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# WAR IN THE UKRAINE

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## THE CHANCELLOR'S UKRAINE POLICY IS IN THE FOCUS OF A DISCUSSION CONCERNING AN ADEQUATE STRATEGY FOR GERMANY.

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Due to the constitution the Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Olaf Scholz determines the guidelines of policy. Since the beginning of the Russian war against the Ukraine he has been criticized heavily by mainstream media and political public for not delivering arms and executing economic sanctions in a sufficient number, not fast enough and not wide-ranging enough. Besides, he is reproached for not communicating adequately. Until the beginning of the Ukraine war public criticism mainly dealt with the fact that Germany sold an increasing number of arms to war zones.

Despite a combined decision of the German parliament to support the Ukraine militarily the leader of the opposition Friedrich Merz (28.04.2022) attacks the Federal Chancellor personally and harshly and pointedly participates in meetings with representatives in the Ukraine and Poland to create the impression of energy and competence in comparison to the Federal Chancellor.

The intellectual leading lights Jürgen Habermas (29.04.22) and Peter Sloterdijk (16.06.22) appreciate the Federal Chancellor's level-headedness and his governmental policy. As a result artists and intellectuals react with contradicting public letters. One group warns of the delivery of arms or a possible World War III while the others dissociate themselves from such ideas. Both the left and the right-wing parliamentary opposition (Die Linke, AfD) and the participants in demonstrations during the G7-summit criticize supporting the Ukraine by delivering arms and sanctioning Russia economically.

## GERMAN MEDIA OPERATE AS ACTIVISTS OF THE UKRAINE GOVERNMENT.

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In large areas German media operate as activists of the Ukraine government. Supporters and representatives are granted the possibility to criticize government officials. Emotional testimonials are integrated into supposedly informative broadcasts thus increasing the moral pressure on the German population and its representatives. At the same time members of the coalition parties, for example Marie Agnes Strack-Zimmermann (FDP), Anton Hofreiter und Katrin Göring-Eckardt (Grünen), and the opposition party CDU /Johann Wadepful) increase the pressure systematically by demanding to meet the Ukrainian request for arms.

It is hardly discussed in public that the delays in the exchange with Poland may be caused by Polish attempts to push through excessive financial demands against the Federal Republic of

Germany and to stage motivated scandalizations to mobilize the followers of the government party PIS( Thiele, ntv 07.07.22). As far as the mutual supply of gas according to the EU SoS (Security of Supply) directive is concerned Poland tries to blackmail Germany openly by demanding war reparation or a public excuse because of the North Stream projects (Eichert 25.07.)

Germany has supported the Ukraine massively for years. This support includes indirect military engagement, far-reaching financial offers and delivery of arms – even so-called heavy armament – both in exchange and directly. As far as public communication is concerned this policy is diminished and qualified or discredited as opportune decisions made under pressure but being insufficient. The parliamentary decision has finally been made due to a 'sudden change of course' by the Federal Chancellor. Extensive efforts to support Ukrainian refugees and their clear preference over war refugees who have been in Germany for years are attributed to the so-called 'civilian population' and are denied German policy. At the same time large parts of the German population are accused of emotional coldness and lack of empathy against the European east and understanding of the aggressor at the same time. (see e.g. Neef, Spiegel 11.06.22)

### PROBLEMATIC MEDIA INDUCED NARRATIVES DISTORT PERCEPTION.

During the first weeks of the war traditional German national stereotypes were established in public discussions : 'understanding Putin' becomes an image of horror.(type: interior enemy). Social democrats and supposedly social democratized Christian democrats appear (as always) nationally unreliable (type: non-patriotic members); their German-Russian energy policy as a betrayal of Russian interests (type: dagger in the back); the former Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, the former Foreign Secretary and present Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier as well as the current president of Mecklenburg-West Pomerania Manuela Schwesig appear as agents of a foreign, hostile power. (type: Moscow's 5<sup>th</sup> brigade).

Federal President Steinmeier had to endure a public withdrawal of an invitation by the Ukrainian President Wolodimir Selensky, who at the same time unsuccessfully tried to invite the former Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel to confront her with the allegedly consequences of her politics.

Steinmeier's real part in the negotiations of the Minsk agreement (type: peace by renunciation/fulfillment policy) is remembered by the political scientist Alexander Libmann (04.05.22). The former Foreign Secretary Sigmar Gabriel had a controversy with the Ukrainian Ambassador Andrej Melnik on the policy of the former government of the so-called 'traffic light' coalition. As harsh critic of the German détente policy he did not accept any criticism on his closeness to right-wing radical nationalists and he affected the atmosphere in Germany by exceeding permissible limits verbally and applying personal offences. (Meanwhile the Ukraine recalled him.)

Only after the Federal Chancellor had refused a visit to Kiev explicitly for several times the bad mood due to the withdrawal of the Steinmeier invitation could be cleared (05.05.22) The visit by Olaf Scholz, Emmanuel Macron and Mario Draghi in Kiev on 16.06.22 contributed to an understanding between the Ukraine and its European supporters, especially by their statement in favour of a Ukrainian EU membership perspective. In terms of domestic policies the German position of armament delivery was put into perspective as far as the public opinion is concerned, even though it may be difficult to dissolve the media-induced reality-

distorting narratives (see critical evaluation on narrative ‘hesitation’, Wolfgang Richter interviewed by Lisa Becke, t-online 29.07.22). The Ukrainian Foreign Minister does not refrain from lecturing the Federal Chancellor on the character of the war and from demanding a refusal of entry for Russians into Germany (Kaleba, 11.08.22)

For months taking part in public discussions has been possible for détente politicians only by rituals of self-mortification and penance after having been pilloried publicly (symptomatic for the German confessional journalism, compare Susaane Beyer, ‘Confess’, Spiegel 10.06.22)

Wolfgang Schäuble’s warning against backwards directed self-opinionated tendencies remains unnoticed (ARD, 18.05.22). There is no doubt that, in case of a war of aggression, the West has every reason both national and international for self-critical analysis (see Sabine Rennefanz, Spiegel 03.06.22) After 2014, e.g., vast deliveries of arms from France, Italy, Germany and numerous other countries were made to Russia. ‘Russia also stayed the second largest market for armament exports from the Ukraine.’ (Investigate Europe, 17.02.22).

The Ukraine also participated in the misjudgment that since the end of 2021 the Russian military operation had been nothing but a threat or a bluff. The attacked country was not sufficiently prepared for the invasion. President Zelenski was engaged in domestic rivalries instead of dealing with the defense of the country. The Ukrainian MP Inna Sowsun (web.de, 11.05.22) utters this openly. Zelenski ignored the warnings of the USA. His behaviour led to heavy criticism by President Biden (Stern, 11.06.22).

## ECONOMIC POWER, ADEQUATE SECURITY POLICY AND WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE OPENED THE IRON CURTAIN.

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In the past Germany represented by different party constellations ignored numerous reservations in Europe by applying its economic power, for example for the benefit of the German car industry. The following aspects must be mentioned critically: the casual abolition of compulsory military service, rejection of domestic defense, turning to out-of-area operations, debilitation of the German army (Bundeswehr), a problematic approach to the countries in southern Europe during the financial and refugee crisis as well as the dilatory handling of problematic developments in eastern Europe, moreover the weak and ineffective handling of official, especially supervisory obligations in different areas of politics (e.g. domestic security, integration, financial and economic crime, disaster prevention) and the dramatic backlog in digitalization. Massive lobbyism in Germany is mainly responsible for the problems in quality of German politics. (EU commission, July 2022).

Discussing these topics critically is different from joining waves of outrage, blame games or one-sided tales of investigation. There is no faultless policy. Horst Teltschik, Angela Merkel’s former adviser, gave a clear statement on convicting the German détente policy retrospectively (29.04.22). Moreover both former Federal Chancellor Gerhard Schröder’s part and importance may be dubious morally, but politically not so clearly accusable as they are currently portrayed and regarded (e.g. Hollstein, t-online, 26.07.22). His part in a possible initiation of negotiations cannot finally be judged. (Schröder, dpa 03.08.22). While his party SPD considers withdrawing his party membership and the German Federal Parliament requests limiting his privileges, the majority of the German population is in favour of his commitment. Evoking critical historical memories on the question of how difficult it is to demand public self-criticism from others in a political area (Bundesstiftung Aufarbeitung

2003) might be helpful as well as a critical hint at the recalling function of ‘damnatio memoriae’ in imperial-totalitarian contexts.

Since the beginning of the 70s there has been a close relationship between the détente and the security policy, which was manifested in the NATO Double-Track decision. Neither the moral voluntarism of the peace movement nor the national restorative confrontation policy led to the ‘Wende’ in 1989. In Germany the importance of the détente policy by Willy Brandt and Egon Bahr and the so-called ‘peaceful revolution’ in the GDR may be overestimated; however, the connection between a consequent security policy, economic dominance in competition and a permanent willingness for dialogue on international, continental and national level was decisive for opening of the Iron Curtain. Intercontinental treaties concerning recognition and disarmament and a moderate but clear practical policy in the East and the West including its consequent realization contributed to the fact that the collapse of the Soviet Union did not lead to a major war on German territory.

The events in China in the 1980s and in the Balkans in the 1990s showed how dangerous the situation really was and should remain. Accordingly the emergence and the contents of the Treaty of Minsk 2014 concerning the Ukraine which must be contributed to German politics to a large extent must not be criticized but valued. But problems occurred due to the lack of effective insistence on compliance, specification and development of the agreement by those involved (Hans-Georg Maaßen, 01.06.22) especially by the guarantor powers USA, Great Britain and France. ‘The invasion of the Ukraine in February 2022, this outrageous violation of international law is [...] mainly the result of a failed strategic or half-heartedly conducted dialogue’ (Kissinger 2022, pp. 540) and not the result of too much détente and cooperation and too little confrontation.

## THE NORTH STREAM PROJECTS STAND FOR THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE GERMAN ENERGY POLICY BY MUTUAL TRADING WITH RUSSIA.

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The North Stream projects did not cause dependence but independence. Nuclear power, coal, oil, fracking gas – the dependence for years on publicly scandalized means of energy and the problematic trading partners concerned, open threats against German firms and sites could be reduced, avoided or repelled. At the same time people minimized the political dependence on Eastern European states through which the pipelines ran and which were in the process of developing autocracy and oligarchy thus aggravating anti-democratic tendencies and hostile rhetoric towards Germany and the EU.

The possibilities of developing a cooperative gas-supply policy for Europe via the North Stream projects were not used. (Due to certain agreements Germany guarantees the gas supply for the Ukraine.) The continual politicization of gas trade was not initiated by Russia but mainly by one-sided trans-Atlantic parties and climate activists in Germany and by western partner countries that are competitors on the global market. The Russian military attack at the Ukraine offers a welcome excuse to realize economic and political interests which have little to do with a supposed (due to insufficient diversification economically and politically partly justified) third parties’ fear of Germany depending on Russia as far as energy is concerned.

Despite the harsh public criticism of Schröder currently about 40% of the population are in favour of activating North Stream 2 (Civey, 07.08.22). Reasons for such a consent are partly

in accordance with the extremist narratives of AfD and die Linken, but their nature is mainly pragmatic, especially among those who have to bear the disadvantages and costs. However, their motives may also be explicitly political to reach the goal of overcoming the self-afflicted status of a dependent petitioner and to expose Putin ('Drehen wir den Spieß doch um', Blome, Spiegel, 15.08.22).

Germany does not drop behind the other member states as a NATO partner.

A further continuously spread narrative is the supposed German unreliability as a NATO partner which has to be overcome now and has to be proven by a massive military involvement for the Ukraine. The disastrous end of the war in Afghanistan just dates back one year. While other NATO partners had withdrawn (justified and early enough) from the war after a couple of years, Germany stayed by the USA's side - no matter what its judgement will be – faithfully until the common shameful end after 20 years of mission abroad. (Expenses : more than 50 dead soldiers, numerous wounded and traumatized ones, €17.3 billion as well as killed civilians as 'collateral damage', Lüders 2022, p.168). During the German NATO-AFTUR mission for Turkey in 2012 German soldiers protected the borders of the NATO partner Turkey despite the almost humiliating and shameful treatment by the Turkish government.

The narrative of the German unreliability should be replaced by an increased German self-respect and a clear definition of its political interests (towards the Ukraine, too). The Ukraine defends its territory against a military attack. Every state is entitled to defend its territory. European values like liberty and democracy are dealt with mainly on a propaganda level in the Ukraine. The prominently sworn values would possibly have to be established there in a long and fundamental process politically, legally and culturally. Democracy is not an export item and demands very specific cultural, economic and political conditions. The developments in the Balkans as well as those in Hungary and Poland arouse skepticism. In the Ukraine the conditions for a full EU membership – not only being an applicant – or a NATO membership are far from being fulfilled as far as democracy, rule of law and fighting corruption are concerned.

Following its imperial logics Russia could class the West as weak and morally incredible for many different reasons (Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Hongkong, Brexit, EU-splitting, Trumps' abuse of the Ukraine for election purposes and hostilities against Europe and the NATO, political and social processes of disintegration in the USA). From his point of view the opportunity and the time had come to start a military attack at the Ukraine. By the public discussion in Germany this fact is put into perspective massively, even denied. Not only the German army lacks financial support and is equipped badly. This is also true for other western European countries like France and England (Thiele, 07.07.22).

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## THE RUSSIAN WAR MACHINERY IS SELF-SUFFICIENT AND IS NOT FINANCED BY THE GERMAN-RUSSIAN ENERGY TRADE.

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For years Roberto Saviano has pointed out the relationship between the Mafia and politics on an international level in his investigations. For a long time he has referred to a deep involvement of the whole western world (mainly Great Britain) in the business deals of

international organized crime, e.g. by the Russian and Ukrainian Mafia and other OC organizations, frequently in tax havens. The economic and politically highly problematic conditions in the Ukraine date back to the post-soviet conflicts between the former powerful structures and a developing prosperous oligarchy. The financial scale of the global and connecting the West to Russia criminal activities (into which the Ukrainian President Selenski is involved according to the Panama Papers) is many times higher than the amount arising from the contractual German-Russian trade on a mutual basis. Oligarchs are interested in territorial stability and international funding, but not in democratic structures (Halling 2014). For this reason it cannot be said that the Ukraine defends European values.

Considering these aspects the financial support of the Russian repression machinery and Putin's military activities must be seen in a different light, different from the tale of the supposedly financial military support by the German energy trade with Russia. It is rather the Ukrainian oligarchs than the process of democratization in the Ukraine that benefit from the financial support by the West. The behaviour of the antidemocratic regimes in Poland and Hungary (accepting financial grants and at the same time decreasing democracy and making anti-European and anti-German statements) is a copy.

The German energy trade with Russia does not finance the Russian war machinery (Ulrike Herrmann, 29.06.22). Russia's financial, staff and material resources (soldiers, fossil energy, steel production, profits from illegal financial deals, wheat) only partly and indirectly depend on the export of energy to Germany and other western countries. For this reason the western sanctions are more or less ineffective. States closely connected to China and Russia do not refrain from supporting Russia secretly and boycotting or undermining western sanctions. Even if Europe courts the so-called 'global South', the interests of South Africa, the Argentine, Brazil, India and Indonesia do not match the European ones and western, eastern, northern and southern European interests are not identical with the German ones. Turkey – a NATO partner – is far from risking a serious conflict with Russia.

Neither threatening with sanctions nor applying and tightening them could prevent Russia from attacking the Ukraine. The attack could not be decreased or finished. Russia's war machinery is self-sufficient (Keupp 21.03.22). In the long run Putin will lose the prosperity that has been achieved over 30 years for the population due to his suicidal strategy and he will lead his people into a possibly dark future. But that does not change his war policy. The question arises, what problem will be solved if Russia collapses. The anarchic tendencies during the Jelzin reign in the 90s may be remembered. On the one hand the massive organized crime flourished and also had its effects on the west, on the other hand it was accompanied by the question who was in control over the Russian atomic capacities. At the same time the sanctions could contribute to the development of perspectives for peace and re-civilization in the long run. They do not lead to terminating military actions or improving the Ukrainian position in negotiations. And the self-afflicted German damage is immense. Inflation, malfunctioning of public institutions and social disintegration may lead to tremendous social conflicts in the future.

But you must not neglect the fact that the ability of innovation and the flexibility of the western economy shows a large potential to use crisis for initiating processes of innovation and to overcome them with new strength (Meyer 22.07.22). Thus, in the long run sanctions can push desired political developments and strengthen the position of the West in the global economic competition strategically. If this really happens, is not clear at the moment. In the best case the western reaction on the Russian war against the Ukraine can drive the process of

transformation of the European economy towards climate neutrality and international competitiveness. Perhaps the present ‘coalition of progress’ ‘traffic-light’ government under the leadership of the Federal Chancellor favours this vision. This would be in accordance with statements made by the SPD candidate for the office of Federal Chancellor during the election campaign in 2021 describing a fundamental reconstruction of German industry.

The fact that after 1990 the Soviet troops withdrew peacefully from their formerly occupied and ruled Western Europe (supplied with generous financial and political funding) could be a weak – but in the long run relevant – glimpse of hope. The collapse of the Soviet Union mainly occurred due to the extremely economic weakening of Russia, when it was close to a breakdown because of the arms race and the competition among the systems. If the present economic sanctions can contribute to a similar development, they will be a long-term investment – despite all self-afflicted burden, especially in Germany – in the process of negotiating a new architecture of security in Europe and thus worldwide. The global risks of fractioning the world economy and financial markets that have been caused by the sanctions so far can hardly be predicted.

### POLITICAL LEADERSHIP DOES NOT CONSIST OF A GERMAN DOMINANCE AND BOOSTING RHETORIC AND ACTION, BUT IN MULTI-DIMENSIONAL CONTEXT CONTROL.

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Expecting Germany to take leadership, especially military leadership, in Europe seems a strange idea. This notion caused fears among its European neighbours in the process of reunification. Critics within the EU stated the real or supposed dominance of Germany almost dramatically in the following years. The German army will be the largest army in Europe due to the agreements concerning the arming of the troops by an extra funding of € 100 billions and a desired increase of 2 % of GNP (gross national product) for defense expenses. Maybe this fact marks the turning point specially distinctively. The consequences cannot be judged at the moment. But you may be critically reminded that large military expenses do not guarantee reaching political aims (see Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan).

Olaf Scholz deals with demanding German ‘leadership’ by explicitly not listening to forcing voices, thus determining this as leadership. He continuously emphasizes his clearly stated guidelines: strengthening of the Ukraine, international coordination, not participating in the war as a combatant, no state of emergency, but the continuation of the contractual coalition policy, however under extraordinary conditions (Scholz, FAZ 17.07.22). Moreover, the head of government of the Federal Republic of Germany chooses the option, thus taking political leadership, to communicate hoveringly, keep questions unanswered and avoid dysfunctional interior and exterior commitment. Leading political affairs in a dangerous situation is not the right place for public discussions and no infotainment at all.

The idea that political leadership today could or must be the ‘realization’ of a vast planned ‘strategy’ and ‘informing’ the public in every aspect is no less anachronistic than the status quo of digitalization in Germany. By active networking and decided support of opening the EU and reforming it at the same time in the context of a global multilateralism Scholz, however, represents a strategy of context control that meets the current challenges and the real balances of power effectively ( Wilke, Steuerungstheorie 2014). As a party the SPD discusses Gerhard Schröder’s expulsion (s.a.), the party Die Grünen keep introducing a stricter tone towards Russia and China in the sense of its value-based and feministic foreign politics, the

party FDP constantly has the interests of the financial side in focus. As long as this political identity competition lasts the Federal Chancellor naturally does not have the possibility of making the western sanctions and arms supplies the subject of negotiations to achieve pacification in eastern Europe and compensation of interests., even though an alternative does not exist... The democratic parties in Germany and a large part of the German media leave relevant topics on options for cold war warriors and extreme groups on the right and left wing of the political range.

The Federal Chancellor's explicit statement that Putin must not win the war and the Ukraine must exist is not problemed sufficiently in public discussion. The statement the Ukraine must 'win', Putin must 'lose' is described as the belief in political correctness that Olaf Scholz keeps owing. Responsible caution towards active participation in the war and, at the same time, decisiveness not to allow Putin's victory are framed as nervousness, hesitation and vacillation, international irritations towards Germany are openly increased and dramatized. Trivial facts like responding shortly to reporters' questions, e.g. after the G7-summit, are scandalized and used for loud outrage. Communicative failure is not attributed to media-inflicted framing but to the behaviour of the government, especially to that of the Federal Chancellor. His reference to the support granted by Germany is considered as unjustified self-praise (see Fabian Reinbold, t-online, 03.06.22).

Paying tribute to the Federal Chancellor's statement (08.05.22) the journalist Gerhard Spörl (09.05.22) criticized explicitly that criticizing him was 'almost a national sport'. As far as politics are concerned Harald Christ (FDP) agrees and calls the constant Scholz bashing disrespectful and even wicked. It is astonishing in what way the pseudo-critical attitude of the medial discussion (personalizing, moralizing, dramatizing, emotionalizing over and over again) sticks to an authoritarian state understanding of politics. The executive head is expected to exercise extensive guidance for general good (leadership). He is made responsible personally for supposedly given 'promises' the keeping of which is continually doubted by hermeneutics of suspicion and the wording of permanent distrust.

## LEVEL-HEADED VOICES ARE MAINLY MARGINALIZED, BUT THEY CARRY THE POTENTIAL OF PROVING CAPABLE IN THE LONG RUN.

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After Germany has decided to supply arms directly in a parliamentary resolution on 27.04.2022 in accordance with its partners, experts like the historians Jörg Baberowski (27.4.22) or Rutger Bregmann (5.5.22) or the political scientist Johannes Varwick (06.07.22) speak up now and then: the real politic caution and far-sightedness could be the wiser options towards the common escalation rhetoric of large parts of the German press. Despite the constant press attacks that have been aimed against Scholz for months 42.6% of all those interviewed and over 50% of people aged 65 or older consider the criticism, e.g. by the Leader of the Opposition Friedrich Merz as not justified (Civey, 05.06.22).

Since the beginning of the war thoughtful voices have been warning against the risks of an enforced western, especially German involvement in the Ukraine war exceeding (not in principle, but) the existing and steadily increasing amount and against the long-term effects of an economic war against Russia: Prof.(em.) Dr. Günter Brakelmann (\*1931), former social ethicist of the Ruhruniversität Bochum described the guidelines of actions of imperial superpowers and the problems of economic sanctions in a positioning paper before the

outbreak of the war. Supporters close to Jürgen Klute (DIE LINKE) founded the initiative ‘Bochumer Erklärung zum Konflikt um die Ukraine’ on this basis. (February 2022).

The former president of the constitutional court in North Rhine-Westphalia Dr. Michael Bertrams discusses the minor (existing, but in fact influencing the war) possibilities of international law in the present situation.

Prof. Dr. Gabriele Krone-Schmalz, a former German television (ZDF) correspondent in Russia who supposedly ‘understood’ Putin and thus was the target of aggression, states (04.03.22) that the harshest condemnation of Putin’s military attack against the Ukraine is necessary and justified in every respect. At the same time she points at the essential necessity of looking the behind the current outrage both politically and strategically. The bitter truth is: There will be a time after the war and nobody should be unprepared, but be aware of the fact that extremely painful concessions will have to be made. Despite all criticism of the - in her view - insufficient German support, the Green politician Alina Weisband who was born in the Ukraine and lives in Germany describes this clearly and impressively (05.05.22). In her opinion the fall of Selenski and his government is possible presently if he has to inform his people of possible results of negotiations like the renunciation of claimed territory. What ways and models are conceivable at all? The steadily precarious military situation in the east of the Ukraine (Reisner, 08.07.22) seems to confirm Mrs Weisband in a very depressing way.

So far, the probability of a limitation of the western military involvement orchestrated by the USA has been neglected. The statement that only the Ukrainians themselves can negotiate the results is correct. But you cannot separate it from the question how far the support by the USA, the relevant director, is to reach and really reaches. Thus the German debate and the criticism of Germany on the supposed lack of German involvement by some European countries seems to be symbolic and motivated by home politics. The national and continental European perspective need global widening in the context of a significant rapprochement of the USA and Germany (see Fabian Reinbold, t-online, 12.06.22). The strategic coordination of the German role in political and military respect becomes obvious. The amount and quality of armament supply will show to what extent the USA is prepared to protect the Ukraine. The military may depend on how the Ukraine will be equipped to reach a balance of firing power (Keupp, 12.06.22). The military chances of the Ukraine are not decided in Kiev or in Berlin, but in Washington – despite all rhetorical assuring of the Ukrainian sovereignty.

The applicant status for the Ukraine that was anticipated by Scholz, Draghi and Macron in Kiev and meanwhile was granted by the EU is legally irrelevant, but is both symbolically and politically important, meets positive response in the Ukraine. It is not clear to what extent the Western Europeans are prepared to take risks – possibly with their own emphasis towards the USA- by supplying artillery systems to the Ukraine exceeding the current amount because of the more serious situation on the eastern battlefield (coming down of Sjewjerodonezk at the beginning of July) (see Keupp, 12.06.22). It is more likely that the security of the own population is given priority, even if it means sacrificing eastern European and Ukrainian interests (Steinbrück, 23.06.22). The politics of the Federal Government in accordance with the USA and its far-reaching, but not full solidarity with the Ukraine (Kujat, 22.06.22) will lead to heavy losses of prosperity here in Germany, but at the same time will avoid an active participation in the war as combatant and thus prevent Germany from turning into an object or place of military actions. The Ukraine carries the hard risk of paying the price of its existence so that the war does not exceed the present area of war, namely the Ukraine. The German interests are objectively different from those of the Ukraine (Varwick, 06.07.22): conflict

confinement and stability are more important than outward solidarity and self-sacrifice. This is tragic and sad, but morally not to be condemned.

Michael Lüders analyses the situation in Germany as far as decisions are concerned on the background of the economic and political interests of the USA, NATO, EU, Russia, the Ukraine, the European national states and the global south in the long run: the present unity of the West cannot be sustained due to the real interests of those involved. Europe, especially Germany, will have to pay the price for fixing the global balance of power if the relationship between Europe and Russia as far as the Ukraine and Eastern Europe are concerned cannot be sorted out successfully. Lüders' statements (22.04.22;01.07.22) are an urgent and impressive warning against the extreme dangers of the present atmosphere of escalation and against the politicization of the public opinion in Germany driven by pseudo-moral outrage. Otto Schily describes this tendency as a new, spreading bellicism (20.07.22).

The secret service CIA points at the danger that Putin could use tactical atomic weapons if he felt pressurized. The Lord Mayor of Kiev Vitali Klitschko also considers this danger to be real (18.04.22). Angela Merkel's former adviser Erich Vad recommended not to allow the German export of 'heavy armament 'due to the risk of perpetuation in a worn-out war causing heavy losses among the civilians and due to the atomic risk, but instead he pointed at possible diplomatic options of negotiations.

From his point of view not escalation, but a way out of the spiral of escalation must be the primary present goal. Vad follows the same string of arguments as Christian Ströbele, a former green MP. 'The fear of the weapon is the actual weapon.' This statement is correct and reflects the political character of the Russian threats, indirectly especially towards Germany. Putin is somebody who 'undersands Germany' (Ulrich Körtner) knows how to make use of the German mental mix of bad conscience, compensatory moral arrogance and the readiness for hysteria. But the weapon itself is also a weapon and as a military threat it is as real as a political one. People - especially in Germany - will have to forget their illusions about the real balance of power between the Ukraine supported supposedly by a united West and Russia with its supporters as soon and as austere as possible (Schwennicke 11.07.22). The chances of reaching any results to stop the bloodshed without letting down the Ukraine and of creating an at least fragile new status quo are decreasing, not increasing if this does not happen. Both sayings are valid: Fear is a bad adviser. Caution is the mother of wisdom. Accordingly the USA strictly follow the guideline not to supply any battle tanks and planes despite all military support. Thus the Ukraine can keep the Russian troops at distance, but cannot gain any re-conquest (Masala, 10.08.22).

The Swedish lawyer and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize Beatrice Fihn is of the following opinion (stern.de,16.04.22): Due to the current situation the Ukraine needs humanitarian and military support by the West; any further escalation increases the risk of an uncontrolled expansion. The nuclear powers USA and Russia should try to initiate a process of disarmament Immediately, parallel to the indirect military support of the Ukraine. A further essential perspective on the global level are the UN efforts which were torpedoed demonstratively by Russia.

However, a treaty concerning wheat export from the Ukraine was signed in Istanbul after the necessary negotiations mediated by António Guterres (22.07.22) and is being executed presently (01.08.22). Whether this could be useful for future negotiations about a ceasefire, a

truce and the initiation of a peace agreement cannot be predicted and depends on the further military development.

## PEACE ETHICS IN REFORMATORY TRADITION SEPARATED FROM THE TRADITIONAL WAR THEOLOGY AND POINT AT A REALISTIC BIBLICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AND A THEOLOGICALLY BASED AND PRACTICABLE ETHOS IN EVERYDAY LIFE.

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Christians in reformatory tradition are modelled on a theologically based ethos of liberty and responsibility. In a liberal, parliamentary democracy political decisions do not depend on a mandate attributed by the church, they are sufficiently and finally legitimated by their constitutional existence. Churches have neither a broader knowledge nor a higher legitimation for political or military decisions. Christians have the duty to give peace which asks for their loyalty. This is how they get involved in the public debates and surroundings – like all the other parties. It has to be stated clearly that Protestant churches do not know an authoritative institution on issues of belief and moral. People represent their own opinion unless they hold a mandate to represent committees or institutions. Following their reformatory understanding of christening and profession Protestants fulfill their everyday duties. In politics, society, church and personal surroundings as well as possible and according to their abilities and possibilities.

In some parts of the German Protestantism this time a pro-Ukrainian ‘In God we trust’ theology might become socially acceptable. (Some services and sermons may create this impression.) The Orthodox patriarchates in Moscow and Kiev did not initiate any peace-making activities. On the contrary: They simply reflect the conflict situation and take sides with the relevant government. Thus, patterns of war theology repeat that are fatally familiar from 2 world wars and cross-confessional.

For the Protestant church in Germany (10.03.22) the President of the EKD Annette Kurschus refers to the remaining ambivalence of political acting and to the capability of learning and considering of the Protestant peace ethics and, at the same time, encourages the communities in their social and pastoral work. Therefore, any kind of a new war theology, rigid pacifism, disillusioned lack of opinion or the willingness to surrender towards the aggressor is rejected. Humanitarian involvement and social service are encouraged by the President as well as the political responsibility of the devout.

In the German Protestantism the pacifist traditions dating back to the time of the peace movement lose importance. Responsibly ethical concepts in the divide of the reformatory 2-kingdom doctrine show a wider plausibility and critical-analytic power. However, a totally new description of Protestant peace ethics cannot be seen even though some people state this now and then. You can rather watch a new gain of the biblical-realistic view on man and the remaining validity of the Gospel a binding and opening message of peace as it was stated in the 5<sup>th</sup> thesis of the Barmer Theologische Erklärung describing the relationship of violence, justice and peace in the days of the so-called Bekennende Kirche. (With an extensive theological argumentation: Kurschus, FAZ, 12.06.22).

Political-ethic communication considering theological responsibility discusses the insight into the ambiguity of any kind of decision. It warns of handed down German national reflexes and motifs no matter whether in national-conservative, liberal-intervening or holistic-decisionist form. Moral illusions of purity, cowardice or self-righteous tribunalization are no option,

either. You have to consider the balance of the international duty of solidarity and the protection of the interests of the own population. Matters of weighing risks are not suitable for taking and committing to a point of view. They are and stay risky decisions under the conditions of insecurity.

Protestant peace ethics support weighing-up, level-headed, based on the war causes chains of actions that can be attributed to positions, institutions and people that are capable of solving conflicts and willing for cooperation and, thus apply differentiation, cooperation and coordination, diplomacy and steadiness in the long-term, economically based and military secured balance of power and interests. However, the right of a state's right of military self-defense against unjustified attacks has to be maintained. An effective support of the Ukraine that is affected by a military attack has to be guaranteed continuously by humanitarian, economic and indirect military help; imperial requests must be curbed effectively in the interest of a collective defense and civilian protection in the areas of individual responsibility. An expansion of the war needs to be prevented decisively. A global cooperation against any temptation of a de-globalization or illusions of self-sufficiency has to be developed by the relevant existing and the newly to be created structures.

### THE PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY IN GERMANY WORKS AND ENABLES THE NECESSARY HANDLING OF CONFLICTS WITH THE RELEVANT PROCESSES OF LEARNING AND CORRECTING.

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The answer to what is right in the present crisis can and must be looked for and be found in a controversial public debate in a liberal democracy. A conflictual public debate proves that the democracy is working and not that it is in danger. Both different opinions among the coalition partners of the government and the polemic of the parliamentary opposition are part of it. Different from dangerous anti-democratic populism strategies even within western states, democracy does not live on harmony, but on non-violent public conflicts. Despite all the criticism in this comment, referring to the theory of democracy the current situation in Germany must be considered as a stroke of luck of a working parliamentary democracy. But, on the one hand, the different option should not be horrified, but be regarded as possible and acceptable under the given conditions, as at the moment nobody knows what will be right in the end. (So an initiative for dialogue like the one of the FAZ 'Deutschland spricht' should be welcomed.) on the other hand, the opinions of minorities have the right to be heard and have to be protected; however, decisions are made due to the principle of majority. Free, equal and secret elections based on the constituency determine the make-up of the Federal Parliament, the relevant balance of power within and the existing mandate for government. (Decisive are the majorities, not the momentary results of opinion polls or the activist identity-based political definition power.)

Russia despises the European states that take their time for exactly this democratic approach to solve problems, organize agreements and bear deviations and, thus, does not take them seriously as partners. Besides the efforts to reach agreements of the democratic states the major potent partner USA and China are internationally requested not to withdraw to military and propagandistic options, but to work massively on a political way out in order to bring peace to the conflict by consensus and compromise in an acceptable time frame, make Russia withdraw its troops and thus, initiate the compensation of interests on this basis and guarantee the recognition of this process, too.

The Federal Chancellor's journey to Japan (27.04.22) is rather a reaction to the fact China might use the opportunity of acting aggressively towards Taiwan instead of being cooperative and deescalating. The Chinese threatening military gestures and Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan (02.08.22) accompanied by the reactions in China give reason for fearing an escalation of the situation there. The coming Japanese parting from its pacifistic constitution must also be considered as a warning sign. Presently the serious danger of war outside the Ukraine is not diminished; the situation might escalate. An international coordination with partners in Asia and Africa is as urgent and necessary as signs of far-reaching powerlessness. At the moment nobody can raise large hopes of reaching a solution by negotiations steered by the West. Its importance is too minor despite all military armament of the NATO.

To minimize risks congruent war goals are essential. At the moment they do not exist: The Ukraine tries to restore its territory including the Crimea. Moreover, for the USA President Biden demanded Putin's fall (regime change) on the one hand, and on the other hand a lasting weakening of Russia for a long time (geo politics) and thus creates the impression of a proxy war. In reality exactly this proxy war is already taking place, a fact that does not make the Russian willingness to negotiate more likely. Obviously Biden is approaching the European position, spiegel, 11.05.22). Europe wants to prevent an expansion of the conflict, strengthen the Ukraine militarily and raise the war expenses for Russia even if it means self-suffering in order to initiate negotiations between the two war parties Ukraine and Russia without any outside guidelines. This is in accordance with the demands made by Scholz and Macron together (09.05.22) concerning a ceasefire and the retreat of the Russian troops. From the Ukraine. Finally the decision of the USA will be of vital importance whether the war will be prolonged or finished militarily by continued, limited or denied military support. (s.a.).

The Federal Chancellor's refusal to talk about a desired 'victory' of the Ukraine shows an adequate problem awareness that at the moment appears in journalistic contributions (Bastian Braun, t-online, 03.06.22) and political proposals (Luigi di Maio, 21.05.22). The West seems to be aware of the fact that excluding nuclear options and refraining from joining the war actively, but at the same time granting military, humanitarian and economic support might lead to a compromise and prevent the worst.

## CONCLUSION : THE CONFLICT ABOUT THE UKRAINE IS FOUGHT OUT MILITARILY, BUT CAN ONLY BE SOLVED POLITICALLY.

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If war is the continuation of politics with military means, that means vice versa that politics can finish and overcome war with political means corresponding with the military situation. The more necessary and justified military resistance in the case of a military attack is to prevent the conquest of further areas of influence by the aggressor - that is the case at the moment -, the more necessary it is to organize political options offering a way out of the spiral of escalation parallel to the military, economic and humanitarian support of the Ukraine.

The future will show if any result of the Ukraine war apart from a total, possibly global disaster can deviate from the results of the treaty of Minsk that have become obsolete in between or possible concessions of the West to Russia immediately before the beginning of the war.

All those responsible both in the East and in the West will probably have to admit one day that any result no matter what it may look like could have been reached without a war. As unbearable as the thought may be, peace cannot be achieved against the present enemy, but only together with him. This bitter lesson will have to be learned by every decision maker and observer.