we have to thank the Wall. The Wall kept away the cheap workforce of Eastern Europe but allowed the cheap imports through - a perfect semi-permeable membrane. And we could heartily express our indignation over the injustice of the Wall. A true win-win situation. ☺ ☺

The [US] Americans have just erected such a Wall. Have you seen it? The Americans constructed a Fence towards Mexico through the desert over hundreds of kilometers, with barbed wire and heavily guarded. The Ossies [East Germans] would feel themselves quite at home. ☺ The Americans are trying to keep the cheap labour in Latin America at bay. To achieve that they spend hundreds of millions of Dollars. Each year. We got the effect scot free. And for all those years the Wall maintenance was also free. ☺ ☺ And as the Wall Operating Company, ☺ ☺ as the [GDR](#) got into serious economic difficulties for the first time in 1983, Franz-Josef Strauß [then Bavarian Premier] kept them alive with a billion DM credit. Exactly as with the Greeks today. We offered help willingly. 1.5 billion DM for the [GDR](#), at that time a really huge sum.

#### **4b. A lucrative investment**

There was a big discussion - should such a regime be given assistance, morally and anyhow? Strauß said: you have to keep a good thing going. ☺ I wouldn't claim that Strauß was a fan of the SED<sup>7</sup>. But Strauß knew how important the Wall was for business in West Germany. Strauß was a dealer and business guy. He didn't die as millionaire because he was Premier in Bavaria. No. Strauß was the prototype for the conservative-business alliance in Germany. That's quite clear. Strauß made deals with the fascist Pinochet in Chile, and with Honecker, a Communist. He made deals with Idi Amin, Burkassa, Gaddhafi, and Khoumeni.

For a Conservative it makes no difference. When it comes to business deals he doesn't let himself be hampered by values or moral considerations. ☺ The Conservative deal-maker doesn't join the church congregation on Sundays because he believes in God or wants to hear that crap about sexually disturbed priests. ☺ ☺ The Conservative takes a seat on the hard bench because he hopes to find business partners there. For the same reason he is member of the carnival society, the shooting association, the traditional costume club, and in the [CDU](#). For him it's all the same. ☺ ☺ The Conservative is successful because he is capable of focussing on business: dough, dough, dough. And that's why we call them the Blacks. ☺ And when the Leftist sees this, he gets Red with rage. And the Liberal gets Yellow with envy. That's how this all hangs together. ☺ ☺

1.5 billion DM for the [GDR](#), back in 1983. This sufficed the GDR with its 17 million detainees for a further six years. ☺ From that you can judge how well they managed their household! Today that's

nominally €750 million. The Hypo Real Estate [Bank] wouldn't even need two hours to send it through the chimney. ☺ The GDR was broke. And how we laughed, back then. Compared to today's Greece and the USA the GDR financial basis back then was eminently solid.

#### **4c. *Aside: Who's afraid of the big public debt?***

Compare the public debt then with what we have today. It's ludicrous. The amount of debt is of no import whatever. Lenders are not interested in getting their loan back. What they want are *interest payments*. How much debt you have doesn't matter. This is devoid of all reason and sense, ladies and gentlemen. The Greeks have a public debt of €26,000 per capita, the Americans have €30,000. And now Barack Obama has presented the household plan for his term of office. Over the four years he intends to increase the per capita public debt by €15,000. I.e. the Greeks have public debt of €27,000 per capita. And the US Americans now have €45,000. And who is credit-worthy?? The Americans of course. They must get their loans, because they have an army. It would otherwise drop by to collect the money. ☺ ☺

But the life of the Greeks is being turned into hell. They are being forced to save €10 billion in their household. For Germany that would amount to €80 billion annually. Can you imagine what would happen here? And the Greeks have to see to it that they reach this goal. Not saving the €10 billion is going to get them into real trouble. What would happen then? I think then they would have to pay a penalty. And from what cash would they pay this penalty? I think Merkel would lend them the sum, don't you? ☺ ☺ This is all crazy. ☺ ☺ Barack Obama has set up a household plan for his four years in office - you can check it in the media. He says: in the first year I will allow \$1,600 billion new debt. \$1,600 *billion*! So, in the second year I will make another \$1,600 billion new debt. In the third year also \$1,600 billion. And for the fourth year he stated that he would halve the public debt. Right, only in the fourth year. He needs time to prepare the trick. ☺ The gag is to state that the public debt will be halved. In reality nothing is going to be paid back to the lenders. What Barack Obama means is that during the fourth year he will make only half as much *new* debt as he did in the previous three years. Try to work out this kind of diet plan with your doctor. ☺ Tell him: during the fourth year I don't want to reduce, but I want to gain only half as much ☺ as in the first three years. And in medical circles they are debating about when a brain should be considered dead. ☺

It's great. The amount of debt plays no role whatever. The question is whether fresh money is obtainable to pay the interest. That's clear. And when Americans don't raise enough loans they go over to printing the money. Within the Eurozone we now do that too. Over the last two years the Americans have been printing money without end. Had the [GDR](#) back in 1983 printed money, they would have been criticized: that's only monopoly money, what do they want to do with it? The Americans are now also printing play-money. The dollar is worth almost nothing now. Only, you [*the audience*] are buying the dollars from the Americans for your old-age pension - so, good luck! ☺ ☺

#### **4d. *A german myth: further example***

Another little example of the functioning of the *Wall*<sup>9</sup>. You all know the Billy Shelf. Billy Shelf is now 30 years old - Ikea staged a big anniversary last year. Even as students we could afford the Billy Shelf. A stable shelf with a backwall, everything you would want. It was cheap. Why? Because back then Ikea produced in the GDR. They even produced in GDR *jails* - did you know that? The Billy Shelves were produced by political prisoners. Think about that next time you dust the shelf off at home. ☺ It had all the features of a typical GDR product. You may remember - one time the holes were missing, then the screws. ☺ But we could afford it! If Ikea had produced the stuff in West Germany paying West German wages, no student could have afforded it. Would have been much too expensive. But the brothers and sisters in the GDR worked for chicken feed. They

didn't get what we would call a wage. They themselves couldn't afford Ikea; and they couldn't renovate their houses.

And now maybe you understand. One Euro [an hour] jobbers have *always* existed in Germany. It's just that before 1990 we did not have to see them because of the Wall. ☺ The Wall tumbled and Ikea moved on. At first to produce in the Czech Republic. Then the EU came to the Czech Republic. Wages rose. Ikea moved on. Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan. Always a step further.

*I don't want to join the fustspots in the back rows to discuss the time order. Don't laugh - at night high school teachers are allowed to run around freely...* ☺ ☺

The point is neither the geography nor the details. The point concerns the underlying structures. The enterprises are still moving on. To countries where the wages are still lower than where the firms are currently producing. A point will come when they have circumnavigated the globe. Just wait. When you in Bonn are prepared to work for €2 an hour because otherwise you get nothing between your teeth, then Ikea will come and produce here. And then you can take your revenge on the Chinese with a shitty little Billy Shelf.

The lie of capitalism consists of leading people to believe that everyone can reach a certain standard of living, they just have to work hard enough. And this level is the standard of our middle class. This is a lie and we must take leave from it once and for all. In this country you can see that it doesn't work. You can work as hard as you like. In particular professions it doesn't help you at all. As doctor's receptionist, as pharmacy employee, as cleaning woman, as taxi driver, as geriatric nurse you can be as diligent as you want. You will never get anywhere. It has nothing to do with diligence. And those people who claim, we need a low-wage sector in order to keep the economy running, are saying: the standard of living of this middle class with car and holidays and all the other niceties can only be maintained if a third of the population works for board and lodging only. Whether behind the Wall or here in the neighbourhood. We need these modern slaves. And you ought to be honest and state: that is how I am. Let "Slave driver" be tattooed on your forehead, so that everyone knows how things stand. But we have a democracy. Alternatively you could use the abbreviation "[FDP](#)", that gives you room for more. ☺ Only stop telling the people that in this country everyone can achieve success. OK, of course you can say: each person can become a millionaire but not *all* people can. That's like the lottery. In the lottery the chance is one to 140 million. People play in the lottery regardless of this. Because they hope that they will be the one in 140 million! In order for one person to become rich, 20 million others have to throw their money away.

That's the principle of capitalism. A small group becomes ever richer and their situation gets better and better. And the situation of a growing number of people gets worse and worse. This is the principle behind this kind of economy. That's the end effect of interest accumulation. And if anyone tells you anything different, then he is either a complete idiot, or an extremely unappetizing body orifice, ladies and gentlemen. ☺

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## 5. Prosperity needs natural resources

All people [around the globe] with our standard of living - that's what common sense tells you - is impossible. The planet doesn't have so much water. We also cannot produce so much energy. As the Asians began thinking of two meals a day two years ago the price of rice rose and for us that little hunger in between became quite dear. What we have currently is not possible for all. The resources of this planet are limited, completely in contrast to the stupidity in the [FDP](#). This is of course

unlimited. Unfortunately it cannot be transformed into energy - science can't yet split anything as minute as [FDP](#) brains. ☹ ☹ Impossible. Should all Chinese and all Indians possess as many cars per capita as we have, then on the way to work we could turn the ignition key and drive around for 15 minutes. Then the oil would be used up, forever. And the atmosphere as well of course.

Two years back the EU Commission stated: we cannot influence the number of cars, because we have a free market economy. But we can control the carbon dioxide exhausted per car. We will pass a law requiring that cars produce less dirt. Then more cars can drive around at the same burden to the environment. Instantly the German auto industry protested: these plans will destroy us! The headline was "65 thousand jobs in the auto industry in danger if these plans are realized". The man-on-the-street said to himself: 65 thousand jobs? This law has to be stopped. And I said: where is the connection between these two things? Why are jobs in the auto industry lost if cars push out less dirt? I was on the verge of calling the editor of the paper to ask him: from which jackass did he get this information? ☹ Where is the connection? I thought about it. There was only one possible connection. The number of workers needed to screw together a car must depend on the carbon dioxide emitted by the car. Or they assume that Germans will buy no more cars if not enough carbon dioxide comes out of the rear. True to the motto: then I will quit driving. If no dirt comes out of the rear then I will go on foot. ☹ I will lose all pleasure in driving! ☹ ☹ Tell me Mr. Wissman, which prerequisites do you have to fulfill in order to get a job as speaker of the auto industry? Must you have worked for years on end at your own exhaust? You present us this EU plan as a *dilemma*! Should we save the jobs in the auto industry or the planet? That's the dilemma!

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## 6. Merkel and the german soul

Then it also becomes a dilemma for politics, for the Chancellor. And then Merkel stands there, the way she always stands when she stands around like that. She just stands there and waits for something. Because ad-lib isn't really her thing. So, now we will proceed to do something. Merkel stands there. And then she looks in her characteristic manner ... She tries to give the crisis a face. ☹ ☹ Then she looks in that way. She stands and looks. Then I always think: She is as curious about what she is about to say as I am. ☹ ☹ That's the way she looks, isn't it? Exactly like that. And then Merkel realizes that she has been hesitating too long, the atmosphere is cooling down. Then she preheats with her speech bubbles. That woman has an inexhaustible speech bubble reservoir. Now comes the first bubble. Merkel says: In this question we in Europe must not let ourselves be divided. The sentence is grammatically just as correct as it is devoid of meaning. But spoken as a *whole* sentence, and in that the German is not spoiled by his politicians. And in future please pay attention to this: the more contentless what Merkel says, the more polished and inane, the more energetically she precedes it with: And therefore, I state consciously ... She always has to remind us that she is in a state of consciousness. ☹ ☹ Otherwise you could think she is just aimlessly babbling along. At times she also says: And therefore, I state *quite* consciously . . . Then she is *completely* conscious. We in Europe must not let ourselves to be divided on this question. The inversion of the phrase works better still. Merkel then says: In this question we must show unity. This immediately enthuses the German. Because unity, harmony, closedness is the thing for the German per se. Yes, the German likes things to be closed: trousers, world view, everything has to be closed and wrapped up. Open-mindedness, something new from the world, is nothing that the German relishes. No, no. That's why he found the time so pleasing as the Russian stood on the doorstep. Then you didn't need to go out. ☹ ☹ Everything was closed.

Political parties must act in cohesion, that's extremely important! When discussions come up in a

political party - what's right, what's wrong? - then the Press reports: the party is at odds with itself, and the voter turns his back on them in disgust. The German doesn't want to be bothered with the details, they just have to be in unison. The German doesn't care in unison about what. The black-yellow [conservative-liberal] coalition government is not being criticized because they produce bad laws, but because they quarrel. They just need to present unity. That is the most important thing for the German. Unity! The national motto is "Unity and Justice and Freedom", and not "Competence and Justice and Freedom". ☺ ☺ They must agree with one another. ☺ ☺ And when the discussion in a party goes on too long, some party member comes up and says: And now let us again all pull together in concert. That's also exactly how the German on the street sees it: Now there's a sensible man, it's high time they all pull at the same rope. Doesn't matter if the rope happens to hang around his neck. ☺ Main thing, they all pull together. Closed ranks! Party conventions must send out a signal of unity. In the convention if two people run for the one post then the Press writes of a *fight-candidacy* [*Kampfkandidatur*]. And then our journalistic brain-dwarfs are ultimately beside themselves. A *fight-candidacy*! A *fight-candidacy* - that will tear the party asunder! Tatarataah! Tatarataah! With only *one* candidate you call it a ballot. ☺ ☺ And we also have a *destiny-ballot* [*Schicksalswahl*]. Every four years we have a *destiny*-election. OK, considering the candidates and parties we have available, that's fate. ☺

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## 7. Political rituals and disinformation

But a *direction*-ballot [*Richtungswahl*], I beg you? You can always renew the mixture: [CDU](#), [CSU](#), [FDP](#), [SPD](#), and since 20 years the Greens. But what is a *direction*-ballot supposed to be? What substantial changes have we had? From black-yellow to red-green, over black-red now back to black-yellow . . . Economically they all do the same. They all believe in the same economic model, and all always have the same instruments for the same problems. Nothing at all changes. *destiny*-ballot is ridiculous. We had elections in which emotion played a role, that's true. Stop Strauß! Back then the population was still active in social questions. But today try putting up posters: Stop Merkel! The Germans would say: From doing what . . . ? ☺ ☺ She just wants to play.

An endless loop. And the rituals are always the same. We have been lulled to sleep, ladies and gentlemen. Year in, year out we have this bargaining for wages. And each year we read in the papers: The employees must exercise restraint with their demands otherwise the economic recovery will break down. The employees then duly exercise restraint. The purchasing power drops. A recession begins. Next year the headlines read: Employees must exercise restraint with their wage demands otherwise we will not come out of the recession. In every year over the last 20 years there was a reason for the employees to exercise restraint in their demands. And we have dutifully complied. And so within 20 years we have achieved the transformation from the country with the highest wages in Europe to the country with the lowest. And this has now provoked the protest of the other Euro members, because with our dumping wage level we are ruining their prices. Rituals - over and over again! Environmental catastrophies - over and over again! That was really terrible, this [Gulf of Mexico] oil spill, wasn't it? As much oil spilt as the Exxon Valdez - but daily! And with the Exxon Valdez the clock already stood five minutes before twelve. That clock is so kaputt, ladies and gentlemen. And then - the most wonderful phenomenon in this country - on the day before the school holidays the fuel price rises - always. I find this phenomenon fabulous. And it's always the dollar - have you noticed that? We hear in the news: The oil price has risen, the fuel price will rise, because the dollar . . . Oh! the dollar, says the German. Yes, the dollar . . . You can't do anything about that, can you? One time the dollar is too high, the other time it's too low. You just can't please those analysts. And I'd like to know how the dollar finds out our holiday dates! ☺ ☺

Our newscasts are a complete machinery for the mental enfeeblement of the population and the dissemination of bull-shit, ladies and gentlemen. And the machinery runs non-stop - permanently. ☺ ☺ And everything repeats itself, endlessly. You can check for yourself in the evening. Then the news of 25 years ago is broadcasted. Have you seen it? The first time I was completely confused. I sat at night in a hotel, casually zapped through the channels, until I got to the news. There I stopped. I have to keep abreast of the news. So, what's doing at the moment? OK, I knew that already, was last week. And that was yesterday. Why don't they bring what's really new? It took me five minutes to realize that this speaker is already *dead!* ☺ ☺

An endless loop. And nothing changes, ladies and gentlemen. Every four years these parties get elected in a new coalition. And what is the difference, ladies and gentlemen? Absolutely nothing.

[←](#)

## 8. Social insurance lies

Name any of the areas I mentioned in which an improvement has taken place over the past 40 years. Have the endless reforms improved anything in the health sector? Hospitals, care homes - anything better? The pension gap<sup>4</sup> - that's a huge topic: we all *know* that the levy-financed scheme has become unaffordable. That's what we were persuaded into believing. That's why today you have an [additional] capital-based pension. Which you can lose completely, as you notice right now. Everything you have set aside by today can be worthless tomorrow, ladies and gentlemen. Your house can lose its value completely. Your house is worth as much as someone is prepared to pay if you have to sell it. If you have bad luck, you live in a neighbourhood in which the jobs are gone and no-one wants to move there. In that case you can only eat up your house. You have to be flexible and may need to move somewhere else. Then you can leave your house behind. It's of no value whatsoever. The only thing that cannot go broke is the levy-financed pension that they have talked us out of. This scheme cannot break down, it has survived all crash tests of the last century. You need to understand this pension model. Levy-financed does not mean you pay for 30 years into the pension fund and get the money paid out with interest. Levy-based means: the revenue that people earned this year is apportioned, distributed. We can only distribute what exists. That's sensible housekeeping. The earnings can vary from year to year, but they can never be zero. And during any future crisis something will still be earned. And we distribute this yearly sum-total amongst those whose work created it, and those who are too young to work, and those who are too old. And if you reach the age of 80 you will have profited for 20 years, have paid in for 40 years, and have profited for a further 20 years.

You can't have it any fairer. And it would work perfectly if all those in society with earnings would participate. In Germany the system isn't working because the doctors have their own pension scheme, the architects have their own scheme, the lawyers have their own scheme, the public functionaries have no [contribution-based] scheme, and the politicians have no [contribution-based] pension scheme either. All those who earn a bit more than the average have decoupled themselves from the levy-based pension scheme. In Germany only 27% of the population pays into the levy-based scheme. But 70% expect a pension from that scheme. That can't work of course. If the [GNP](#) rises and the proportion of people who earn wages and salaries dwindles, then *everything* that is earned in the country has to be included in the calculation. And this works.

### 8a. Switzerland does it better

Switzerland has such a system. Of course the Swiss only have it because they didn't pay attention in arithmetic at school - they have a levy-based pension scheme because they're a trifle dense! In

Switzerland you contribute from all your sorts of income. From rent, interest, dividends, speculation gains, and from wages/salaries. A smaller percentage as here, but from *all* sources. And this guarantees everyone in Switzerland a basic pension *high enough that he can live from it*. Of course that's only possible because Switzerland is a prime example of a socialist country ☺ You will have guessed this. In case you've never been there, you should be aware that the Swiss border is secured by means of spring guns [Selbstschussanlagen]. At the borders the rich always have to be caught with a lasso to prevent them from escaping.

### **8b Distributing the load fairly**

In our country this system couldn't be implemented at all. If Westerwelle [German foreign minister, [FDP](#)] had to pay into the same fund as his charwoman he would get so many pimples you couldn't recognize him any more, ladies and gentlemen. ☺ And better still is people getting told: our pension system is socially just because everyone pays the *same percentage*. The [SPD](#) always says: strong shoulders must bear more [of the burden]. Levies for the healthcare fund, pension fund, unemployment fund and nursing fund amount to 20% of the gross wage/salary income. Do you imagine for everyone? Mmh.. better stay with the Easter Bunny. If you earn €2000 a month you pay 20% ~ €400 in social insurance levies. Should you earn €4000 gross, you pay 20% ~ €800. If you earn €8000 what do you suppose you pay? 20% ~ €1600? Not quite. You pay €889.93. It doesn't get any more. Amazing, isn't it? What the strong shoulders have to bear. If your salary is €20,000 monthly you still pay only €889.93. It doesn't rise further. You can earn as much as you like. It's the so-called *contribution-assessment-ceiling* [Beitragsbemessungsgrenze]. You can also call it a protection fence for the rich. Above a gross salary of €5500 you cease to pay more into the pension fund. Above €4800 your healthcare fund contribution stops rising. Someone earning €20,000 pays the same sum for healthcare insurance as someone with a salary of €5000. Only, the person earning €5000 pays 20%, and the one earning €20,000 pays only 5% of his income. That is the fairness of our systems. The strong shoulders must bear more. Yes, on their way home more caviar in their pockets. ☺ ☺ The healthcare system is more batty still, ladies and gentlemen. If your monthly income is permanently over €5000 you are entitled private insurance. You earn €200-300 more than your colleague, and as reward you are allowed a cheaper insurance. Because you earn more. As compensation you get a better medical care. Because you pay less. Try explaining the fairness of that to a person whose IQ is at least slightly above his body temperature.

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## **9. Angst syndrome**

But you can explain these systems to a German a thousand times, the German would say: It doesn't work any more! The pension fund, the pension, the pension gap<sup>4</sup>! The German fears the dispute within the government! They're at it again, aren't they? Driving us crazy! If the coalition negotiations carry on for too long, the spectre of ungovernability and the Weimar circumstances rear up in their heads. Oh-oh! says the German. Oh my God! Then we'll have no government at all! That's worse than a shitty government! I don't want that. ☺

There's no such thing as no government at all. *Something* incompetent always stays in office. Ask in [Hessen](#). ☺ ☺ Or ask the Italians. The Italians haven't had a government for 63 years. And yet they got up every morning and managed to get through the day. And the Italians aren't as dumm as we are. They've seen through the game long ago. The Italians have recognized: those cabbages in Parliament don't have a say anyway. *My* situation, the Italian explains, is determined by big business and by the Mafia bosses in this country. These are the decision makers. And last time round the Italians were consequent: they elected the richest person in the country with the best

contacts to the Mafia as Prime Minister. Following the motto: if he governs us anyway, then we might as well elect him. ☺ And Berlusconi can do whatever he likes. He is undisputed. Try to get an Italian's blood to boil with something like a *ministerial car affair*. ☺ ☺ With something like that you can occupy the German public for three weeks on end. With a *ministerial car affair* you can divert interest from pension and health care systems completely. The Italian would only comment: why didn't he pack in a few tarts as well, there was enough room in the car. ☺ ☺ I find this attitude sympathetic, I like Italy. The country is open, it is honest. There you can call the Mafia *Mafia*, you don't have to shamefacedly use the term *power utility*. ☺ ☺ And the German is afraid of dying out. Once again we're dying out - have you noticed that recently? Over the last 10 months the figures have been sinking dramatically. The big reforestation program of Mrs. von der Leyen<sup>5</sup> has failed. ☺ The academics litter bonus is deflagrated. We are facing extinction! All those articles are popping up again: the demographic factor! How can life go on? One day we will be only 40 million Germans! A horror vision. Do you know how many Norwegians there are? They've already been added to the red list. ☺ ☺ Those are discussions! Where is the correlation between the population of a country and the quality of life therein? Isn't the crux of the matter the other way round? They always carry out these surveys in Europe: Where are people contented, balanced, happy, and feel themselves taken seriously and secure? In these surveys always the same three countries stand out on top: the scandinavian countries: Sweden, Denmark, Norway. These are the countries with the lowest population density and the highest taxation rate. That which we fear the most brings the greatest happiness. Touch wood! ☺ ☺ But we are scared of dying out. Says the German: oh, how can the world exist without Germans? And the African replies: if there are no more Germans, then we too don't want to live any longer - no, no, no... And then the German can't decide what he should fear most: extinction? the failure of the government? Al Quaida? what's the worst that can beset us? I can tell you exactly: the worst thing of all would be - we die out, and pension is left over. ☺ ☺ ☺

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