

prudentia

HIGH IQ SOCIETY FOR THE TOP 1/250 OF THE POPULATION



THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN EUROPE
AND THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET

Journal Issue #6 – March 22nd, 2019

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the sixth issue of Prudentia Journal!

Although not even a month has passed since the previous issue, so many things are happening in the world right now that I have decided to release a new issue already now; I also know already now what the topical focus of the next issue will be, so expect it to follow soon, probably within less than a month's time, as well.

While I would still like to point your attention to the "Volko Test of Original Thinking", which was published in the previous issue, this issue deals with the political situation in Europe. Prudentia Journal is a magazine distributed via the Internet. The European Parliament is now planning to enact two new laws that face great opposition from people who regularly use the Internet, also known as Netizens. It is to be expected that the new laws will go through and this will show that the Netizens are powerless, even if they stand united against a law. In effect, this might have dangerous consequences regarding the freedom of the Internet. It is to be expected that further laws harming free speech on the Net will be passed, and we Europeans will be more and more restricted in our possibilities to express ourselves and our ideas on the Net.

Prudentia Journal relies on the Internet, as this is our sole way of distribution. I have plenty of experience in making magazines that are distributed via the Internet. Without the Internet I would probably be some very minor figure in this world who would not get any attention. With the Internet, I have made the achievement of being connected with like-minded personalities and having the ability of intellectual exchange of ideas, views and experiences. I have even met my girlfriend on the Internet, with whom and whose family I get on very well. Without the Internet, my life would be far unhappier than it is now.

For this reason, I have decided to dedicate a whole issue of Prudentia Journal to the political situation in Europe and the future of the Internet.

Enjoy reading, and feel free to send me feedback!

Claus Volko, cdvolko (at) gmail (dot) com

THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN EUROPE AND THE FUTURE OF THE INTERNET

Leisure Time, Intellectual Independence, Free Speech

Every human being is different. Under the right circumstances every human being would develop into a different direction. In reality, most people do not develop exactly into the direction that would match their innate abilities and talents because of societal and environmental pressure.

In my case, my parents believed that they were doing me good by forcing me to study medicine, because as a doctor you are highly regarded in society and earn good money. They did not understand that these things are relatively unimportant to me, while leisure time, intellectual independence and free speech mean much more to me.

For this reason, I am interested in living in a political system that gives me leisure time which I can use for my own purposes, instead of having to work all day and night except for the few breaks which are necessary to consume food, sleep etc., as well as the power to think for myself instead of being forced to adhere to an official state ideology, and also the freedom to express my honest opinions in public.

I do not know if you are like me; most likely, you are not. But some of you might have similar values as I do. In which case you might be highly interested in what I am going to write now.

Liberal Democracy

I am living in Vienna, the capital of the Republic of Austria, which is a medium-sized landlocked country with a population of roughly 8.7 million people, most of whom speak some sort of German dialect. My home country joined the European Union back in 1995, when I was celebrating my 12th birthday. I am aware that I enjoy privileged living conditions here in Austria and that my way of life would even be a thorn in the side of some politicians or would-be politicians in my own country if they knew about it; I experienced this again and again during my time as a member of the Austrian branch of the world's largest high IQ society.

Now my parents and teachers used to educate me to believe that the best guarantee for the preservation of this way of life would be a democratic government. Alas, as I have recognized in my twens through intensive reading of political literature, discussions and life experience, this is not necessarily the case insofar as democracy as the rule of the majority over the minority does not always lead to more freedom. In addition, one must not forget

that even the evil dictator who ruled Germany and Austria from 1933 to 1945 originally came to power through democratic elections and that something like this could theoretically happen again at any time.

The best guarantee for freedom, to my mind, is liberalism. Or liberal democracy - in other words, a democracy that is limited by a constitution based on basic liberal principles such as the rule of law, the respect for human rights, freedom of speech, freedom of expression, free trade, respect for property, etc.

Now the big question is: Are we, in Europe, living in a liberal democracy? Have we ever lived in a liberal democracy or are we at least following the path of becoming a liberal democracy? Is the political situation for us free spirits getting better or worse? What do you think?

A clever man from Eastern Europe

In late January 2019, I had a nice, extensive conversation via e-mail with an old acquaintance from an Eastern European country, with whom I had not talked for a long time. He paid tribute to me for daring to run against the officially party-backed candidate in the 2019 European Parliament primaries, but at the same time called me a "naive fool" because I seriously believed that I had a real chance against such a young, beautiful, telegenic woman.

Anyhow, the essence of his speech was: We in Europe have ceased to live in the age of "liberal democracy", if there ever was one. Rather, we only have the choice between an authoritarian regime à la Macron or May or an authoritarian regime à la Orbán or Putin.

However, he also pointed out to me that not only the older generation of politicians is largely "computer-illiterate", but also the younger generation. Only Generation X, who was born in the 1970s and to whom he believes he and I belong (although I was born in 1983, in his opinion I am by no means a member of Generation Y, but rather a late-born member of Generation X, due to my special socialization with regard to computers), knows computers well (of course, except for those who have never been interested in computers). The younger ones (Millennials) usually do not have any decent computer knowledge anymore, which is mainly due to the fact that they never owned a home computer like the Commodore 64 that forced every user to acquire at least elementary programming knowledge because otherwise they would not have been able to use it. At first I was a bit skeptical of this statement but, frankly, I came to similar conclusions in an blog entry I wrote myself a few years ago.

So there is the hope that at least our generation will be able to exchange ideas with the help of self-created websites, weblogs etc. and that we will remain largely untouched by the "computer-illiterate people". (Just think of Angela Merkel's infamous saying: "The Internet is new territory for us all.")

What my acquaintance, of course, did not explain is the reasons why we are no longer living in a liberal democracy, if we ever did. Let me try to provide an explanation myself: It is due

to human nature. Although there are some human beings who are happy when they are free and have no intentions of imposing their views and their way of life upon others, there are also people who strive for power and want to direct others. And, of course, those who venture into politics and become politicians themselves are mostly people of the latter kind. So it is, short said, the nature of politics that most politicians are enemies of those who desire freedom for themselves.

The Internet

A few general words about the Internet. Many clueless people consider the Internet an invention of the 1990s. In reality, the Internet has been around since the 1960s. (In the 1960s, computer technology was far less advanced than it is now, but there were already computers, as well as networks connecting them!) For decades, however, access to the Internet was restricted to public authorities and universities.

This situation began to change at the end of the 1980s when the English physicist Tim Berners-Lee invented an Internet application called the World Wide Web, which firstly featured much better graphics than previous Internet applications (Telnet, Gopher, etc. - nobody knows these things today!) and secondly was intuitively easy to use.

That must have been the reason why some entrepreneurs thought: If it is now also possible for non-specialists to find their way on the Internet, why don't we also offer private individuals access to the Internet for a monthly fee? And so the development has taken its course.

As I have read, now, in 2019, about 80% of all households in Austria and Germany are connected to the Internet. While the Internet was originally intended to facilitate the exchange of information between scientists, the Internet is now also used for commercial purposes, for political propaganda, for the distribution of computer games and entertainment software, etc. - there is uncontrolled growth. That's a good thing. The only problems are censorship, monitoring by government bodies and abuse to gain access to sensitive data.

Europe is no longer a democracy

Now the European Parliament is about to pass two new laws, articles 11 and 13, which will concern many Internet users and make the publication of own contents as well as the linking to others' contents far more troublesome. If you have little information on what is going to happen, please take a look at the website <http://savetheinternet.info/>, which is available in many European languages and provides a comprehensive introduction to the matter as well as many links to websites with more background information.

This has reminded me of the wise words of my friend from Eastern Europe that the era of liberal democracy, if it ever existed, is gone for good and we in Europe only have the option to choose between a regime in the style of Macron's or May's or a regime in the style of Orban's or Putin's.

Articles 11 and 13 will have tremendous negative implications for all Internet users. It is clear that opposition from the Netizens is strong. But in the end all the resistance will probably be in vain. And this will clearly show that even if all people on the Internet share the same opinion, they will not be able to stop the enacting of a law, even if they unite against it. So in effect, this will serve as a clear and definite demonstration of the powerlessness of the Internet population and it will finally disillusionate those of us who believed that the Internet would give common people power to shape politics.

In this context it is also noteworthy that Macron is planning to use the military against the gilets jaunes even though the results of polls say that 53% of the French population openly support the gilets jaunes. This is no longer a democracy, no longer a rule of the majority - my friend from Eastern Europe was absolutely right.

(See this article: <https://www.newstatesman.com/world/europe/2019/03/macron-s-military-reaction-gilets-jaunes-sign-his-government-has-lost-control>)

The Future of the Internet and Europe

Once Articles 11 and 13 are adopted, history will show us Netizens how little we can do, even if we stand united against a law. Then some of us will freeze and from now on hold back very much from expressing opinions on the Internet, while others will radicalize themselves, according to the motto: "Now more than ever!" Those who radicalize themselves will be disadvantaged and oppressed by the authorities, possibly even physical violence will be used against them (see Macron's procedure against the "gilets jaunes"). In the end, the authorities will triumph and the Internet in this form, as we experience it now, will be history. In the future, the Internet will be a pure instrument for the authorities to monitor and spy on unpopular citizens, as is already the case in the People's Republic of China. What originally has had great potential to improve people's lives will ultimately be used against them.

No, Facebook is not destroying society

In this context, please allow me also to make a statement about Facebook. If George Soros claims that Facebook has destroyed society and even Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez agrees with him, I would contradict them. Facebook does not destroy society, Facebook merely changes it. Something fruitful and new can emerge from it.

In my experience - I have been on Facebook for ten years - Facebook reduces the social distance. People who used to be known only through the media and who seemed unreachable can now be contacted on Facebook and communicated with at eye level. Society has become more egalitarian as a result; prejudices have been dismantled. It was to be expected that people would still not agree. You do not like each other in every case, but at least you talk to each other. The fact that Facebook is monitored by intelligence services is another matter. All in all, I am glad that Facebook exists.

Conclusion

My intention with this article was merely to make you aware of what is going on in Europe right now and what this will eventually result in. I did not intend to make you upset or think about ways how to actively oppose this development – most likely you will not be able to make a difference. Rather than that, I want you to be aware of what is happening and to prepare for what is probably going to come.

I will keep making Prudentia Journal for as long as it will be possible for me to do so. Let us hope this will still be possible for many years to come, despite the increasing restrictions to freedom of speech online.

"Hope for the best, prepare for the worst, and everything in between will not come as a surprise" – these are very wise words from famous African American novelist Maya Angelou.

Claus Volko, cdvolko (at) gmail (dot) com

LEGAL STUFF

Prudentia Journal is an electronical magazine edited by Dr. Claus Volko. Prudentia Journal is free, you are allowed to spread the magazine provided it remains unmodified. The editor assumes that the person who submits a contribution for Prudentia Journal (the contributor) has not violated any rights of third parties. Contributors preserve all rights and responsibility for their original contributions, but they give the editor the right to adapt them. There is no guarantee that a contribution will be used in Prudentia Journal. If you want to use articles from Prudentia Journal, you must arrange that with their authors. For any questions contact Claus Volko.

Official website of Prudentia Journal:

<http://journal.prudentia.club/>