

Blow the Ulrichsberg away Ulrichsberg wegpusten!

This year the Ulrichsberggemeinschaft celebrates its 50th anniversary, hence, half a century of unhindered revisionist traditions and glorification of National Socialism. Every year on the Ulrichsberg in Carinthia/Koroška (Austria) veterans of the German Armed Forces (Wehrmacht) and the (Waffen-) SS, student corporations (Burschenschaften) and (Neo-)Nazis, supported by the Austrian army and in unison with (provincial) politicians of almost all parties gather to commemorate the comrades of both World Wars and the „Kärntner Abwehrkampf“.) The glorification of National Socialist organizations positively refers to National Socialism itself. The innumerable and inconceivable crimes of the Wehrmacht and the (Waffen-) SS are either completely concealed, or excused with the soldiers' decent fulfillment of their duties. By equating the NS atrocities of war with the military actions of the Allies and the Partisans, their own guilt is denied and history reinterpreted.

The renaming of the „Ulrichsberg-Memorial“ into „European Peace Memorial“ in 1994 has to be seen as an effort to spread the same old ideas to a broader public. The claim that the many volunteers in the Waffen-SS from all over Europe fought in defense against the threat of Bolshevism and for the creation of a peacefully united Europe, distorts the German extermination war to a battle for freedom and peace. In 2000, Jörg Haider demanded a “Europe of the People”, which in contrast to the “United Nations of Europe” should strictly maintain ethno-cultural borders and prevent a multicultural melting pot. This concept of an ethno-pluralistic Europe is well received by the European right, which is reflected by the participation of right-wing extremist parties and organizations at the Ulrichsberg festivities.

It is no surprise that (Neo-)Nazis are attracted by these ideas and happily join the Ulrichsberg gathering. In particular the traditional “Carinthian Evening” in Krumpendorf/Kriva Vrba, which takes place one day before the celebration on the mountain is the ideal place for (Neo-)Nazis to exchange ideas. Over many years this meeting has been organized by the “Kammeradschaft IV” – a right-wing extremist organization of veterans of the Waffen-SS. The K IV derives its name from arguing that the Waffen-SS, which was declared to be a part of the SS and therefore a criminal organization by the Court of Nuremberg, was actually the fourth part of the Wehrmacht, and hence, tries to lift the verdict. The Krumpendorf/Kriva Vrba evening serves to bridge the gap between the old and the young and (Neo-)Nazis find an opportunity for networking behind closed doors.

The Ulrichsberg is a symbol for the German-nationalist consensus in Carinthia/Koroška. Already after World War II German-nationalism rose to a hegemonic principal of politics. Every year not only at the Ulrichsberg gathering but also at the celebrations for the “Kärntner Abwehrkampf” on October 10th the German-Carinthian „national community of the peoples“ (Volksgemeinschaft), which defended the “threatened Germanness (Deutschum)” against the “Slavic aggressor” is conjured up. The idea of an “endangered Germanness” exists until today and is for example mirrored by the continuous opposition against bilingual - Slovenian and German - place-name signs.

The celebrations at the Ulrichsberg also reflect Austria's relation to its own National Socialist past. The Wehrmacht conducted an anti-Semitic and racist extermination war and fulfilled the ideology of National Socialism. Particularly, in the country of the culprits no responsibility for the atrocities of war committed by the Wehrmacht is taken. While the murderers have still not been brought to justice and their years in the Wehrmacht are added up for their retirement funds, the compensation for the victims of the National Socialism is delayed until today, until it will simply be too late. The enormous political success of the rightwing-extremist Carinthian BZÖ (former FPÖ) has to be seen in this context. The Carinthian consensus is a product of the social circumstances, for which the Ulrichsberg is a symbol. Therefore the “AK against the Carinthian Consensus” (AK gegen den kärntner Konsens) organizes for the fifth time in succession “Antifascist Action Days” against the Ulrichsberg celebrations.

Join us in Austria in Klagenfurt/Celovec from September 18-20, 2009!
No peace with Austria and its Nazis. Blow the Ulrichsberg away!

1) „Abwehrkampf“ („defense war“) is the term used in Carinthia for the military conflict between Carinthian and SHS-troops over the location of the border (between Austria and the new SHS-state) after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918. In 1920, it was decided by a plebiscite that southern Carinthia would remain a part of Austria.

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