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## Does Left-Socialism have a future?

The German PDS suffers political weakness along with other West European left-Socialist and reformed Communist Parties. These parties will be able to surmount their conceptual and organizational deficits only to the extent that their political leadership successfully transforms these parties into »learning organizations«. The socialist and reformed communist left must develop autonomous concepts for transforming and vanquishing today's more flexible capitalism.

FRANZ J. RADERMACHER:

## Eco-Efficiency – Global Social Reconciliation and Controlled Growth Processes as Key Instruments for Sustainable Development

Subsequent to, or even preceding, the Rio summit conference, 10 years ago, the world has been confronting the challenges of sustainable development. This question, which has always been complex, has become even more critical in the aftermath of September 11, 2001 and the quasi-total failure of the 2002 Rio + 10 summit in Johannesburg. An interaction of the world's various cultures on a basis of fairness, is the key to solving this issue. This would also contribute to the alleviation of poverty, draw more attention to issues of environmental protection and the decline of natural resources. An eco-social market economy is probably the only chance we have to attain a peaceful and sustainable future. It may also prove to be the best political innovation, coupling reasonable equilibrating mechanisms and more strict environmental protection measures to the power of the open market and the potential of innovation.

KLAUS STEINITZ

## Is Economic Growth indispensable?

Left-wing economic, social and environmental policy should neither be 'hostile toward growth' nor fall victim to the currently prevailing idolatry of growth. The focal point of the debate concerning economic growth should be such issues as content, structure and quality of growth, in addition to the entire process of reproduction and its interconnection to social-ecological reconstruction. The debate should differentiate between immediate, intermediate and long-term dimensions, also in accordance with their global and regional economic impact. Economic growth does not automatically create higher employment rates, improved living standards nor generate additional social financing for state budgets. It depends on the political policy at hand whether, and to what extent, economic growth will be used to help create meaningful employment and for the maintenance of a social welfare state.

## MARGARETA STEINRÜCKE AND KERSTIN JÜRGENS Free Time – the Thermometer of True Freedom

In their article, the authors review current discussions of ideal work hours and vital time frames. Their main emphasis is focused upon understanding time as a space for human development. Today some suffer from »too little« time at their disposal, while others from »too much.« In the latter case, the time is not being constructively used. It is wasted, becoming dead time. The authors analyse different models of employment – full-time, part-time, flexible – for their implications in solving the question of time. The results of the »Bremen in 2030« workshop serve here as a starting point for the discussion of new concepts for achieving an ideal time frame.

## URSULA SCHRÖTER AND RENATE ULLRICH Who cleaned the Bathroom in the GDR?

Today it has become important to remind that in the GDR research on the social role of women and on gender relations began earlier and was pursued more continuously than in the FRG. The results of this research can be found in a series of sociological publications. The insights of this research having had only a partial impact on GDR policy toward women, is today in danger of becoming completely obscured. The article offers a quite comprehensive résumé of the concepts derived from this research and furnishes remarkable information about the series of East German publications handling this issue.

## KLAUS MÜLLER The neo-classical wage and employment model

The neo-classical diagnosis alleges that unemployment is so high because the wages are too high. Only through wage cuts can the employment problem be solved. This inverse relationship between wages and employment level cannot be empirically proven and is itself based upon numerous untenable premises: an assumption of invariable factoring expenses, income and consumption sums, consistent or increasing profits. This also alleges that these profits are unconditionally reinvested, creating automatically new jobs.

The real reasons for persistent mass unemployment in a prosperous society, is not the result of high wages but rather of an immense progress in productivity leading to market saturation and therefore a decrease in consumption. Under these circumstances it is not more economic growth that will mitigate the present unemployment problem, but rather a radical cut in work time.