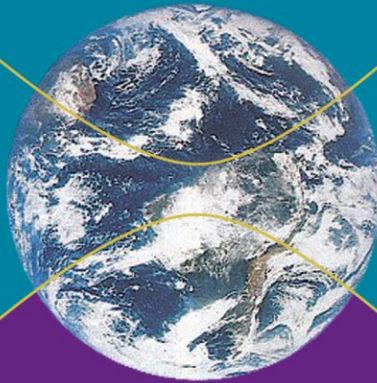


CONGRESS ON INTEGRAL POLITICS

www.integrale-politik.org

MANIFESTO



The time is ripe ...
... for a new understanding of politics



HOLON
Netzwerk für integrale Entwicklung

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Towards a peaceful, global cultural renewal

About this manifesto

In August 2008, various organisations and individuals, primarily from Germany and Switzerland, organised the first Congress on Integral Politics in Götzis / St. Arbogast (Austria), at which the concepts of a new, integral understanding of politics were explored in depth in a variety of ways. This new understanding of politics is manifested in the vision of a new, integral consciousness (in the sense, for example, of the cultural philosopher Jean Gebser), which aims to bring about cultural renewal on a global scale. An important outcome of the congress is the manifesto, adopted by consensus among all the organising groups, which highlights the existing and increasingly acute major problems – psychological-individual, social-collective and ecological-world-centred – and identifies several key areas for action to resolve these problems. At the congress, many participants expressed the wish to organise further congresses of this kind.

A shared will to act, like a flow of breath

The Programme Council, which is working on organising the follow-up congress – planned for 2012 – believes that it is now necessary to disseminate the insights gained and the existing opportunities for changing cultural life as widely as possible, whilst seeking to network with other like-minded groups.

On the one hand, the objectives set out in the manifesto are to be implemented. On the other hand, the aim of the follow-up congress and further events of this kind is to foster a shared determination to act amongst all those who wholeheartedly desire these changes. As many enlightened people as possible in Europe and around the world should thereby come to act as if in a shared breath.

MANIFESTO

Agreement on Joint Action

More and more people have recognised that, in order to strengthen the common good, preserve creation and ensure the vital further development of democracy, a new understanding of politics must be found and put into practice. This requires a new, comprehensive consciousness, which we refer to as 'integral'. The concept of 'integral consciousness' encompasses and summarises what many people understand by terms such as wisdom, spirituality or heart-based intelligence, in both an individual and collective sense. The problems and challenges facing the world today cannot and should not be solved by a handful of decision-makers. This requires the active political participation of broad sections of the population who take their share of responsibility. The people who gathered at the Congress for Integral Politics embody this new consciousness and are ready to assume this responsibility. They feel a personal commitment, going beyond the individual efforts they have already begun, to agree on and implement joint steps towards profound change.

Starting point

We greatly value the immense achievements of the modern era and would not wish to be without them. However, the one-sided, materialistic view of the world and humanity that emerged in the wake of the Enlightenment, and the belief in an economy based on exponential growth, are clearly proving to be serious global aberrations.

We believe that humanity is essentially confronted with three major problem areas:

1. The psychological and individual challenges encompass the feeling many people have of being overwhelmed by life and the associated depression, crises of meaning, addictive behaviour, increased propensity for violence and egocentric behaviour.

2. The social issue encompasses the rampant poverty and exploitation of people worldwide, the breakdown of fundamental human communities, isolation and, as a result, the growing loneliness of more and more people, and the marginalisation of disadvantaged fellow citizens.
3. The ecological problem area encompasses the gradual collapse of ecological systems and, as a result, the threat to the very existence of all people and living beings on Earth.

These global challenges are rooted, to a significant extent, in the misguided pursuit of human needs.

Integral politics seeks concrete solutions to these three major problem areas. In doing so, it aims to tackle not the symptoms, but their root causes.

The non-material needs of every human being and all living beings on this Earth – such as affection, a sense of belonging, justice, creativity, meaning and, ultimately, a sense of security – cannot be satisfied on the material level of consumption and possession. However, the materialism that dominates today attempts to satisfy human needs, in the form of income, consumption and wealth, primarily on the material level. This attempt is bound to fail.

Unfulfilled non-material needs lead to inner dissatisfaction, insatiable material demands and a flight into substitute forms of gratification. Addiction – for example, to alcohol, other drugs, overeating, possessions and power – destroys both the individual and peace within society. The considerable inequality in terms of wealth, consumption and freedom of self-fulfilment breeds discord. Today, boundless material demands are disrupting the dynamic balance of nature and increasingly destroying the foundations of life and habitats. The economic growth generated by the misguided financial system, particularly in industrialised countries, is now fuelled largely by this dynamic of demand for substitute forms of consumption.

Objectives

The overarching objective, derived from the relationships outlined above, is:

The greatest possible fulfilment of the needs and self-realisation of all levels of human existence in connection with all beings on Earth and the Earth itself. To achieve this objective, the following individual and collective changes are required:

1. Psychological and individual changes

- One-sided materialism, in the form of attachment to consumption and possessions, must be overcome; at the same time, however, the material basis – which includes nature – must be nurtured with the utmost care. Material moderation becomes possible when non-material needs are also satisfied.
- Material growth is to be replaced by the emotional and spiritual growth of the individual and society, expressed through a deepening of compassion for all that exists. Every single person bears responsibility for this.

2. Social and collective goals

- Strengthening democratic structures at the grassroots level.
- The establishment of soul-nurturing, independent and interconnected communities with greater opportunities for self-sufficiency.
- Strengthening the principle of subsidiarity by giving priority to the lowest possible level.

3. Ecological and world-centred goals

- A sensible form of economic activity, that is to say, a material basis for the production and distribution of goods that is geared towards people's real needs and founded on justice and sustainability.
- A monetary system that puts an end to the compulsion for growth in economic life and serves the needs of life.

- Empowering regions rather than centralisation and the concentration of power.
- We must continue to build upon the culture of freedom, wisdom and love, which is recognised as a cosmic-evolutionary force.

Actions and measures

At the Congress for Integral Politics, those present were able to forge a shared commitment to action. These people wish to create a shared spirit that will enable them to sustain the sense of community and solidarity forged at the congress beyond its conclusion, thereby taking action in line with the set of objectives outlined above. The following areas for action are based on the wishes and ideas of the congress participants. They are divided into long-term and short-term courses of action and are intended to lead to concrete projects. They may also be expanded or amended after the congress.

1. Strengthening existing approaches (immediate)

We recognise that numerous beneficial and meaningful institutions and areas of activity are already emerging across the globe in all fields of culture. We wish to strengthen and support these.

2. Fostering vibrant and spiritually nourishing communities (long-term)

Communities are essential for human survival and vital for our spiritual and intellectual development. Culture can only flourish collectively. We must therefore counteract the trend towards isolation.

3. Direct democracy (long-term)

A culture of love requires that as many people as possible be involved in decision-making processes. The process required to achieve this is best regarded as a long-term endeavour.

4. Media (immediate and long-term)

We wish to establish media outlets that disseminate our concerns, which are also shared by many other groups. To this end, we must pursue both short- and long-term approaches:

In the short term, we seek to cooperate with existing media outlets. In the long term, the aim is to generate funds in parallel to establish a global network of media outlets dedicated to raising awareness (through foundations, etc.).

5. Political parties (immediate)

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

6. Networking and community movement (immediately)

Support networks such as HOLON (neutral meeting platforms such as the 'HOLON Café') to connect with people who, like us, are seeking a new, integral culture. Bring people together through conferences and events, thereby growing into an ever-larger network.

7. Financial system: Regional funds (immediately)

As a first step towards fundamental financial reform, we support regional and complementary currencies.

8. Subsidiarity and global federalism (in the long term)

We want decisions to be taken closer to the people once again. That is why, in the spirit of genuine subsidiarity, we support all efforts to devolve central government sovereignty and decision-making powers to the regions wherever possible.

At the same time, we recognise the need to strengthen ethical and democratic principles on a global scale. In the long term, we therefore aim to transform the UN into a democratically legitimate world federation.

9. A Europe of Regions, Charter for a Democratic Europe

We see a European constitution taking shape which, for a long time to come, would result in an extreme concentration of political power in the hands of a few. This would jeopardise the implementation of many initiatives aimed at achieving our overarching goal. We will therefore develop a Charter for a Democratic Europe as an alternative and propose it to as many people as possible.

10. Education + Pedagogy

Tomorrow's leaders in politics and business are today's children. The protection of natural aptitudes, education and pedagogy must be freed from the constraints of economic interests. Pedagogical endeavours and education should be based on a holistic view of humanity and the world. All people should be given the opportunity to realise their latent potential.

Final Thoughts

We strive for a social order in which self-knowledge through individual spiritual development, compassion, a willingness to help, creativity, open communication, ecological thinking, non-violence, freedom in intellectual life, humanity in economic life, equality and equal worth for all, tolerance and personal responsibility take precedence.

With this in mind, we engage in the areas of action we deem necessary. We do so with serenity and joy, whilst taking care to preserve our energy resources.

The sponsoring organisations

HOLON Network, Europe

IP (Integral Politics), Switzerland

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Konvergenzgesellschaft, Germany

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