

## Enough is enough – Towards a new social contract!

What do receivers of Hartz IV (German social welfare benefits), unpaid academics, doctors, temporary employees, trainees, small businesses and laid-off workers have in common?

They are purposely set against each other and kept in a state of insecurity. This serves a definite economic policy, which has proved to be inhuman. It serves neither the general public interest, nor does it bring the much publicized success which it promises. It widens the gap between rich and poor and does away with the middle class.

To classify people according to considerations of economic usefulness is contrary to any religious or humanistic ethic as well as against human rights. The concept of homo profitabilis has not stood the test. One's right to exist is not founded on performance but upon one's basic human right to dignity.

The propagation of the concept of homo profitabilis is advanced through disinformation – against the interests of mankind and nature. The skillful complication of connections and the manipulative policy of the dissemination of information also impede any active participation of the citizens towards the shaping of society.

If people were taken seriously it would be made clear from which Think Tanks these concepts originate which ruin us: Bertelsmann-Foundation, Initiative New Social Market Economy and other major international enterprises.<sup>1</sup>

The attempt to shift responsibility for the decline of society to the individual for the problems resulting from misguided policies has become all-too apparent. For the sake of constitutional statehood, democracy and peace for the whole of society world-wide, we need a radical structural change instead of an economic dictatorship. The happiness of the people, which is most apparent in countries where class differences are the least visible, cannot be measured according to rates of economic growth.

To that end we appeal to you to join forces with us in a wide alliance according to the example of the Enough-Coalition in the United Kingdom and to demand a stop to this particularly inhuman form of profit politics! The Enough-Coalition shows that political parties, NGOs in all their variety, religious groups - even to the Sikhs, as well as the peace movement and many more can successfully join together to discredit this policy of the desolidarisation of society and stand together in an alliance against social cuts, the fomenting of bogeyman images and other ostracizing policies.

We call upon everyone to accept the challenge and make their contribution towards social responsibility. We therefore urge our media in the strongest terms possible to no longer support these campaigns towards the fragmentation of society in the sense of divide and rule. They should rather make information public which uncovers the structural violence of the politics of impoverishment. That should be their function as the fourth estate!

With this declaration against the targeted fragmentation of society and a clear condemnation of the playing off of different groups of people against each other, we invite everyone who feels committed to humanity. Together we can stop the trend of the commercialization of all branches of life and moreover intervene to engender a way of a life in Germany and beyond based on human dignity.

Working team "Debates about rich and poor in the media" during the Christian-Muslim Conference of the Bendorf Forum in Nordwalde, Germany, at Whitsun 13.06.2011.

*The Bendorfer Forum for Ecumenical Encounter and Interreligious Dialogue, the successor organisation of the interreligious conferences held in Hedwig Dransfeld Haus in Bendorf/Rhein, Germany has organized a Christian-Islamic Conference at Whitsun for over twenty years. This was originally founded by the German-Muslim League in Bonn and Pastor Horst Eisel. This year the theme of the conference was "The rich get richer and the poor become more numerous" – the theme was introduced with a stimulus by Prof. Christoph Butterwegge.*

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.anti-bertelsmann.de/2007/baue0708.pdf>; <http://www.nrhz.de/flyer/beitrag.php?id=12472>