

THE POLITICAL PAGE¹

July/August 2012

A Timely Word

Preface

Dear Readers,

Recently, I received an inquiry from my friend, Peter, asking my opinion on the current political situation summarized by Brother Penner in his commentary. My answer to Peter was made clear to me as I looked at Jesus as Lord of Lords. Of course I read much about this in the newspapers and heard about it on the news; however, here I did not make recognizable quotes of these. In this respect, this Political Page is more an essay than a study.

So, first Dr. Hans Penner, then Peter's question and following, my answer.

Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear friends,

We can and should thank God that we are able to live in a free constitutional state. God wants justice. "Justice raises up a nation" our first Federal President, Theodor Heuss, quotes from the Bible in his founding speech in 1949.

Our free constitutional state is endangered. The government has clearly expressed its will to strip Germany of its sovereignty and to integrate itself into a European federal state. According to previous experiences, we can expect a fiscal dictatorship. This goal is not compatible with our established constitution, which, as a result, would be abolished.

On June 29, 2012 the Bundestag (parliament) obligated Germany to pay 190 billion Euro to an uncontrollable ESM Superbank in order to restructure banks of corrupt nations. Since the Federal Government can no longer dispose of this sum she gives up of a large part of her budget sovereignty.

On June 30, 2012 responsible specialists presented to the Federal Constitutional Court a constitutional complaint. Subsequently, an open assembly of the Free Voters was held in Karlsruhe, whereby the expert in constitutional law, Professor Schachtschneider, explained the circumstances. Dr. Philipp presented 8 questions to the members of parliament, which shed light on the problematic situation (see: www.fachinfo.eu/philipp2012.pdf).

Professor Hankel requested us citizens to pray that, through the constitutional complaints, the Federal Constitutional Court, with their sense of responsibility, will be strengthened to preserve constitutionality in Germany.

I would like to share with you this prayer request from Professor Hankel. This script also may be passed on.

¹ The "Political Page" is an independent part of the prayer letter "Call of the Watchmen" and therefore must be ordered separately by Dorothea Best, Wielandstr. 16, 74348 Lauffen; dhbest@web.de.

The "Political Page" also appears on my homepage www.beter-im-aufbruch.de. There you also will find the archives of all previous issues, including the English translations.

Best regards,

Hans Penner

Dear Ortwin,

During the past few weeks the political situation has been quite stormy and the entire development has occupied me very much. I would very much like to hear your opinion; are we still moving within the framework of the constitution or are we already at the edge or even outside.

In addition, the letter from Dr. Hans Penner in the attachment.

Personally, I increasingly have the impression that an idea is being pursued that is leading astray.

Thank you in advance.

All the best,

Yours,
Peter

Dear Peter,
to answer your question:

1. I find the tone in the letter from Penner to be acceptable... and the subject worth being considered but the account of facts needs to be supplemented.
2. I agree with your insecurity in the assessment of the situation. As such, now **prayer for wisdom for the Federal Constitutional Court** certainly has priority.

3. The previous path

When I analyze the current situation and its inherent trend, I come to the following conclusions:

- Twenty years ago in Maastricht, we decided upon a common currency and 10 years ago it was implemented;
- We knew exactly that, essentially, a fiscal union requires a superordinate European authority with control competence ("Finance Ministry"), but we were not ready to give up this "choice piece" of national sovereignty. On the one hand, in order to avoid loss of sovereignty and, on the other hand, to limit the risk of the national economy drifting apart, the so-called "Development and Stability Pact" from Maastricht 1992 was introduced with clear criterion (national debt max. 60%, new debt max. 3%).
- Since sanctions were not imposed *automatically* and the "Chiefs" installed themselves as supervisory authorities (whereby, of course, no one wanted to hurt another), the "Pact", without noticeable resistance and with increasing frequency, was broken more than 40 times. It had practically no effect, the longer, the less.
- The result: national economies, especially in Southern Europe, accumulated more and more debt. In order to conceal these, unbelievable budget tricks were applied; to begin with, in a political euphoria without moderation, only those countries which fulfilled the Maastricht criterion were admitted to the EU and the Euro Zone, however this was only achieved by manipulation. It was

known, however using political calculation the facts were suppressed. The results of a political union were taken in advance without being ready to pay the costs along the way.
That's where we stand today.

4. Two Alternatives

If I see it correctly, then we have the following alternatives: either we turn back and give up the Euro, returning to national currencies with continually fluctuating exchange rates and thus retaining our unrestricted budget law of the national Parliaments; or we take the direction of the European unification process over the past 60 years seriously, recognizing that we have made mistakes that now need to be smoothed out, and consciously set out on the road towards a European Democracy, which still needs to be shaped, consciously releasing important national competencies to a functionally and democratically legitimate and, in its competencies, transparent and controlled Europe.

5. Personally, I believe that the way forward is the right way, since I consider the unification process of the past years as God's gift to Europe. All changes in life cause insecurity and fear when the old breaks up and the new is not yet tangible.

In this situation the Christian's duty is

- to raise his eyes away from the tumult towards the Lord of History and to feel which of the two alternative directions calm my heart; where do I feel peace in my spirit, even when I absolutely still do not know what this direction requires of me and others. As I said, I personally feel this peace in view of the direction towards moving forward and not backwards. According to my understanding, the Lord is showing us the direction forward because He is going with us, if we listen to Him.
- If this is clear, then it is the Christian's duty to speak a word of assurance to his environment – like Paul during the storm (Acts 27: 22-26) after God had spoken to him.
- When the heart is calm the mind works better, meaning it is clearer to understand what is to be done. Paul was not the captain but because of his peace he was able to make clearer suggestions for action (v. 31-36). It may be that even today Christians are able to give encouragement and eventually even concrete suggestions for action out of the peace in their hearts to those in a position of responsibility.
- It is important in a chaotic situation to rid the people of fear. Initially, this is done through strong prayer against terror and fear and, on the other hand, through a clear definition of the goal, where is the situation going and that it will be good and is good to reach it (v. 24). The old form breaks apart but the people survive (v. 44).
- In the present situation the Christians' prayers also must include a very clear and extensive confession of guilt before God (v. 21). "Yes, we Europeans have sinned. In 2003/04 we consciously kept the name of God out of the "Constitution"; "yes, we have sinned in that all of us have broken the dam of agreements and, therefore, are responsible for the present flood of problems"; "yes, we are guilty because of the declared godlessness which caused countless other ungodliness to follow. Lord, have mercy"! Here we are calling with the words from Daniel 9:14-19 - Lord, have mercy:

14 Therefore hath the LORD watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the LORD our God is righteous in all his works which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice.

15 And now, O Lord our God, that hast brought thy people forth out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand, and hast gotten thee renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly.

16 O LORD, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.

17 Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate, for the Lord's sake.

18 O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies.

19 O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God!

The God of the Bible can very well be angry and judge His people but His intention in doing this is to bring about repentance, in order to be able to show His goodness. God accepts the representative prayers of the Church for the rest of the people. That is Biblical reality and one of the core points of our hope for a future Europe. God wants us to knock at His heart.

- And God also hears us. We are helping to shape the future of Europe when we raise our voices and praise the God who, in 2000 years, has had mercy on us, again and again, the God and Lord over Europe, extol His Name – the triune God – and in this we are doing for Europe exactly what was denied Him in the Constitution: giving Him the honor that He deserves.

6. The Antichrist – a few basis thoughts

The progressive centralization of Europe still holds an additional, a spiritual potential danger for Christians: the Antichrist. According to Revelations he is the global adversary of the end time, the attempt to annihilate the Church of Christ. His sights are set on world domination, concentration of power in political and religious domains. Will we become the stirrup holders of the Antichrist if we support the increasing unification of Europe? Are we being naïve if we do not link the coming of the Antichrist and his centralization into our conception of history for the future of Europe?

Counterquestion: what use is it if I do?

In regards to all the predictions of history that refer to end time propositions, I have never experienced anything other than fear and resistance against the present and dreaded future happenings, for example, within the scope of globalization, larger alliances are made necessary. The concrete political reaction is refusal to collaborate politically, right up to clear obstruction, in prayer (“Just pray away the unification of Europe as the devil’s work”), as well as in actions. Up until now, there has been no word of consolation for this theology, nor is one expected.

A few basic Biblical principles:

- Of course I am certain that the Antichrist will come. Presumably, not in the too distant future. But no where in the Bible, where the Antichrist is mentioned, is it written that the Church has the task of delaying or preventing his coming by erecting politically fire walls, for example, against seemingly necessary mergers.
- However, what the Church is called to do is: “Be on guard!” Because the enemy/the devil tries to intimidate (“like a roaring lion”) and tempt (“See, here is Christ, there is Christ”). The fire wall against the approaching Antichrist must manifest itself by training the young generation in Bible knowledge, in distinguishing between religious and ideological patchwork-philosophies and in practicing a Christ-centered daily life, etc. Such people will be able to withstand the Antichrist. That’s what it’s all about!
- These people should be actively involved today and tomorrow in education and in media, in the economy and in politics, if possible in top positions. The

base commission that Jesus gave to us, and that counts, is to be light and salt in this world until He comes again. Without using a picture: co-shaping society in a positive and critical way ("light and salt").

- The Antichrist's realm will more than likely be an extensive controlling world dominion. And control always produces conformity and along with this persecution of dissidents.
Fear of the Antichrist's realm is, however, a special, crucial fear. Everyone knows that, whoever becomes a Christian in China or North Korea, in Iran or in Saudi Arabia, gives up his life to death for the sake of Christ.
The realm of the Antichrist just leads us Westerners into the normal Christian life of our brothers in other parts of the world. And there, where persecution happens, precisely there the Church often grows the strongest!
Could it be that the time of the Antichrist will coincide exactly with the worldwide promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? I do not believe that the Antichrist can extinguish the Church, but rather to the contrary, when Christ comes to establish His Empire a flock of co-workers, tested by suffering, will be available to reign with HIM – a thousand years!
- Not only will the Antichrist exert his global rule. Jesus will do the same! The millennium is a global theocracy. Meaning: the global, the world domination as such, cannot be "the evil", in other words, not the structure but rather the king of the world empire makes the difference.
Therefore, today it makes no sense to fight against continental or global confederations, in order to ... yes, for what? ... rather it is and remains our commission, regardless of the state structure, to establish that other empire and to actively work towards its completion.
National structures are aids. Blessed is the nation whose structures – partial, regional, international alliances – are built for the benefit of its citizens. Europe now has 65 years of experiencing that it is made easier, and even made possible at all, by incorporation. At the moment, we are dealing with the question of money and even in this case, we simply must find the best way how to do it.
I trust in the Council of the European Union "chiefs" and ministers, as well as the Commission, that the guiding star, which directs their actions, is the welfare of the citizens.

7. Europe's political union – a few thoughts upfront:

Whoever has perceived in his heart that the forward-moving direction God's direction for Europe is, will pray intensively and in his actions take part in building a new future Europe. Today's vision is our grandchildren's reality for tomorrow. Surely, they will live in an integrated Europe with restricted national sovereignty as we have lived in a Europe that has been growing together over the past 50 years, giving up many national sovereign rights. Today, they will be as far distanced from us emotionally as we were from our forefathers' Nationalism in the years 1870-1945 ("hereditary enemy" France). Next to their national identity they will develop a European identity, which, for them, will be as unproblematic as our parallel identity as Swabians, Frisians, etc. and, at the same time, being Germans.

- The political union will come. But, as many fear, it doesn't mean the end of the national state. Political competencies will shift towards Europe, nevertheless the national states will remain recognizable because their identity does not depend on the extent of their budget laws, but rather on their culture, which has grown over the centuries and, which is expressed through their profound and unique mother tongues. Despite all of Europe's political similarities, German belongs to Germany and French belongs to France along with all their relevantly distinguishable national peculiarities. This is what makes the peoples distinguishable. This is their identity. – Also, the geographical identity

of their national territory will not change, since in Europe there are no longer any conquering expeditions taking place.

- No one knows how long the transformation process will take. Most likely, it will involve adjustment and new formulation of some national constitutions. Unlike in 1949 – at least in Germany – a new constitution will lead to a popular vote (Wolfgang Schäuble). The Federal Constitutional Court only can guard over the compliance to a valid constitution – over the present one, as well as over a future one, if it becomes necessary. In this regard, “Europe” will become a core theme of discussion in Germany, but also among the other peoples of this continent.
- According to all experience, during times of change, one thing is sure: decisions made today are not valid “forever”, even though the ESM (“European Stability Mechanism”) is thus labeled, but very quickly things can look differently. Everything is so long in progress until it “fits”, meaning until it is felt to be appropriate and workable. At the moment, this does not apply to the ESM.
- Momentarily, considering everything that can be observed, Europe’s population has (finally!) awakened and wants to help shape and wants to be asked. This is the approach to democracy. May the new Europe have a free democratic form of government and not a Big-Brother-Watches control-statehood. Here, political vigilance is imperative.
- Politically, communal relationships most likely will be implemented on all levels, likewise, as in a corporation, sharp control over the economic performance of the respective sub-areas will have to be employed, eventually right up to intervening in the structures of those countries with negative financial balances. An basis of law, which cannot be refuted, will emerge: no financial performance without accurate control.

Conclusion

I am taking the freedom to call out to Christians these thoughts concerning the alternatives “forwards” or “backwards”, “onward” or “regress”, as a word for the present time, associated with a clear teaching on the “Antichrist”. It is my prayer that the peace of God will enter and fear will vanish. I pray that the Church will begin to open the way for politics through their prayers in confidence and unity and in the power of faith, so that the right decisions will be made. “Liberating prayer” takes place by interceding for those in positions of responsibility, and by proclaiming the Lordship of Jesus, who is the Lord of our continent in the past, the present and the future.

Christians have a substantial part in the development of the new Europe. It must be asked for, and earned. It needs people with a vision and a hope for Europe after the crisis “to hope means: to look through the horizon” (from Papua New Guinea). Christians are from the day after tomorrow. “If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all” (Isa. 7:9). At the moment, God is humbling Europe in order to purify it, to raise it up anew. God is not a destroyer but rather a God who wants redemption. Even if previous structures in Europe are breaking, let us pray for new ones, which will allow the “redemptive purpose” of our continent to come forward.

PRAYER

- Praise to the God, the Lord of creation and history, who says of Himself: “I am the Lord, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the Lord, do all these things” (Isa. 45:6-7). Let us very consciously put Europe under the Lord’s shelter.
- This LORD also has the present situation with the fiscal pact, ESM or the banking union in His hands. We can fully trust in this. What are we looking at: at the visible or the invisible? At the Helper or the problem?
- As God’s representatives in this entire affair, we are allowed to bring before Him

those things which have grieved Him and Europe, those things which have defiled His honor and have impeded His Kingdom; for many know the changing power of repentance, which is testified to manifold in the Bible, even in the political realm. Jesus carried all judgment for us. That's why HE is Europe's hope, today and tomorrow.

- Intercession for those in positions of responsibility – national and European – for wisdom in bringing together the various solution approaches (i.e., saving and growth), so that God's merciful actions in Europe will be recognizable to us and that an optimal result for the peoples of Europe will come forth. May God give us Daniels and Josephs, today!
- A Spirit of council, wisdom and understanding for the constitutional judge.
- An end to the fear of the Antichrist and a worldwide outpouring of the Holy Spirit, also onto Europe.

Ortwin Schweitzer