

HANS JÜRGEN KRYSMANSKI

Privatization of Power

The privatization of all value-added processes is the engine that drives the distribution of wealth. Contrary to illusions, wealth, thus accumulated in the upper strata of society, cannot be »redistributed«. It is lost, as far as politics of economic equality is concerned. And this time, there is no hope of a »New Deal«. The reason: wealth deriving from unfettered privatization is being rapidly reinvested in social, cultural and political power. This monetarization of politics and of all other public domains is transforming democracy into the rule of the moneyed few, into a plutocracy. Therefore privatization, as such, is no longer a problem of distribution, it has become a question of the power structure – and of power structure research.

WOLFGANG SCHELER

A World Without War? From Violent To Just Peace

Is it possible to have a world without war? This question seems to be repressed by the spirit of the day. Since the demise of the socialist system and the end of the block confrontation, there has been a rise in the number of wars and war, itself, has become a »normality«. But, the author maintains, the majority of humanity live in peace and – despite all the rhetoric of a »worldwide war on terror« – there is reason enough to defend this peace and to avoid what would be the opposite of world peace – another world war. But to defend this peace, it has to be changed from the current violent peace – a peace which is always »pregnant« with war – into a just – a non-violent – peace. The struggle for such a peace needs a broad coalition of different various forces.

GREGOR SCHIRMER

International Law As an Instrument Of Peace

The wars waged by the United States and its allies against Yugoslavia in 1999, Afghanistan in 2002 and Iraq in 2003 grossly violated international law. These violations consisted particularly of disregarding the prohibition of the threat and use of force in the international relations. The author warns against accepting, what could be called, a substitution of international law by a »pax americana«. To avert new wars, he pleads for a general strengthening of the United Nations and specifically a strengthening of the International Court and the International Criminal Court. International law, he adds, also has all the necessary instruments for fighting international terrorism.

DIETRICH EICHHOLTZ

»Generalplan Ost« As a Plan For the Enslavement of Eastern European People

The »Generalplan Ost« (General Plan East) developed and realized between 1939 and 1943, by the Leaders of fascist Germany, was a complex of different plans and orders directed toward wholesale genocide in Eastern Europe. The author discusses four main interests which stood behind the »Generalplan Ost«: the political und military »safeguarding« of the occupied territories by liquidating the indigenous population; the creation of a German social basis by settling an economically viable but, politically, totally dependent stratum of German farmers and landowners; by agglomerating a German urban middle-class, and the expansion of big business, and by the unlimited availability of food for the German »Herrenvolk«. He goes on to describe the realization of these plans and concludes with the admonition that, in Germany, public interest in the »Generalplan Ost« is still only meager.

Jindřich Filipec

The »Beneš-Decrees« – Context and Significance

Pleading for perceiving the highly controversial »Beneš-Decrees« of 1945, in all their complexity, and thereby, overcoming one-sided judgements, that see only »heroes« on the one side and »villains« on the other, the author discusses some of the newest positions appearing in appropriate

Czech publications. He sees reason for hope because of some of the subtly differentiated assessments of the complicated Czech-German relationships. At the same time he criticizes those tendencies that tend to water down historical truth, in order to support Sudeten-German revanchist positions and to instrumentalize the attacks on Beneš and the Czechoslovak communists as weapons against current Czech government positions.

Eva Roman-Żukowicz A Polish View on the Eviction and Resettlement Of Germans

Discussing the demands of German displaced persons organisations, the author reflects into the developments under German occupation of Poland during World War II. She reminds – for instance – of the displacement of two Million Polish farmers, landowners, entrepreneurs and intellectuals from western to central Poland by the German occupiers, and the loss of Polish eastern territories as a result of the Yalta conference, as well as, the role of this conference for the expulsion of the Germans at the end of the war.

KLAUS EHRLER The Munich »Agreement« – Endorsement for Occupation

The Munich »Agreement« – the author maintains – can only be understood by examining the history of the aftermath of World War I. Rather than taking the necessary consequences drawn from what at the time was the world's biggest catastrophe for peace and beginning in 1919, set up a completely new system of mutual security, the contending national imperialists and imperialisms in Europe instrumentalized the peace negotiations and treaties to carry out their respective aims and interests. Anti-democratic, as well as, anti-communist partiality poisoned all negotiations from the outset. In Munich 1938, all these peace-disruptive movements crashed into one another, and the avalanche leading to war could no longer be stopped.

ECKART MEHLS The Beneš-Decrees and Their Historical and Contemporary Context

The author contradicts the contention that the Beneš-Decrees can be seen as the cause of flight and expulsion of Germans from Czech territories following World War II. He pleads for a comprehensive approach to the question. One should consider all 143 decrees handed down by the Beneš-Government, (only 10 of which concerned the destiny of Germans and Hungarians living in Czechoslovakia), the history of the German political movements in Czechoslovakia in the years between the two World Wars, as well as, the overwhelming significance of the Potsdam Agreements signed August 2, 1945 by the United States, the USSR, Great Britain and France to have a clearer picture of what determined the destiny of Germans in Czechoslovakia.

JOACHIM WAHL The Lula-Government in Brazil

Since the electoral triumph of the Workers Party in October 2002, Brazil is governed by a Centre-Left-coalition headed by President Lula. The hopes placed in the Lula government were very high but – the author says – the Brazilian left today is sharply divided over what the government has really done to overcome the country's deep social crisis. Some critics feel that the government is not acted with enough determination to limit the influence of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and others criticise an erosion of the inner party democracy which weakens the Left in general. The year 2004 will show to what extent Lula is still close to the people.