

An addition to the contribution to the `refugee debate' of January, 2016

There is the danger that the initial enthusiasm of the refugees about their generous reception in Germany in the autumn of 2015 might be replaced by a considerable degree of disillusionment and that possibly it might even turn into frustration, resignation, even into a hostile attitude if racist propaganda, torrents of hatred and attacks on the residential complexes of migrants continue to poison the political atmosphere. Of course, also all those who have been criminally involved into the currently much discussed incidents at Cologne's main station and elsewhere during New Year's Night 2015/2016 contribute to hostile reactions by the people towards foreigners. Yet still: successful integration may be supposed to be a precondition, although not really a guarantee, for non-violence on all sides. The German people should feel invited to create the preconditions, by way of friendliness and readiness to help migrants, but most of all by actively contributing to the tasks of integration, so that democracy, the rule of law as well as humanist values will find both intellectually and emotionally committed defenders also in the future. In the long run, only making contacts, establishing friendships and acquaintanceships will help towards the development of a fruitful togetherness in an increasingly pluralised society. Such a process, resulting in a pacified human community, provides the foundation of the entire European system of values which is characterized by both cultural and religious influential factors, but which is particularly, as we all know, permeated by the achievements of Enlightenment, notwithstanding any setbacks and irritations which in this respect must sometimes regrettably be noticed.

After all, what is required is the commitment by the people not only in Germany but in all of Europe!

Michael Pleister, January 10th, 2016, revised August 8th, 2019

(Übersetzung Deutsch-Englisch (Juli 2021): Mirko Wittwar, BDÜ)