paradox-a
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“honest”, “ethically good” and “state-technologically sensible” policies.

I realize that I am not the target group and that relevant shares of the vote cannot be achieved with slogans calling for the expropriation of the super-rich. That would not be “undemocratic”, but honest, ethically good and reasonable in terms of the state. In any case, this would require more than just “governing” — it would require social-revolutionary action. However, this is least likely to happen at the political level.

Rudolf Rocker wrote in the text Seid aktive Nichtwähler! (1924) that a purely oppositional stance by parties could make sense. (This does not apply to the BSW or AfD, even though they use fundamentally oppositional narratives). But even if it were to take this to heart, the Left Party cannot and would not be able to be a mere opposition party. Anyone who thinks this is possible is an idealist and probably better off with the MLPD (= orthodox marxist-leninist) or some other fun party, against whose background DIE PARTEI (= a satire party) embodies pure realism…

and the political spectacle. I am hopelessly lost to left-wing party politics — because on the one hand I know too much, on the other I don't believe in them, but I do believe in other things.

However, the Left Party is once again making a fool of itself with one of its main election campaign slogans. "Everyone wants to govern. We want to change" is written in large letters on posters, as well as on the election program. That sounds good, I think, because I don't want to be governed either. Of course, this puts them in contrast to the BSW, which above all wants to govern, despite all the phrase-mongering, at most superficially change.

The plan to redistribute wealth also suits me personally and many others very well — after all, the property of the super-rich and wealthy has grown considerably worldwide and also in Germany in recent years. — If some of this social wealth were to be returned to the public domain, the majority of people would be better off. This can be said regardless of whether or not this purely social democratic concern is demonized by bourgeois politicians, their lackeys, mouthpieces and chatterboxes.

To be honest, however, it has to be admitted: The Left Party's election campaign cannot currently be about any government options. They were replaced as a coalition partner in the Brandenburg state parliament in 2024 and in Thuringia after a rare eight years in government. In Saxony, the CDU kept a firm grip on the helm, in Meck-Pomm they were always allowed to play along — but this has no real relevance. And state politics is not federal politics, i.e. the government over all Germans. The Left Party has to change because it is fighting to get into the Bundestag. No more and no less.

And in the fictitious case that the political situation changes significantly again and leads to a relevant boost for the Left Party (which I do not assume), it would of course also want to govern. And why not? Anything else would be a lie. Just as the election campaign slogan is window dressing. But this clashes with the claim of

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technocratic means which, in the context of the ideology behind the election poster, is static, i.e. can only be understood as a state.

Democracy is surprisingly irrelevant in this context. In this sense, peace is an elite project designed to secure the political and economic stability of the international power bloc that is the European Union. And this is supposed to be — and obviously is — achieved through weapons and the prospective militarization of European countries.

When the green peace prevails, there is peace in the box. Apparently it has to be enforced against resistance, it has to be imposed. Anyone calling for fewer working hours, minority rights or free public transport will have to get in line. Opposition to this — it doesn't have to be pro-Putin or pro-Trump — is thus crushed. It is anti-state, hostile, at least towards the false, enforced "peace" of the progressive-neoliberal faction of the ruling classes.

no one lets them rule

And once again I put my cross with the Left Party, bagged it up and sent it off. Once again, I didn't want to enter a school building. Since I am sure of my convictions and can justify them, but at the same time believe that we need to get involved and join forces, I no longer need to blabber about refusing to vote.

Let's be honest, such dribbled phases actually only serve to justify one's own unwillingness to get involved anywhere.

Nevertheless, I respect people who don't want to vote out of conviction. Surely this also has to do with where you stand or what you want to distance yourself from. Since I find the idea of purity of some anarcho-fundamentalists just as silly, I'm happy to get my hands dirty.

That doesn't mean I believe that elections would seriously change anything. And of course, even "in times like these" it is important to criticize parliamentary democracy, the election battle

in the political sphere, or make reference to it. Supporting a Left Party election campaign is a contradiction (and I personally would not participate in such a thing). At the same time, it is less of a contradiction than wanting to found an anarchist party (which has also been attempted historically).

On the other hand, one can want to stay out of political affairs — and focus on the supposedly "pure" activities of struggles in the economy (syndicalism), in insurrection (insurrectionalism) or in cooperatives (mutualism) and communities (communitarianism). Although this makes sense from an anarchist point of view, in my opinion it firstly leads to contradictions — within a social form regulated by politics — and often tends to become an end in itself (and to abandon the aim of transforming the social form as a whole).

What it should actually be about is dealing productively with the paradoxical relationship to politics in anarchism. This would mean participating in emancipatory social movements and orienting them towards automomy and self-organization, radicalizing them and orienting them prefiguratively towards a libertarian-socialist form of society. How this (anti-)politics can succeed remains to be explored…

forced peace

One of the most absurd election posters — which I only came across in passing because I usually just ignore them — was from the Green Party. Annalena Baerbock was depicted on the brand-green background without any other symbolism. It read in bold capital letters: "Only one must rule in Europe: Peace".

If only "one" reigns, it is generally a monarchy, an autocracy. According to the liberal Greens, this should certainly not be exercised arbitrarily and hereditarily, but constitutionally and on a rotating basis, I imagine. And it is also clear that "peace" is not a person, but a state. More precisely, it is a state to be established by

The one who breaks the oath

Alice Weidel is shown in a video lasting just 53 seconds entitled "Time for a chancellor who remembers the oath". She descends from her Swiss exile in the mountains to save Germany. All that can be heard in the clip is her reciting the oath of office for the offices of Federal President and Chancellor: "I swear that I will devote my strength to the good of the German people, increase its benefit, avert harm from it, uphold and defend the Basic Law and the laws of the Federation, conscientiously fulfill my duties and do justice to everyone. So help me God" (Article 56 of the Basic Law).

Once again, fascist propaganda has outdone itself. Because it is clear to all thinking people that the AfD is concerned with the abolition of democratic elements in the FRG. How this works within the framework of liberal-democratic constitutions was recently observed when Trump came to power in the USA.

The focus on the oath is therefore, firstly, an obvious lie. The assumption behind it is simple: if lies are repeated often and seriously enough, they become anchored in the hearts and minds of their followers as truths. However, they want to be lied to and shaped into the subject of the submissive and incapacitated national community, which is once again allowed to be the perpetrator.

Secondly, the staging of the oath — admittedly very cleverly — suggests that the predecessors in office did not really feel committed to the people who appointed them. In this respect, their oath would be a lie; they would not actually be legitimized by the people. Quite apart from the extent to which it is relevant or not relatively irrelevant in practical terms to what extent heads of state — in all conscience — swear or not, they are primarily performing a function. And this consists of safeguarding the order of rule, which presents itself as an obligation to the citizens.

Thirdly, an essential strategic element of neo-fascism shines through in the oath in the election commercial: If Weidel is undoubtedly not yet chancellor, the facts are created with the

announcement of the. Whether with street violence, decree laws, unconstitutional bans on organizations and symbols, the criminalization of political opponents, etc. — neo-fascism reaches ahead of its goals when it reaches for power.

This leads to the fourth point that shines through in the production: the silly, solemn oath is intended to embody a recollection that is actually a mythological narrative rather than a fact-based historical reconstruction. Oaths and oaths seem to have fallen out of time anyway, which is now to become a new, reactionary time. By referring to them, reference is made to the fascist current and tradition in the FRG, which has continued since 1945 and has never been fundamentally uprooted: Be it ex-Nazis in the West German civil service, war criminals who fled to Argentina or South Africa, supporters of the Nazis who were absorbed into the scientific establishment or the secret services of the USA, or the scattered anti-Semites and fascists who continued to cultivate their networks.

In this respect, "Never again fascism" must actually mean "Never again Germany"... The neo-fascist actors feel fit as a fiddle. And their propaganda falls on receptive ears, at least among a large proportion of their contemporaries.

Preserving the future — constructing the past

Temporality seemed to be more important than usual in the current election campaign. Whereas two or three years ago it was the climate movement that warned us that we were running out of time, that we were running out of time or that it was time to act, the idea of the scarcity of time seems to have become generally accepted. Two posters on a lamppost stand archetypically for the different directions in which our time is being pulled.

On the one hand, the "progressive social-liberal" Volk party is tugging with the slogan "Let's take back the future". Volt is not just metaphorically calling for a return to a time when the future

insert themselves, sometimes even taking it to an ultra-political extreme, depending on the form it takes.

It should be emphasized that, in my understanding, policy-making is not necessarily parliamentary or party-based. Rather, it involves a logic that aims to influence statehood. This also applies in the sense that one's own political activity is intended to drive a wedge between the state and democracy — in the hope of democratizing society to such an extent that the state implodes at the same time as its functions are socialized.

Obviously, there are a number of anarchists who act in this way — be it on the street, in the neighborhood, in the workplace or in their personal environment. They assume that they can influence the state by organizing and agitating a certain social milieu within the existing form of society. Other anarchists fundamentally reject this. They argue, understandably, that the use of political means and logics are captured by the state — just as they do not address it directly. They argue that this does not call into question the state's political relationship of domination and thus governance, but rather supports it.

In principle, I welcome pragmatic action. As far as I'm concerned, anarchists can support election campaigns if they think it makes sense. I don't have to deny them their self-image. After all, there are many reasons to act in this or that way, depending on the respective backgrounds, experiences and possibilities. Nevertheless, I can point out to them that political action in this sense can certainly not be considered genuinely anarchist. In this sense, it is gradually more "anarchist" to support a social democratic party on a selective basis — possibly based on balanced strategic considerations — than to see oneself and form oneself as a political actor in general.

In other words, in my opinion and understanding, it is conceivable in principle that anarchists occasionally engage in political activity. Or rather, I observe that they do. Historically, anarch@-communist federations in particular are most likely to be located

ues to build up, which is now to be blocked out by quasi-partisan representation.

Ironically, it is nevertheless fitting that the BSW staff's concrete actions amount to supposedly clear-cut, no-nonsense policies: Cuts, deportations, job cuts, reduction of plurality. However, as the BSW can only disappoint its supporters with its superficial political show, they will then turn to what they have come to understand as a more authentic opposition: and that is the AfD.

(anti-)political engagement

Overall, I can't judge, but I assume that some anarchist-minded people took part in the Left Party's grassroots campaign. In terms of numbers, they are certainly few, given the small size of our pluralist camp. Whether it is still "anarchist" or not when people who see themselves as such support election campaigns is a matter of indifference to me. What matters to me is what people do, how they justify it and why they see and describe themselves as they do. But one thing is clear: supporting a party in an election campaign is always political.

Therefore, a debate about whether or not such activities can be understood as "anarchist" leads back to the question of the extent to which anarchism uses political methods, logics and organizations at all — or not. As I have explained and argued at length, I believe that this question cannot be answered in a generalized way. Rather, there is a paradoxical approach to politics in anarchism — which in turn runs through anarchist currents and should be judged on the basis of certain activities and ways of thinking.

Incidentally, this distinguishes anarchism from radical left-wing movements. For left-wing radicals only move in the contradiction between an ultimate abolition of politics (in idealized and contracted communism) and the bitter reality of a supposed necessity of political action — into which they often cynically

was still open and shapeable. The AfD, on the other hand, is completely different, stating: "Time for a country that remains home". The homeland that remains as it was is therefore, at first glance, something threatened that could no longer remain, but could disappear. However, if you think deeper into this idea, it becomes clear that it is not about preserving an existing order, but about constructing a new one. This new era led by the fascist project is therefore based on the creation of a past that never was.

But this can also be played back: The time of a shapable and open future, which Volt recalls — did it ever really exist, as if it could be recovered? And if it did exist, was it only because those responsible at the time failed to recognize the time and missed the opportunity to act? Assuming that was the case, what guarantees that Volt could lead us back to the future?

— Which of the two camps is just more out of time? And which one ultimately better addresses people's feeling that they no longer fit into time and that time no longer suits them?

A sense of temporality and people's perception of time certainly plays a role in most election campaigns. However, it seems to me that it has rarely been as great as it is at the moment. This is an indicator that fundamental questions about the form of society and thus the evidence of its passing are coming to the fore with brutal disenchantment. Under the impression of being unable to go forwards, backwards or sideways, the feeling of pressure is increasing, crying out for a resolution to this tense situation.

But where do "progressives" want to lead us, when it is essentially progress thinking that has brought society to its current point? Left-wing actors have not yet managed to respond to this need with a vision that would credibly convey a transcendence of the crumbling form of society. Even from anarchists, all we have heard so far are phrases, helplessness and sometimes even wistful airs of supposedly easier times.

In contrast, the reactionary alliance proposes to crawl, step down and march. And so it seems to move forward at a goose step.

In its campaign, the AfD claims that it is time "for Germany", "for Alice", "for our culture", "secure borders", "cheap energy". But it would be time for us to bury them. Oh yes, and according to the AfD, it's also time to "be proud again". Why does that actually sound exactly like "For a Germany we can be proud of again" — the CDU's slogan? Because both parties are driving forward the reactionary-conservative zeitgeist or emulating it.

Resentment, jealousy and cowardice

The BSW's electoral strategists have read her theory of hegemony. Like Chantal Mouffe, however, they bluntly reduce it to mere political haggling. Firstly, pseudo-antagonisms are articulated ("war or peace", "muzzle or opinion", "Sahra or everyone else"), while actual social divisions such as class relations or governance are concealed. Secondly, the debate about hegemony is broken down to that between political parties instead of being a transmission belt for real social aspirations. Thirdly, the focus on the omnipresent leadership figure reduces the political to its voluntaristic dimension. According to this, only the right people would finally have to ensure clarity and be allowed to take the helm.

All three aspects — superficial reflection of muzzles, no: opinions, reduction of politics to competitive thinking and personality cult — are exemplary populist. Of course, all other parties also make use of these elements, because populism is an essential feature of politics par excellence. To criticize it only in the BSW or AfD would reduce politics to a supposedly factual business, which those parties with direct access to state power could manage better per se — otherwise they would not have it.

And yet BSW populism, as the last degeneration phenomenon of former socialist concepts with its nationalist and social-chauvinist narrowness, has its very own way of ensnaring its

voters. This touches on a fourth aspect of hegemony theory: the importance attached to affects, passions and emotions in politics. Here, too, it can be said that these are reflected, addressed and strategically served by all political projects. However, the unashamed and instrumental way in which the BSW deals with affects, passions and emotions has a different quality to that of democratic parties. It is a project from the retort that does not rely on participation, but only assures itself of the acclamation of its supporters for whom it is supposed to break the slippery slope.

When it comes to the emotional-affective dimension of politics, there are essentially three main keywords that sum up the BSW: Resentment, envy and cowardice. Resentments are the traditional prejudices in the population, which in turn are to a large extent products of experiences in systems of domination. Those who go through the world obsessed with prejudice cannot deal with their own experiences of exploitation and conformity in any other way than to devalue others, see them as morally depraved, accuse them of evil and imagine them as a threat. Envy arises from real experiences of being set back and is nourished in state capitalism solely by the competition that drives it. However, the decisive factor here is not whether the envious actually have less than others, whether they have really been denied recognition or rewards — but merely whether they feel set back in comparison to others.

Finally, in my opinion, cowardice plays a role among BSW supporters. This is particularly common among those who have not been able to adequately process their GDR socialization — but it is also widespread in general. Instead of being able to articulate dissatisfaction in a direct and fair way, it is either whined about awkwardly or bottled up. Approaching others, engaging in an exchange with them on an equal footing without immediately becoming insecure in one's own position, daring to deviate and be obstinate, seems difficult under conditions where this is immediately branded as self-expression. In cowardly people, frustration contin-