

MORALITY AND HUMAN DIGNITY

I am writing this in the last few days of my membership in the Bundestag. At the beginning of December, eight years of parliamentary and extraparliamentary work for the Greens in the Bundestag will come to an end. This is, of course, very painful as over the past eight years I have been able to help numerous people, especially via the infrastructure of the Bundestag office. Very often I did so quietly because virtually no member of the established press in Bonn was interested in the issues. Precisely this apathy and disinterest induced me all the more to stand up in the Bundestag for children suffering from cancer, Aborigines, Tibetans, members of the Chinese prodemocracy movements, and for many others, and I shall continue to stand up for them. On the one hand, I was hardly ever supported by the press in the Federal Republic of Germany, but on the other, I was always able to count on the support and solidarity of the members of the Bundestag belonging to other parties.

Cancer-stricken children, old people, the handicapped or people in Cambodia, Tibet, China, and elsewhere are victims of power--victims of established power here in Bonn! I was partly ridiculed because of my efforts on behalf of these people, and I also met with a great deal of spite and ignorance in the ranks of the Greens themselves when I first espoused the causes of Tibet and Cambodia, for example. Numerous regional associations of the Greens and the national office started to mock my support for the Tibetans and the Dalai Lama, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989, by writing ironical commentaries and satires on this subject and even distributing these inane papers at national congresses. Sometimes I even had to ask myself what I am still doing in this

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party, which had started out as a party committed to human and civil rights and now handles these rights in a selective manner. In my book *Mit dem Herzen denken* [To Think With the Heart] I tried to record the things that disturbed me so deeply in Bonn in recent years, not only in parliament but also in regard to my own party. There was practically no other means available to me because somehow I always felt that everything I tried to achieve was strictly censored by the Bonn press. Of course, I did not have a regular drink at the pub with journalists, nor did I deliver grandiose speeches at press conferences in order to impress journalists. I find this whole system of interdependence between parliament and the press in Bonn rather suspicious. In this system it does not matter at all whom you actually help or what you specifically do for people who petition parliament. What matters is to sell the ideas you constantly preach in a cool and professional way. At the same time you can stay ignorant, inactive, or even completely idle. The main thing is merely to sell your ideas well without concrete action and to disseminate them well via the media. I have discovered that many politicians do not remain at all honest in this system.

Over the last eight years I have succeeded in setting up worldwide parliamentary and extraparliamentary networks in diverse fields, for example on such subjects as cancer in children, ecological health policy, cooperation with centres for peace activities throughout the world, collaboration with feminist, ecological, and disarmament groups, as well as cooperation in the domain that I consider highly important: human and civil rights. As a result, I have accumulated a large collection of papers and files, which now fills three offices, a corridor, and a filing room. In a few weeks I have to move out of my office in the parliamentary building and take these archives with me so that I can use them in my new situation and develop them further. Information from social and alternative movements all over the world was one of the cornerstones of my parliamentary work in Bonn, precisely because I encountered so much ignorance there with regard to foreign affairs and human rights issues. I discovered that state secretaries, officials in the various ministries, and especially those responsible for, say, the weapons and human rights scandals were the most ignorant of

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all. In the past eight years I repeatedly tried to introduce counterinformation into the debates on such subjects as Brazil and the construction of nuclear bombs, the participation of German engineers in a missile project in India, and Guernica and the lack of German reparations. Maybe I got on some fellow MP's nerves with this counterinformation, and it is true that Helmut Schafer, Minister of State at the German Foreign Office, and I frequently had passionate disputes over this information.

But this was and remains my attempt not to make political decisions until I have informed myself in depth on both sides of a question. This led to an intensive working day for me; in other words, I spent a large part of the day reading and analyzing the voluminous papers and files, conscientiously studying the roughly eighty to one hundred letters received daily, endeavouring to find out as much as possible through direct contact with various grass roots and social movements while abroad, and reading up on counterinformation whenever possible. Thus time for virtually no numerous press conferences, visits to embassies, joint luncheons, and joint trips. Parliamentary life in Bonn is not high life. For me it was almost always distressing because I did not know how to cope with the deluge of information. If you want to stay honest in politics you have no choice but to handle all information, inquiries, and subjects very conscientiously. This means becoming highly selective and concentrating on the areas in which you have acquired specialized knowledge and expertise. I do not think much of superficial and global statements or grandiose speeches in the Bundestag which in the final analysis have very little to do with the subject under consideration but amount to playing to the gallery.

It is somewhat painful to remember the days when I was one of the initiators and founders of the Greens at the time when I was working for the European Community in Brussels. The media regarded this as new, exciting, and exotic; the newspapers often even invited me to write articles. But when I began in 1983 to deal concretely with my subjects and in many cases also cosponsored unusual nonviolent activities, the media were no longer interested because this did not involve grand, top-level politics. I recall the

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four alternative art auctions for the benefit of cancer-stricken children that I organized in order to rouse people engaged in the arts and to persuade the public at large to take up this cause at long last. It proved possible to give several hundred thousand marks to a spontaneous fund for clinics and centres providing psychosocial care for cancer-stricken children and adolescents. Panel discussions in Bonn on this subject, which were intended to encourage parents' action groups and nursing staff to seek public attention, were likewise ignored by the press in Bonn. Peaceful action in East Berlin in 1983, in Moscow in the winter of 1983, and in the occupation of the German embassy in Pretoria--all these were also very hard to put across, especially in the ranks of the Greens themselves. It took over three years for financial resources to be released and approved by the Bundestag for a pilot project benefiting children who suffered from cancer.

This was one of the reasons why I did not then give up my seat in accordance with the system of rotation within the Greens. Looking after cancer-stricken children was and remains a key priority of my political work. For this I would even have accepted my political death within the Green party. Other questions, such as a symbolic gesture of reparation for the destruction of Guernica and reconciliation with the people of Guernica, occupied me for many years and entailed a desperate struggle to inform the public. Very often I did not succeed simply because newspapers remained silent in spite of my press releases, press conferences, and detailed documentation. I am not bitter about this because I feel that in this way I was able also to retain my political independence both in parliament and among the Greens. This independence enabled me to help bring about changes through other circles of society. To my mind, the purpose of politics and of political parties is to stand up for the weak, for those who have no lobby or other means of exerting influence in Bonn. I view my political work as acting for and with people. This political work must extend far beyond one's own Green base, the oft cited grass roots. It must be based not only on the local or regional associations of the Greens, but also on the Chinese students, on the people of the Basque region with whom I planned a centre of peace and encounter at Guernica, on the

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Aborigines in Australia whom I visited several times and whose cause I have been backing for many years, on parents' initiatives and self-help groups in the health sector, on the Tibetans with whom I arranged many joint activities and political events, and on the many people who turn to MPs like myself for advice and assistance.

I have always found it very annoying how the Greens national office and individual members of parliament handle the letters and petitions they receive. They reveal a specific type of arrogance: that of putting the mail aside, ignoring it, not being able to deal with it because there are far more important things to do. But surely a primary duty is to try to respond to people who modestly turn to Bonn and rightly expect a useful and constructive reply. I have frequently been unable to cope with all the mail that I receive. After devoting seven to eight hours almost every day to seeing to the mail, one often feels absolutely worn-out and devoid of energy for other political work. Almost every week another file was filled with letters from Germany or abroad together with the replies sent. At the same time there were heaps of letters to which it was not possible to find an answer or which required weeks of research for a proper reply. Yet even fellow party members make life difficult for anyone who tries to deal conscientiously with this matter and not ignore the letter writers. All too often other members of the Greens smiled condescendingly and said, "Why don't you just send a standard reply?" Or, "Why don't you let your staff answer the mail?"

Sometimes I almost despaired of this attitude, particularly within my own party. What is left of the honesty and credibility of a party that set out to do things completely differently? How quickly the established behaviour in Bonn was assimilated by our party! Many members attached more importance to a regular drink with journalists, a reception at an embassy, or party infighting than to everyday political problems, which we had wanted to solve in a different, more caring spirit of solidarity. Struggles for power within the Green party, whether at the parliamentary or constituency level, suddenly became the navel of the world, and everything else

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was overshadowed by this maneuvering and infighting. I never became involved in this, nor did I want to. I found it exasperating to see the so-called mullahs of the party's various wings perniciously combating each other for hours on end almost every week. Since our meetings are always open to the public, no matter how painful for those being rebuked or criticized, the press in Bonn has always been present, eagerly absorbing the occurrences and obtaining news of Green parliamentary work fit for the headlines. But it is not the fault of the press--we are the ones to blame for the impression created. The passion displayed in the infighting was all too often lacking in our treatment of genuine political issues.

The Greens, set up as a kind of anti-party party, have turned into a party obsessed with power, into a "dead boring German party," as Josef Beuys so aptly put it shortly before he died. In my opinion, it is still very doubtful whether the civil rights movements from the former GDR, united as the Greens/Alliance '90, can help us to evolve further and overcome our own sterility. The power blocks that emerged when the Green party was founded still exist, and nearly all fundamental and strategically important discussions are conducted within a group of sixty to seventy Green members. This certainly has little to do with thriving grassroots democracy. You only have to look at the lists of speakers at party congresses and delegates' meetings to discover that little regeneration is occurring in the ranks of the Greens and that there are few signs of a feminist, imaginative, and caring party. Thus the Greens, originally intent on transforming power from below, have meanwhile become victims of power from above. The individual members of the party have to be honest about this.

Here I would like to quote from the New Year's address given by Vaclav Havel:

Let us learn and make it clear to others that politics should reflect the desire to contribute to society's happiness and not the intention to deceive and violate society. . . .And let us also learn and make it clear to others that politics need not just be the art of the

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possible . . . but also the art of the impossible, namely the art of improving oneself and the world.

This is basically the essence of the Greens' programme and objective. Maybe it is a kind of alternative oath that each of us should take to heart: politics is an expression of the desire to contribute to society's happiness and not of the intention to deceive and violate society. Many find it easy to say this because they simply point to the East and say, "Oh, how the people there have been deceived and violated over the last forty years!" But I feel that Vaclav Havel's words are also valid in the Federal Republic of Germany. Vaclav Havel, Charter 77, the People's Forum, Solidarity, the civil rights and ecology movements in the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, and Hungary--they are all a challenge for us in the West. At the moment we are merely offering the East an ideology, inspired by a know-it-all attitude, and very little tangible assistance. The answers given by the West, by NATO, by the European Community and the WEU, are still sadly unimaginative ideas that are not commensurate with the radical changes in Eastern Europe. The people who took to the streets in the autumn and winter of 1989 brought home to us what it actually means to participate in building a common European house. The people in Eastern Europe who created and pursued a kind of anti-politics as defined by Gyorgy Konrad know what conflicts are and that conflicts are not a unique phenomenon to their situation. For them, conflicts are seen as a normal part of life. Consequently, people in Eastern European civil rights movements face up to these crises much more boldly than we tend to and do not deny their existence or gloss over them. Above all, the people in those civil rights movements, with whom I have worked for many years, have courage and no fear. They demonstrate a new kind of sovereignty I would like to see displayed by every German parliament member and minister.

At the time of the revolutions in Eastern Europe Stephanie Sand ("1992--The Europe of Big Business") wrote:

Our political representatives evidently also failed to notice the emergence of new faces in the midst of the movement in Central Europe, where the face of state

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and party functionaries grew pale. Yet these new faces accompanied the radical changes. It is easy to spot these people. They know how to engage in conversation without preaching. They blush with shame when not saying what they believe. They are able to speak freely and with subtle distinctions, to depart from the notes. They do not just tolerate questions, but are pleased to be challenged. They master all skills of irony and humour . . . And they have patience, which they have acquired in decade-long conflicts.

In my view, there is still a faint hope that this new thinking in the Eastern European civil rights movements will generate new energies and outlooks here, too, in the 1990s. The goal is to move away from the prevailing bureaucratic language and measures and make a genuine effort to find new forms of perception and communication in politics in order to fundamentally alter and improve social life in Central Europe.

The rhetoric of most politicians in the Federal Republic of Germany on, say, the European Community or the single European market is incessant, without any pause for reflection on the concept of a future common house in Europe. When I ask whether a different kind of Europe might be possible, people reply, "How else could it be?" shrugging their shoulders. My vision is of a completely demilitarised Europe without military blocs, without nuclear power stations, without a chemical industry that causes cancers, and without an Iron Curtain in people's minds. It is not our friends from the Eastern European movements for civil rights and democracy who have a great deal to learn. No, it is we in the West who still have much to learn and who must acquire the courage to stand up for our own convictions in the political field. The tasks which we must now perform demand the very abilities that the bold people in the independent civil rights movements in Eastern Europe have demonstrated. There is no longer any time for silly claims of victory or for German or Western European self-content.

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Hans Magnus Enzensberger recently declared that at the end of this century it is essential to treat the earth with care. Should this not be our political precept?

I would like to give all my colleagues in the Bundestag Erich Fromm's book on ethics and politics. In political action we must always take account of the moral and humanistic dimensions of decision-making processes. As Hans Kung wrote in his latest book, this one world needs one ethic; this one world society does not need a single religion or ideology, but rather some binding and unifying standards, values, ideals and goals. What I have found so annoying in Bonn during the last eight years has not only been a deliberate policy of secrecy in certain vital areas but also intentional deception and even downright lies which are seen as legitimate means of attaining specific political objectives. Truthfulness must at last be regarded as a political virtue, whereas lying, secrecy, and deception must not be allowed in politics.

With the aid of some examples I would like to show why politicians in general are falling into disrepute. Of course this has to do with the numerous political, military, and economic scandals of recent years in Bonn and with the cool professionalism and sterility of debates in the Bundestag, which almost no member of the public takes an interest in any longer and which merely increase the discontent with political decision-makers.

For instance, there is the scandal involving nuclear power supplies. In North-Rhine/Westphalia, it has not been possible to shut down the thorium high-temperature reactor at Hamm, although this was unanimously agreed upon in mid-1989, because nobody knows where to put the roughly six hundred thousand fuel elements, each the size of a tennis ball. The highly radioactive elements will be temporarily stored at Ahaus. No one knows for how long. And after the abandonment of the Wackersdorf reprocessing facility our ministers have been taking for granted costly reprocessing contracts with the toxic Sellafield plant, formerly Windscale, as well as the toxic La Hague facility in France. Although we do not want to poison our children at Wackersdorf and nearby, we are nonetheless

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participating in poisoning children and the environment at Sellafield and La Hague by letting our spent fuel elements be reprocessed there. Now, following German unification, there is the question of what to do with nuclear waste from reactors in the former GDR. Ironically enough, the Soviet Union originally undertook to accept spent fuel elements from the GDR. Now it rightly refuses to do so, as recently confirmed by the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation. I cannot imagine any compromise in this manner with the nuclear lobby because, in view of the increasingly evident long-term effects of Chernobyl in the Soviet Union, it is very obvious that the Soviet population does not want to be deceived or lied to about these issues any longer. In the Soviet Union there is growing firm resistance to the use of nuclear energy. It ought to be evident to all of us that we have been deceived and lied to for many years. And yet it is still not possible to organize the abandonment of nuclear power. Although it has been decided to shut down the high-temperature reactor at Hamm, the German Research Ministry since October 1988 has devoted 8.34 million DM to improving the nuclear fuel elements initially intended exclusively for that reactor. According to the Ökoinstitut [Ecology Institute], in 1990 alone a total of twenty million DM, hidden in various budget items, has been earmarked for research on high-temperature reactors. The German nuclear lobby regards these as the reactor type of the future, with Eastern Europe and China being the main markets for them.

Noted nuclear physicists have repeatedly accused the German Health Office of delivering one-sided opinions in favour of the Siemens company. Whenever independent nuclear physicists carry out tests, they measure Becquerel values several times higher than those recorded by the Health Office. I would like to mention once again the reprocessing of German nuclear waste at Sellafield because only a few months ago Roger Berry, safety director of the British nuclear industry, who is responsible for health matters at nuclear plants, advised workers there not to have any children for the time being. Mr. Berry thus augmented the fear that the increased incidence of leukemia in children living in the vicinity of Sellafield is due to changes in the genes of workers caused by

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radiation. His advice is absolutely outrageous. The aim cannot be to persuade workers at nuclear power plants to change their way of life, but to shut down at long last the toxic and deadly nuclear industry. The tragedy in Chernobyl, like that at Three Mile Island, roused many people who until then had been indifferent towards the type of power generation used. This affords an opportunity for decisive and radical reorientation. But such reorientation simply does not take place at the governmental level. Time and again in the debates on this subject we hear the professional appeasers on the government benches and in the ranks of the government parties. Those of us who have long been involved in the antinuclear movement, who have long been together with cancer-stricken children and supporting their cause, are fed up with hearing the justifying, appeasing, and belittling remarks and downright lies of the people who bear responsibility for what has happened and continues to happen. Ever since Chernobyl, any politically minded and responsible person ought to realize that nuclear technology, whether military or civilian, is a declaration of war against life.

As Yuri Shcherbak put it, we have a nuclear war zone right in the middle of Europe! By this he means the contaminated areas around Chernobyl and some others which, owing to the whims of weather conditions, are several hundred kilometres away from Chernobyl. At least two million of the roughly ten million White Russians are in acute danger. Twenty percent of the territory is considered uninhabitable. The world needs to be told, a Russian doctor recently said to me on the phone, that nuclear genocide is occurring in White Russia. Officially, the situation there has been alarming only since July 24, 1989, when the first secret map of the contamination was presented to the Supreme Soviet, and was also leaked to the press. But here in Germany, in the Bundestag in Bonn and in the regional parliaments, the belittlement and appeasement continue so that the nuclear lobby can still flourish in the 1990s. In the Soviet Union hundreds of villages have levels of contamination of sixty curie or more per square kilometre. Milk is contaminated in 530 towns. Deformities in animals have increased several hundred times. Two million people have been contaminated and thousands of children have cancer. The children suffering from leukemia die

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in the hospitals before the eyes of the living, the doctors being powerless. Yet no real, full-scale emergency aid in the form of donations, medicine, or medical equipment has been provided by the German government. This is again left to private and charitable organizations. The full scope of the occurrences in Chernobyl simply has not been recognized. The radioactivity, which is constantly played down here, will remain with the people around Chernobyl for many years to come. In forty years the situation there will be the same as it is now, four years after the disaster. When will the members of the Bundestag at last realize that even radiation below the allowable limits can be dangerous? Usually cancer is regarded as the only result of radiation. Yet there are manifold effects which occur even with low levels of radiation, such as the impairment of the immune system and genetic consequences.

During my membership in the Bundestag over the last eight years, we made every possible effort to draw attention to the danger of low levels of radiation. We presented data on the effects of nuclear tests in the atmosphere and data on Kerala in India. We submitted studies of and statistics on workers in uranium mines in Malaysia and Australia. Anyone who follows how radiation limits are set by parliament inevitably becomes filled with anger. The sole criterion given consideration until now is the lethal cancer rate. Whenever we present studies on changes in the blood count that may be caused by the operation of nuclear plants they are quickly cast aside and any discussion of them is avoided.

The superficial way in which vital issues are dealt with in Bonn often shocked and angered me. Is there anybody in the government parties who reads the motions that we Greens table on such topics as the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl? Who takes our demands seriously, and are they considered at all by the comfortable majority on the other side of parliament? This is what makes me so depressed and angry. Occasionally an individual MP's conscience may be pricked, as occurred in the case of the cancer-stricken children and human rights violations in Tibet, China, and Romania. But by and large the party whip reigns supreme; the comfortable majority dominates the helpless minority, and an in-depth debate is

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avoided when it is already clear that the majority will dismiss the opposition's motion. But what does this have to do with truthful life-affirming politics? Is everything or almost everything that comes from the opposition inherently wrong?

The entire parliamentary debate on nuclear energy and weapons reminds me of a comment by Henry David Thoreau:

They hesitate, express regret and sometimes even sign petitions, but they do nothing seriously and effectively. In their position of ease, they wait for others to remedy the grievance so that they no longer have to take offence at it. At most they cast their vote in the elections, this does not cost much. And they give a brief nod to justice as it passes by, wishing it well.

Given the elimination of the long-standing East-West conflict and the virtual dissolution of the large military blocs (at least of the Warsaw Pact; we are still waiting for NATO to follow suit), disarmament has come within reach for all of us. This is the current state of the discussion, not least in the Bundestag. But this is somewhat odd--again the political debate is lacking sincerity and truthfulness. Although Helmut Kohl and his government talk a lot about peace and disarmament in the united Germany, this year's defence budget will reach an unprecedented 57.5 billion DM as a result of the third supplementary budget. Military spending will set a new record. Something else should not be overlooked. Bill Arkin, a recognized arms researcher, recently told the magazine *Stern*, "When the last Pershing II missiles have disappeared from Europe at the end of the next May, as envisaged in the INF Treaty, the first converted Pershing warheads will return as nuclear bombs."

Old into new! Thus the warheads of the scrapped Pershing II missiles will come back to Europe as nuclear bombs. The elimination of INF missiles was celebrated worldwide at the time. Now it is becoming evident that the INF Treaty has by no means reduced the nuclear arsenal in Europe. The Pershing IIs are returning in a different shape. "How is it possible?" people in my constituency ask me. The politicians and members of the military

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did not act unlawfully then; they simply deceived the public. I remember well my efforts in the Bundestag after the signing of the INF Treaty to draw attention to the provisions of a supplementary protocol which largely went unnoticed and that stated, "Before the missile is destroyed at a site intended for this purpose, the nuclear warhead . . . may be removed." As U.S. General Yates told the Senate Armed Services Committee, "In the future the number of nuclear aircraft bombs will increase exactly in step with the number of intermediate-range missiles withdrawn."

This means that we were deceived once again because the U.S. Senate and military establishment had planned for the further use of Pershing II warheads even before the treaty came into force. While we were staging peace festivals it was already clear that NATO would reuse the warheads in a slightly changed form. When I pointed out in the Bundestag that the two superpowers can do as they please with the warheads, I was not only sneered at and mocked by the government parties, but also interrupted by the Social Democrats. They simply did not want to believe me. In my own party, too, there were some who just refused to take note of this.

To my mind, the same tactics of deception are evident in the Moscow concluding document of the Four-plus-Two negotiations. Despite the announcements renouncing the production of nuclear weapons, united Germany retains all the options that the Federal Republic of Germany possessed for shared control over nuclear weapons of other countries and for participation in production outside its own territory. This was recently confirmed by Frau Adam-Schwaetzer, minister of state at the German Foreign Office, in a reply to a parliamentary question tabled by the Greens. Time and again Foreign Minister Genscher reaffirmed the Federal Republic's declarations of renunciation and ruled out any German control over nuclear weapons in the future. Genscher's declaration to this effect was incorporated identically in the Moscow concluding document of the Four-plus-Two negotiations. In response to the Greens' question of nuclear participation and of shared control over the nuclear weapons of other countries, Frau

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Adam-Schwaetzer stated that Herr Genscher had "reaffirmed the obligations of the two German states without altering their substance in any way." This clearly shows that Bonn fully upholds the reservations and restrictions expressed in connection with earlier declarations of renunciation. Within the WEU, Bonn pledged in 1954 not to develop or produce nuclear weapons on German territory, but expressly left open the possibility of participating in production carried out in collaboration with other countries on their territories. On ratifying the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1975 Bonn expressed a reservation, which is contained *inter alia* in a bilateral accord with Washington, to the effect that the possibility of shared German control over nuclear weapons within the scope of a future European political union would not be affected. The Federal Republic possesses delivery systems for NATO nuclear weapons, which of course means that nuclear participation continues to exist.

The German renunciation of nuclear weapons is therefore full of gaps; it is highly desirable that these be eliminated. We have thus long been demanding a comprehensive and unlimited renunciation of nuclear weapons in the constitution so that the Bundestag and the Federal Government can send a positive and enforceable signal. It remains open why the present government has not advocated the inclusion of such a renunciation in the Constitution. Despite the historical legacy, in my opinion the Federal Republic has in the past few decades weakened rather than strengthened the international nonproliferation regime. You need only think of the German arms industry and its criminal actions in many parts of the world. Proscribing any assistance in the construction of nuclear weapons as a violation of the Constitution and completely renouncing the military attributes of a great power with binding effect--these are not just necessary, but ground-breaking steps logically ensuing from our country's history.

Whereas the Warsaw Pact is nearing its end, NATO has acquired new momentum and is becoming the architect of the new Europe. But what will then be left of the vision of a new, nonaligned, and peaceful European house? At present many options are being discussed: some Eastern European countries want

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to leave the Warsaw Pact and even join NATO, while others wish to abandon the Warsaw Pact for the sake of a truly European, neutral concept--which I fully support. Yet others want to withdraw from the military structure of the Eastern alliance, while retaining the political links. Still others seek the reform of military and political structures until comprehensive arms control renders the two alliances superfluous. So far new thinking has been lacking within NATO. This discussion is virtually not being conducted in the Bundestag, and many of the facts needed for it are simply not disclosed. Disintegration of the two blocs is a prerequisite for pan-European collective security.

In my opinion, NATO, a military pact, cannot be incorporated into the creation of a security system for the whole of Europe. We advocate that use be made of the CSCE framework to develop collective peace and security structures serving the people themselves. The CSCE process must be intensified from below, which means that societies in East and West alike must be democratized. Particularly in the ecological, economic, technological, transport, and scientific fields there are common interests transcending any borders between blocs. And there are new kinds of threats which confront all European countries and thus call for close cooperation. In my view, the logical step is to dissolve the two military blocs and establish a creative and imaginative European system of collective security, even a system of collective social defence.

But Europe seems to be evolving in way completely different from what we had hoped for. The European Community is turning into a military and security league, and the "European pillar" is to take on the shape of a relatively independent "European Defence Union." Thus Western Europe can become a fairly autonomous military power--under German leadership, as many of us fear. Only recently Jacques Delors, President of the EC Commission, warned of a strong, united Germany. He fears the emergence of a tough and powerful German state and a powerful Germany economy in the heart of a weak Europe.

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There is something else about which we are constantly being deceived. For months now, German industry, trade unions, and many social groups have been demanding that the European Community should be open to accession by Eastern European countries. But on October 30th newspapers reported on an article by Chancellor Kohl in the *Financial Times* in which he defined the EC's borders. He opposed any excessive expansion of the Community, stating that the aim now could not be to include in the EC as many European countries as possible. He added that only countries which are able and willing without reservation to set up a European Union should be allowed to join. Have we again been deceived in recent months, or did we in our euphoria once more fail to notice the ideas and reservations hidden between the lines of European declarations/ Are we not again being duped about the common European house? Will the Eastern European countries remain poor backyard on a continent that is Germanized step by step?

There are other examples that I find very annoying--examples that are connected with ethics, examples revealing that military, economic, and strategic objectives and considerations have far greater influence and significance in our world than does humanity's suffering. One such instance is that nuclear tests are still being carried out. At this time of so-called disarmament, a comprehensive nuclear test ban is needed all the more urgently. Recently the former GDR expressed its support for such a ban and voted in favour of a conference of all signatories to the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty to be held in New York in January 1991. Over two-thirds of the signatory countries wanted the treaty to be amended at that conference so as to include a ban on underground nuclear tests. The Federal Republic of Germany abstained from voting--probably out of consideration for its nuclear allies, the U.S.A., France, and Britain, as one ironically might state. It is evident that Mrs. Thatcher and President Bush do not want to agree to an early test ban. Yet there are increasing reports that half a million people in the Republic of Kazakhstan alone have suffered lasting damage as a result of Soviet nuclear tests. One in every three babies born there has deformities, and the mortality rate for leukemia is 200 percent higher than elsewhere in the Soviet Union. This was recently stated

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by Soviet medical experts at a seminar of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War. All nuclear tests entail maximum risks for man and nature, as Anthony Robbins, chairman of the IPPNW Commission, recently pointed out to the UN conference on nuclear testing. The reports on the harm done to public health in the Soviet Union ought to alarm all individuals and governments in Europe and the United States.

French President Francois Mitterand in particular ought to heed these reports from the Soviet Union, considering the consequences of the French nuclear tests in the Pacific region for the people living there. In the past few years forty-six holes at a distance of five hundred metres apart have been drilled under the Mururoa Atoll. Every explosion tears open cavities over one hundred metres large in the base of the islands. The atoll has already broken apart at four places. In 1985, thirteen countries of the South Pacific Forum proclaimed a nuclear-weapons-free-zone in the Treaty of Rarotonga. This is a binding document, which is again ignored by France alone! Nobody in France bothers about the dramatic increase in serious cases of poisoning following the consumption of the fish contaminated by nuclear testing in French Polynesia. Nor is there any mention made of the stringent curtailment of civil rights and personal freedom on account of nuclear testing. We all remember the bomb attack in 1985 by the French secret service that sank the Rainbow Warrior in Auckland harbour in New Zealand. This Greenpeace ship had protested against France's nuclear tests. The response was state-sponsored terrorism! Why did the European allies not protest strongly? State-sponsored terrorism is viewed as a kind of petty offence if it occurs within any of the Western European democracies.

Gert Rauhaus rightly stated in the *Nürnberger Nachrichten* last August that parliamentarians themselves are to blame for their loss of power. He cited the Cerberus case and the Bundestag's powers of control. In that affair the Defence Ministry for years had squandered 1.2 billion DM and intended to spend another 900 million DM for good measure. The Bundestag was systematically bypassed--this was the real scandal. Neither the Defence

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Committee nor the Budget committee ever examined the huge spending on Cerberus. This was not only a violation of the Bundestag's decision of 1982 stating that all projects involving more than 50 million DM have to be made known to the Budget Committee. Such an attitude by the government towards parliament also touches on the very substance of our democratic system--a system that we are currently recommending to the whole of Eastern Europe as a tried-and-tested form of popular control of the executive. But in the last eight years I discovered all too often that reality did not tally with the Constitution. In many instances, the loss of power was the Bundestag's own fault. Time and again it acted as a kind of implementing body for the Federal Government.

I witnessed very few occasions where government sponsored bills or political projects were stopped by the majority in parliament. Joint motions and unanimous decisions are also a rarity in the Bundestag and are thus celebrated as "historic moments." I recall the Bundestag's unanimous adoption of my first motion on Tibet and human rights violations in October 1987. On that occasion Vice-President Stücklen interrupted the sitting and stated after the vote that miracles still occur in parliament. During my parliamentary work over the last eight years, I repeatedly initiated cross-party motions--precisely because I considered it the greatest challenge to obtain the backing of the entire chamber for an important initiative. I attempted this twice in connection with Tibet, which proved very successful, twice with regard to China after the terrible massacre at Beijing in mid-1989, and several times on the issue of psychosocial care for cancer-stricken children. I was also able to participate in bringing about and experiencing such "historic moments" in parliament regarding biological treatment for cancer victims, Romania, and other issues. Whenever I tried to obtain joint motions, I gained the impression that such conduct is regarded as very unusual. Basically everyone stays within the confines of his or her own party, complies with the party whip, and otherwise generally keeps quiet. Since I never wanted to become nor never did become a "party soldier," I felt it was all the more essential to seize the initiative for joint Bundestag motions and decisions, at least within my own party.

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In this context it became clear to me time and again how much energy and effort are required of each of us in order to peruse all of the relevant material and grasp the matters that are up for decision. If you try to do this conscientiously as an MP, you use a vast amount of time and energy, even harming your health. I never understood why some colleagues did not feel this stress and pressure, why many of them dealt so nonchalantly with the information presented to them. Often I was simply not able to digest and analyze the extensive documentation presented to me, even if it was needed merely for a single committee meeting. I only have to mention the final reports of a committees of investigation on the Nukem-Alkem affair and on submarine blueprints for South Africa. They covered thousands of pages, and it is impossible to make them intelligible to the man in the street.

In the Bundestag I also experienced boundless inertia and opportunism in all forms, even in the ranks of the Greens. What I noticed most is a lack of courage among many MPs to stand up for their own convictions. Every day we have to fight for our rights as MPs, and every day there is a struggle with the government. I strongly welcomed the many attempts by Dr. Hamm-Brücher to imbue the German parliament with life and more credibility. Parliamentary reform is still pending and must at last be taken seriously not only by parliamentarians but also by the government. Why should Chancellor Kohl not have to face MPs' questions for at least one hour a month, as Mrs. Thatcher regularly has to do in London? What point is there in sending state secretaries into parliament when really we want to question Chancellor Kohl himself? And why are we not able to speak more often and more spontaneously, without wretched party discipline always prevailing? Of course parliament becomes boring for the public at large if always the same leaders and spokesmen of parliamentary parties take the floor in debates. Sometimes the Bundestag is nothing short of a "vanity fair."

Particularly in the last few years I held back completely in this connection. I found it unbearable to have to put up a fight within my own party for the right to speak in parliament, even if I had been

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handling a specific subject for years. In this respect there were also some painful experiences that are not easily forgotten; for example, due to one missing vote I was not permitted by my party to speak in the Bundestag debate on China after the massacre in mid-1989, even though for many years I had been dealing with China and human rights and a few months earlier had initiated an international hearing on Tibet and human rights, at which fifty experts spoke from Germany and abroad. Precisely because I refused to take part in this vanity fair for the sake of the media in Bonn, I had all the more time to dedicate myself to concrete issues. Should I have the opportunity to return to the Bundestag in four years, which I would very much like to do, I already know in which direction I would steer my energy and commitment. I would again focus on quiet, substantive work concerning certain priorities rather than on grandiose speeches in parliament, which in the final analysis have far more to do with party discipline than with one's own convictions. To my mind, a good parliamentarian occasionally has a real row even with her or his own party. Here, too, courage to stand up for one's own convictions is called for. Party-political opportunism has hindered many a parliamentary decision to the detriment of the public at large. Unfortunately I know of only a few cases when the legislature as the so-called "first power" acted with sovereignty vis-à-vis the executive. I remember all too well what happened a year ago in the Foreign Affairs Committee when I tabled my second motion on Tibet after the massacre in Lhasa. Minister of State Adam-Schwaetzer actually told me that she considered the motion inappropriate because it would hamper relations between the Federal Republic and China. Did she think I would withdraw it? Or did she believe something like that would influence me? Such occasions are not exactly "historic moments" of German parliamentarianism!

In the summer of this year Gert Rauhaus raised an interesting issue: the increasing intermingling of the legislature and the executive. One such example consists of ministers and parliamentary state secretaries retaining their seats in parliament after their appointments to those posts. A more obvious case of incompatibility is scarcely conceivable.

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Permit me to mention another instance displaying the lack of courage of the MPs. We all know that the overexploitation of the earth's irreplaceable resources has to be ended, or else we people living in the twentieth century will bear the blame for the greatest environmental disaster in the history of humankind. Once depleted the tropical rain forests will be irretrievably lost because reforestation can never restore the original condition of the primeval forests. The destruction of the rain forests will deprive the Aboriginal population who have been living there for millennia of their basis of existence. This ought to be clear to everyone; we all know that we have to change our lifestyles if the earth is to survive. The people living in the Northern Hemisphere, the rich one-fifth of the world population, must of their own accord limit their consumption of food, raw materials, and consumer goods. While hundreds of millions of people continue to live below subsistence level, the rich North in the last forty years has experienced a consumption boom. The quarter of the world population that regularly eats meat indirectly consumes one half of the world's cereal supplies. Per capita energy consumption in the United States has risen sixty percent since 1950. Returning to the tropical forests, a worldwide ban on trade of tropical timber suggests itself. We should also introduce a luxury tax on products manufactured at the expense of the rain forests. And we should share the cost of preserving the tropical forests. German companies and consumers alike are involved in their destruction. Motor saws made by the Stihl company are used to fell trees in the rain forests of Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Africa in order to satisfy the desire of German consumers for fancy furniture, teak trays, and window frames made of tropical wood.

I recall the debate in the Foreign Affairs Committee on the emergency measures initiated by us to protect Malaysia against the disastrous consequences of commercial logging in Sarawak (Bundestag document 11/7114). In the motion we called upon the Federal Government to implement the European Parliament's resolution of 1988 demanding an immediate ban on imports of all tropical timber from Sarawak until it can be ensured that such imports come from concessions which do not cause unacceptable

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ecological damage and do not jeopardize the livelihood of the native population. The Federal Government's reply again lulled half of the committee, generally referring to measures for the protection of tropical forests in which the Federal Government claimed to be involved. There was no mention of the fact that these measures are much too late to protect the rain forests and the inhabitants of Sarawak who are dependent on those forests. The native tribes of Sarawak themselves urged governments throughout the world to discontinue all imports of tropical timber from Sarawak. But who listens to the native tribes, to the Aboriginal population? I have not forgotten that debate in the Foreign Affairs Committee. As usual, we had only half an hour or even less to discuss this subject. Some colleagues took the trouble to deal with the substance of the motion. Others just read their tabloid newspapers and refused to take note of the matter under consideration. A few found it frustrating and annoying that such an issue was again being treated so superficially. On such occasions I would have liked the Bundestag to have had the courage to invite representatives of the native tribes to the committee meetings so that we could hear at first hand what the people want and how they wish to participate in decisions. The smooth, ready-drafted replies of the state secretaries cannot convince me, whether in this or other cases. For the debate on this motion I had gathered many options from the Third World from my own collection of documents, and I was also in the possession of the latest Third World Network Features report on the demands of the native tribes in Sarawak. Yet there was little point in quoting from this report or from an analysis of a report by the International Tropical Timber Organization. I had gone to great lengths to find and compile this counterinformation, but during my speech on this subject, lasting only few minutes, it was not possible to induce anyone in such a short time to vote differently than they had originally intended. As a result, one leaves another committee meeting completely frustrated, picks up the newspaper, and reads about continued excessive consumption on the part of the world's wealthy nations. You shake your head, feel depressed, believe you could perhaps make even better preparations next time around, and resolve--as I did so often during the last eight years--to send the counterinformation directly to each member of the committee.

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Maybe they will take note of it, read it instead of immediately throwing it away, and be influenced by it.

Another recent occurrence dismays me. In the Budget Committee the government parties rejected humanitarian assistance for the Iraqi/Kurdish victims of the use of poison gas by Iraq. To me the rejection of such aid is incomprehensible and shocking. In the draft of the third supplement to the 1990 budget, the Federal Government proposed that humanitarian assistance for Egypt and Jordan be increased by twenty million DM. But the Government's draft did not envisage any funds for the Iraqi/Kurdish refugees in Turkey who had fled there after massive poison gas attacks by Iraq on the Kurdish civilian population (using German know-how). During the deliberations the Greens tabled a motion for a minimum sum of five million DM as humanitarian relief for the refugees living under disastrous conditions in Turkey. Even the Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously adopted a decision acknowledging the urgent need for humanitarian assistance and calling upon the Federal Government to make provision for it. Despite this clear vote and despite the fact that Iraq relied on criminal German companies to produce the poison gas used against the Kurds, the government parties dismissed the Greens' motion in the Budget Committee. Under these circumstances one is lost for words, and the many government declarations on human rights, dignity, and freedom are simply not credible. But where is the public outcry when the press reports, albeit meagrely, on such subjects? Is it not a kind of flight from responsibility to stay silent when you ought to speak out, to refrain from action that is necessary? Is courage needed at all to vote in favour of such an obvious motion? What political opportunism prompted the government parties to vote against it?

The things one sometimes witnesses in the Bundestag makes one shudder. This applies, for example, to the debates forty years after the war on the people who were compulsorily sterilized or to debates on compensation for other victims of Nazism. It does not surprise me at all to read that the headmaster of the Geschwister Scholl Gymnasium in Waldkirch wanted to inspect the manuscript

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of Inge Aicher-Scholl's speech before delivery. Inge Aicher-Scholl is the sister of Sophie Scholl and Hans Scholl, who were both executed by the Nazis in 1943. At a commemorative ceremony in Waldkirch, the headmaster of the school wanted to see the text of the speech in advance on the grounds that this was necessary to ensure the speech did not contain any reference to current political affairs or any comparisons between the Nazi era and the present-day situation. This is yet another of the unbelievable things now happening in Germany. Of course Inge Aicher-Scholl had no intention of submitting the manuscript. This showed once more the signs of censorship existing in our democracy, a censorship diametrically opposed to democratic principles.

It also makes me shudder to think of the Bundestag debate on the unification treaty with the GDR. The preamble to the treaty drafted by the Federal Government failed to mention the Nazi crimes; the efforts by the Central Jewish Council to include a reference to them were ignored. As Heinz Galinski said, the preamble is an affront not only to Jews throughout the world but also to all victims of Fascism. The Central Jewish Council demanded that the preamble state unequivocally that the division of Germany was a logical consequence of the Nazi disaster and that, in connection with German unification, accounts must be taken of that legacy. The Central Jewish Council and the Greens wanted the preamble to contain a clear reference to the "unique nature" of the atrocities committed between 1933 and 1945 and to the obligations incumbent on the whole of Germany vis-à-vis the victims of Nazism. Yet the Federal Government refused to accept these obligations and responsibilities. All that remained in the end were the words "conscious of the continuity of German history." What makes me shiver is that during the debate on the unification treaty the Bundestag was unable to muster the courage to vote in favour of including the proposal made by the Central Jewish Council. This prompts me to recall Heinrich Böll's apt remark: "We live in a country that has suppressed its history . . . in a country that has delusions about its popularity."

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One of the questions asked by the Hesse Broadcasting Corporation is whether politicians have to be honest. Without honesty they cannot really call themselves politicians. All of us must learn anew every day what it means to think with our hearts and to make political decisions with our hearts. The electorate rightly demands more credibility and sincerity in politics. I believe that the voters have had enough of the Federal Government's countless contemptible arms scandals, of the vanity fair and grandiose speeches, of maneuvering to form coalitions, or party discipline, and of jockeying for publicity. It is up to us to ensure that the public does not become indifferent to politics.

President Havel recently stated in a speech to the People's Forum in Prague that upright, honest, credible people are needed in politics--people who have the courage to stand up for their convictions, who are not afraid, and who can act and think independently. All of us in Germany would benefit if we were at last to learn the liberating and constructive art of civil disobedience--not just in the extraparliamentary movement, but also within parliament and within political parties. Civil disobedience has to be practiced in parliament or even in our own party if we become too dogmatic, powerful, or arrogant. Restricting a party's power and consistently reducing its power is also a manifestation of credibility in a democracy. Precisely for this reason I am highly skeptical when I think of the Social Democrats and the Greens joining forces for the purpose of a government coalition in Bonn. Will the Greens be able to set out with the aim of paring down power? For me, this remains an open and important question!