

St. Arbogast, August 2008

MANIFESTO

Agreement for Joint Action

More and more people have recognized that in order to support public welfare, preserve the environment and develop democracy in a vital way, a new understanding of politics is needed. This new understanding of politics requires an all-embracing consciousness, which we call “integral”. The expression “integral consciousness” can be defined in an individual and collective sense by what many people understand as wisdom, spirituality and “the intelligence of the heart”.

The present global problems and tasks cannot and should not be solved by a handful of decision-makers. Therefore active political participation by the wider population is required, and this can happen only insofar as people are ready to take on responsibility.

The participants who assembled at the Congress for Integral Politics possess this new consciousness, and they are prepared to take on this responsibility. They feel committed to agreeing upon and taking common action for in-depth change which transgresses their individual efforts.

Present Position

We appreciate the immense achievements of modern times and would not want to do without them. However, the one-sided materialistic view of life and humanity following the Enlightenment, together with the belief in exponential economic growth, have proven to be serious global errors.

Essentially, we see humankind as being confronted with three major problem areas:

1. the psychological or individual, 2. the social or collective, and 3. the ecological or globally-centered. These problems originate to a considerable extent in illusory beliefs about what satisfies human needs.

- The psychological-individual problem area includes the experience on the part of many of being overwhelmed by contemporary life, leading to depression, loss of purpose, addiction, violence and egocentrism.

- The area of social problems comprises ever-increasing world-wide poverty and human exploitation, the collapse of supportive community life, the separation and resulting isolation of more and more people, and the exclusion of disadvantaged fellow citizens.
- The area of ecological problems includes the gradual breakdown of ecological systems, threatening the existence of humanity and all the creatures of this earth.

Integral politics is searching for concrete solutions to these three problem areas by dealing with the causes of the situation, not just the symptoms. Non-material needs such as affection, belonging, justice, creativity, meaning and the security of each human being and all creatures of this earth cannot be satisfied only on the material level through consumption and wealth. However, the materialism that dominates our present values attempts to address and fulfill human needs on the material level through income, consumption and property.

This attempt is doomed to failure. Non-material needs that remain unsatisfied lead to inner discontent, ever-increasing material demand and escape into substitute gratification. Addiction - to alcohol, drugs, food, material goods and power – destroys on the one hand the human beings themselves, and on the other, a peaceful society.

The considerable imbalance created through the inequity of possessions, consumption and developmental freedom causes strife. At present, unlimited material demands affect the balance of nature, thus exponentially destroying the environment, the basic fabric of life. Growth-based economies are products of misguided financial systems, particularly in industrial countries, and are fostered today by the demand for consumption that substitutes for authentic fulfillment.

Goals

The main goal is to foster change based on the aforementioned reflections: **The best possible resolution of the needs and development on all existential levels of human life in connection with all creatures of the earth, as well as with the earth itself.**

To achieve this goal, the following individual and collective changes are needed.

1. Psychological-individual change

- The one-sided materialism that accompanies consumption and property must be overcome, yet at the same time the material base - including nature - has to be attended to with the utmost care. Material moderation becomes possible only when non-material needs are satisfied.
- Material consumption needs to be supplanted by growth at emotional, mental, and spiritual level by individuals and societies, which will be expressed by a deepening of the compassion for all sensate beings. Every single human being needs to take responsibility for this process.

2. Social-collective goals

- Strengthening fundamental democratic structures.
- Establishing spiritually supportive and connected communities with more possibilities for self-sufficiency.
- Strengthening solidarity by giving priority and space to those in the lowest levels of society.

3. Ecological earth-centered goals

- A sensible form of economic activity in which the material needs of humans are based on a just and sustainable production and distribution of goods.
- A financial system which puts an end to the necessity of the growth of economies and supports human existence and sustainability.
- Strengthening local regions instead of accumulating power at one central point.
- Expanding the culture of freedom, wisdom and love, which has been recognized as a universal evolutionary power.

Actions

At the Congress for Integral Politics, the participants arrived at an agreement on a common platform. They came up with the metaphor of "a common breath" to sustain the communal feelings and solidarity created at the congress and support their individual and collective work toward the aforementioned goals.

The following actions are based on the wishes and thoughts of those attending the Congress. There are long-term and short-term plans of actions that should lead to concrete projects. They can be extended and altered even after the Congress has finished.

- **Strengthening of existing solutions (present)**

We would like to strengthen and support the beneficent and meaningful work of numerous establishments and cultural projects throughout the world.

- **Establishment of vital and spiritually supportive communities (present and long-term)**

Communities are crucial for human existence, for survival, and for mental and spiritual development. Culture can only develop in a collective manner, which also counteracts the tendency to isolation.

- **Direct democracy (long-term)**

Democracy should be a culture of love. This requires that the greatest number of people participate in the decision-making process. To achieve this is necessarily a long-term process.

- **Media (immediate and long-term)**

We intend to set up our own media to popularize our own interests and those of other groups. To that end we will pursue short-term and long-term methods.

1. In the short-term, we are looking for ways of co-operating with existing media.
2. In the long-term, we will try to raise money (through grants, etc.) to establish a global media network for raising levels of consciousness.

- **Political parties (immediate)**

We strengthen and support existing and emerging political movements. At present, for example, these include “Die Violetten“ in Germany and the “ip“ (Integrale Politik) in Switzerland.

- **Networking of community movements (immediate)**

We need to support neutral encounter networks such as HOLON or the “HOLON-Café“ to link up with like-minded people who are searching for a new, integral culture. The network will expand by bringing people together through congresses and events.

- **Financial system – regional currencies (immediate)**

We support regional and complementary currencies as a means of initiating fundamental financial reform.

- **Subsidiarity and global federalism (long-term)**

We would like people to be more closely involved in decision-making processes. Therefore, wherever possible, we will support a shift in sovereignty and decision-making processes from national to regional levels in the sense of true subsidiarity. At the same time, we see a necessity for strengthening ethical and democratic principles world-wide. As a long-term goal, we aim to help reform the United Nations into a democratically legitimized world federation.

- **European regions, Charter for a democratic Europe (immediate)**

We are witnessing an emerging European system of government which will result in the concentration of political power in a few hands for many years to come. This would endanger the realization of our ultimate democratic goal. Therefore, we will develop an alternative charter for a democratic Europe and present it to as many people and groups as possible.

- **Education and education science (long-term)**

The political and economic leaders of tomorrow are the children of today. The nurturing of natural talents, culture and education is to be extricated from the constraints of economic interests. Pedagogic endeavors should be based on an integrative view of humanity and life. Everybody should have the opportunity to develop their latent potential.

Final Accord

We are striving towards a social order that places the utmost value on knowledge of oneself through personal and spiritual development, compassion, goodwill, creativity, open communication, ecological thinking, non-violence, spiritual freedom, humane ecology, equal rights and equal opportunities for all, tolerance and personal responsibility. To this end, we are engaging in the areas of action we consider essential. We do so in serenity and joy, as well as out of respect for our abilities and energy resources.

Participating organizations

HOLON-Netzwerk, Europe

IP (Integrale Politik), Switzerland

Die Violetten - für spirituelle Politik, Germany

Konvergenzgesellschaft, Germany

TALENT, Switzerland

Co-signatories

See: www.integrale-politik.org

(The Manifesto can be co-signed online.)