



Party of Reason (Partei der Vernunft) **Manifesto**

As Adopted at the National Party Convention

17 June 2012

Preamble

The Manifesto reflects our vision of a future society worth living in. Intermediate milestones and transitional models will be necessary to reach this ultimate goal. These demands will be embedded in our campaign platforms.

The PARTY OF REASON unites all people who want to help build and further develop a democratic state under constitutional law along with a society dominated by free thought, irrespective of their nationality, race, gender, social standing, or religious faith. The PARTY OF REASON vehemently rejects totalitarian and dictatorial endeavors of all types, whether they be left-leaning or right-leaning.

Individual liberty, the protection of property, and the right to a self-determined lifestyle are inalienable, provided the rights of others are not violated. This means that voluntary agreements between two parties must not be infringed upon. No individual, institution, enterprise, or governmental authority has the right to force someone to do something against their will – with or without the threat of violence. For it is immoral to initiate violence to achieve one's ends with force. This applies to government, as well. Individuals and institutions have the right, but not an obligation, to join together to promote social causes on a voluntary basis. In other words, no one must be forced to join or financially support a social community.

All types of direct invasion of property, including direct taxes (such as personal income tax, trade or professional tax, corporate tax, or investment withholding tax) are banned. Fiscal budgets are to be financed without the issuance of new debt. Governmental tasks are limited to the protection of life, liberty, and property, and are funded through indirect taxation. In this way, through their behavior as consumers, citizens themselves determine how much they contribute toward state funding. The limited tasks of government for domestic and national security currently equate to approximately three percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Starting in their local communities, the citizens decide what kind of indirect taxes should be imposed (e.g. a sales or value-added tax) and how the revenue is to be used. Only after a lower governmental level freely decides that it makes more sense to exercise a task at a higher level, does that task fall into the jurisdiction of the next higher level of government (principle of subsidiarity). Lower-level jurisdictions must be able to rescind the delegation of a task at their own choosing. This approach guarantees the full revival of local autonomy, as incorporated in Article 28 of the German Constitution. Individual liberties, civil rights as well as the primary decision-making authority of municipalities must be preserved as our greatest treasure.

These principles must not be abrogated by European or global institutions. Rather, institutional power brokers must be barred from encroaching on individual liberties. Through the constraint of governmental actions to the protection of life, liberty, and property of its citizens, a peaceful society will become a lasting reality.

The state monopoly of money can be used as a prime example to demonstrate the perils of unfettered governmental action. In this system, unbacked (fiat) currency is created exclusively through the issuance of debt. At the same time, legal tender laws force the citizens to use this currency for most monetary transactions. Central banks are also authorized to issue as much new debt as they see fit, thus inflating the currency. As a form of expropriation, monetary inflation devalues people's savings and relentlessly reduces buying power, harming the poorest members of society the most.

The steady rise in payment obligations of the state due to growing debt and interest burdens leads to ever increasing levels of taxation in terms of GDP as well as decreasing levels of state benefits. This trend needs to be stopped and reversed. Instead, increased decision-making control at the local level and the significant reduction in tax burdens will lead to a higher standard of living.

People of all generations will enjoy the benefits of reliable long-term planning, guaranteed true social security, the protection of the family unit, a sense of security for children in particular, more room for individuals to fulfill their dreams, and an active role in the political process in the local community. Furthermore, support of the needy and personal humanitarian interaction will return to the local level and have a permanent place in society.

The Manifesto follows the Austrian School of Economics surrounding Nobel Laureate Friedrich August von Hayek. Their teachings of a "spontaneous order" accepts people as they are, in contrast to today's social engineering that politicians and idealists strive for. Limiting government to the protection of life, liberty and property will lead to a higher standard of living and financial independence for all members of society.

The restoration of this natural order can be achieved only if the citizens reclaim their decision-making sovereignty in all aspects of their lives. As a consequence, lobbyists will no longer be able to exercise their influence on governmental decisions. When all people take responsibility for their lives and families, we will be able to continually develop a sustainable liberal society.

1. Rule of Law and Direct Democracy

The PARTY OF REASON restores power back to the people. In accordance with the self-administration of municipalities as guaranteed by Article 28 of the German Constitution, citizens themselves decide which projects are to be planned or realized, how much money they want to appropriate to such projects, and how those funds are financed. This guarantees the highest possible transparency in the political decision-making process.

Direct democracy will be realized by concentrating as much political work as possible at the local level. All representatives work in an honorary capacity and are reimbursed for their expenditures. The number of career politicians supported with tax money is kept to a minimum.

Today, government authorities not only issue directives by decree, but also enforce those directives. Once the state focuses on its core duties, the enforcement of a directive must first be decided by a court of law. Citizens will no longer be treated like numbers. By means of a constitutional referendum as described in Article 146 of the German Constitution, said Constitution is to be amended with the concept of direct democracy as well as the limitation of governmental authority to the protection of life, liberty, and the property of citizens.

Further demands:

- Secure and put into practice the freedoms of speech, information, and the press, as guaranteed by Article 5.
- Restore the right of people to access diverse sources of information in the media landscape.
- No censorship of the Internet, regardless of the pretenses under which such attempts are made.
- Abolish the blanket taxation of all households for the reception of television and radio signals (GEZ-Gebühr). Instead, such fees should be collected only from the actual recipients of such services (using the concept of Pay TV).
- No intrusions on personal freedom and civil rights. Instead, protect the privacy of persons and all their data.
- Abolish and prevent all surveillance laws. Permit surveillance only by court order in cases of immediate danger to life or limb.
- Abolish anti-terrorism laws that regard the entire population as potential criminals. The political reactions and ramifications of terrorist attacks must be based on a politically-independent judicial investigation, in which the criminals are identified and brought to justice.
- Reject voting machines to prevent election fraud.
- Memberships in organizations of all kinds are to be voluntary. This includes chambers of commerce and employer's liability insurance associations (Berufsgenossenschaften).
- No political influence on state prosecutors. Abolish the authority of ministers of justice to issue directives to state prosecutors - as demanded by the German Association of Judges. In a state under the rule of law, judicial proceedings must be transcribed, word for word.

2. The Monetary and Financial System

The PARTY OF REASON stands for a fundamental reform of the monetary and financial system. As taught by Nobel Laureate Friedrich August von Hayek, this involves the legalization of alternative forms of money. The State must no longer determine which currency its citizens are permitted to use as a medium of exchange. If people are free to choose between competing currencies, the most stable currency will automatically prevail (Gresham's law) and the monopoly on money will dissipate.

What Mr. Hayek points out and what people are insufficiently informed about is the fact that, in our current system, money is created exclusively by the issuance of debt. The amount of money in circulation has continuously increased over the past decades, resulting in price inflation, loss of buying power, depletion of savings, impoverishment of the population, as well as disruptions and excesses in the financial markets, depressions, misallocation of investments, increased military intervention, and bank bailouts at the expense of future generations.

Once the monetary system is reformed, most people will prefer gold, silver, or other assets with intrinsic value as a medium of exchange. The benefit of such assets is that they are debt-free. With this kind of money, noticeable price inflation or the continual depreciation of the value of money will be a thing of the past. Inflation occurs only when the amount of printed and electronic money exceeds the amount of goods produced. This can never happen if a currency is based on an asset with intrinsic value, such as gold, because the supply of such assets cannot be increased by decree.

Under the new system, the practical use of money does not change. Banks process monetary transactions as before. However, if a bank goes bankrupt, its customers retain the ownership of the bank deposits in asset-backed currency. As a result, failed banks no longer need to be bailed out with taxpayer money. Under this system, bank deposits – or unbacked fiat money – cannot be created out of thin air. Dramatic depreciations of currencies, such as the 90 percent devaluation of the deutschmark and the euro, are impossible. A free choice of currencies builds the foundation for a stable monetary system free of currency crises.

The future monetary system without a monopoly and without legal tender laws shall be secured under constitutional law.

3. Europe

The PARTY OF REASON is explicitly committed to Europe, the preservation of its cultural diversity, and the fundamental values gained from our shared history, in order to conserve peace and prosperity in Europe.

However, the European Union (EU) is not the continent of Europe. As a supranational entity, the EU is superfluous. Instead of guaranteeing peace and freedom, it causes increasing tensions in Europe because of its regulatory frenzy and central monetary planning. The EU wreaks economic havoc in its member countries and ruins the prosperity and freedom of all Europeans.

Europe does not need a Lisbon Treaty or a constitution that disenfranchises its citizens. The EU relies on centralism and remoteness from its citizens. This is incompatible with the concepts of grassroots politics and local empowerment.

The PARTY OF REASON rejects politics that are directed against the interests of its citizens, and rejects the disenfranchisement of its citizens. Economic cooperation between European nations is to be limited to a free trade agreement.

The PARTY OF REASON rejects all payments to other nations, a transfer union, an EU economic government, Eurobonds, and euro safety nets (including bailouts, ESM, and EFSF) – in other words, any liability of the Federal Republic of Germany for the debts of other nations. The surrender of further competencies to the EU is to be stopped. Sovereign rights already relinquished to the EU are to be restored immediately.

Germany's funding of the EU is to be reduced to zero as soon as possible. At the same time, all EU subsidies are to be dismantled.

The paramilitary reaction force of European member states (EUROGENDFOR), founded in 2006 and based on secret service and police entities, is to be dissolved.

4. The Environment

The PARTY OF REASON wants to sustain nature and the environment. Environmental protection works only if property rights are strictly adhered to. This presupposes "the responsible party pays" principle. The responsible party is liable for the environmental damage to the full extent. For example, contamination of groundwater or the air infringes on the rights of local residents, who can therefore sue for damages. To be effective, environmental protection does not require funding through fees or taxes.

Prudent management of limited resources has a high priority. But state intervention through central planning leads to the squandering of such resources. Due to their scarcity, limited resources become expensive. The free market automatically helps preserve limited resources. For this reason, the PARTY OF REASON rejects all subsidies of specific forms of energy generation. Energy companies must bear the full and unlimited liability for any risks caused through their operations, including all incidental damages.

Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is indispensable for plants to flourish (photosynthesis). Without CO₂, there would be no life on Earth. Therefore, until an open dialogue between proponents and opponents provides scientific proof that anthropogenic (man-made) emissions of carbon dioxide have negative effects on the environment, all new measures due to climate change alarmism must be stopped immediately and existing governmental programs are to be rescinded as soon as possible. Even the Enquete Commission of the German Parliament has determined that there is no such proof.

The concentration of man-made carbon dioxide is barely measurable. Carbon dioxide is a trace gas with a concentration of 380 parts per million (ppm) in the atmosphere (or 0.038 %). According to the German Federal Office for the Environment (Umweltbundesamt), a mere 1.2 % of the total CO₂ emissions are the result of combustion processes caused by human beings. Therefore, all governmental regulations to reduce CO₂ emissions border on the absurd and demonstrate the arrogance of mankind in wanting to control nature.

Over 31,000 scientists (Oregon Petition) and numerous Nobel laureates of the natural sciences refute the established climate theory. Over 700 experts in related fields have joined together in a climate council (NIPCC), which is not funded by governmental authorities, and come to the conclusion that mankind's influence on our climate is insignificant. Instead, they emphasize CO₂'s positive effects on plant growth. Furthermore, human rights advocates point out that measures to "save the planet" cause human suffering, particularly in developing countries and primarily affecting children. At the same time, the deindustrialization of developed countries drastically reduces the standard of living. This results in the exploitation on behalf of subsidized corporations and the impoverishment of broad segments of the population.

5. Contributions and Taxes

The PARTY OF REASON will simplify the system of taxation and contributions.

No taxes or contributions are imposed at federal and state levels. Municipalities have sole jurisdiction over taxation and contributions. Furthermore, direct taxation is forbidden (to protect property rights). The expenditures of the federal government are reimbursed by the municipalities to enable the federal government to exercise its duties. The amount of reimbursement must be limited to the revenue gained from a value-added tax (VAT) of five percent (similar to Switzerland).

All forced revenue allocation between levels of governments (for example, vertical transfers from federal to state and municipal government) as well as all government subsidies are ceased. Municipalities are free to join together or cooperate and delegate governmental duties to a higher level. As mentioned earlier, the higher levels are reimbursed for these duties by the municipalities. Existing organizational structures can continue to be used or be retained as they are. These structures need be changed only when a municipality wants to assume the task itself.

The capping of VAT for federal expenditures, the ban on direct taxation, and a prohibition of new public debt are to be enshrined by constitutional amendment.

Interim demands until this model can be implemented:

- A flat income tax rate of 25 percent with elimination of all itemized deductions and loopholes along with a generous standard deduction per dependent (Grundfreibetrag).
- Gradual and across-the-board reduction of all subsidies, with the ultimate goal of zero.
- The federal budget must be financed without taking on new debt.

6. Health and Social Matters

Businesses include all tax expenses in the prices of their products and services, which increases costs to consumers. Unemployed persons, low income wage earners, or single mothers are hit the hardest because they have to spend a higher portion of their income for consumer goods and services. The relief, which the new tax and contribution system of the PARTY OF REASON provides, enables all people to easily make provisions for their retirement and to provide their own safety net against risks such as illness or unemployment.

Every citizen can freely choose between free-market or community (state) offerings. However, insurance is not mandatory – with the following exception: Since children are not yet mature, their parents must insure them against the major risks in life such as chronic illnesses, disabilities, accidents, and unemployment incapacity. With regard to children, DNA testing is forbidden and all insurance applications must be accepted.

Municipalities can secure financing for insurance for the poor. Here again, personal assistance to the poor, human interaction, and charity should come first.

Instead of taking the money out of peoples' pockets through forced contributions and taxation, and redistributing it by means of the huge expense of bureaucracy, individuals decide for themselves when, how much and how long they want to work, how they want to make a living, and whether and how they want to provide for the future.

Housing and care of orphans and the homeless are the responsibility of municipalities and are financed through indirect taxation. The costs are currently the equivalent of less than a VAT rate of 0.2 percent.

Current entitlement payments from today's social services (e.g., retirement benefits) remain untouched. Earned social entitlements will be accounted for in a transitional model.

Additional demands:

- No patents on genes and natural organisms, such as plants or seeds
- Full liability of drug, food, and seed manufacturers for their products
- Voluntary certification procedures instead of state approval for drugs, thus preventing favoritism of pharmaceutical conglomerates
- Freedom of physicians and pharmacists to choose where to open a practice or shop
- Free choice of treatments and cures
- Free choice of medicines

7. Education

Education has a great impact on society. Therefore, it must not be influenced by politicians. The current school situation demonstrates the damage that the state monopoly has caused. Competition of ideas concerning educational content, teaching methods, and school models is urgently needed. This will undoubtedly increase the quality of educational offerings while simultaneously cutting costs. Parents will be free to choose the best educational path for their children.

All educational institutions are self-financed to ensure that all schools are on equal footing. Needy families can receive school vouchers, enabling them to choose any school they like. Local communities decide whether to grant educational loans or scholarships, or reimburse tuition fees for good performance.

8. Families

The best family policy is one that allows parents to keep the fruits of their labor. It is not the duty of the state to influence parents on how to raise their children and what their children are taught. Care and raising of children is the natural right and obligation of parents (Article 6, German Constitution). The family unit is one of the most intimate areas of one's private life. Therefore, state intrusions are off-limits. It is the sole responsibility of parents as to how they balance their private life with their career and how they organize day care for their children. Families will have far more net income than they do today once the monetary and financial system is reformed, and taxes and contributions are massively cut. This will allow parents to freely choose the right education and training for their children.

9. Foreign Affairs and Defense

In foreign affairs, the PARTY OF REASON seeks peaceful coexistence with all people. Foreign relations must respect the sovereignty and cultures of other nations.

National defense is the responsibility of the federal government. Domestic deployment of the armed forces remains restricted to humanitarian aid during natural disasters or severe accidents, as stated in Art. 35 § 2, German Constitution. Humanitarian missions abroad are reserved to civilian relief organizations.

According to Art. 26 § 1, German Constitution, acts that are facilitative and intended to undermine peaceful relations between nations, in particular preparations for waging an aggressive war, violate the Constitution and are punishable by law. This constitutional principle needs to be amended to also include a ban on the involvement of the German armed forces in wars of aggression. A militarized peacekeeping mission is a contradiction in itself.

German Armed Forces are defensive by design. Their purpose is to protect German citizens and defend German territory. To fulfill this mission, the German military must be equipped with adequate manpower, training, and weaponry.

10. The Justice System

The PARTY OF REASON wants to redefine the relationship between citizens and public authorities. If a citizen does not comply with a demand of an authority, the authority must appeal to a court of law, which determines the legitimacy of the authority's demand. As a consequence, the relationship between citizens and public agencies will be no different than the relationship between citizens themselves.

The PARTY OF REASON will ensure fair play in civil suits. Since civil disputes can also be settled in private courts, all civil courts must be financed through fees. Thus, civil courts of the State are no longer subsidized through taxes.

11. Legislation and Bureaucracy

We will restore power back to the people through direct democracy and referendums. The federal and state parliaments convene twice per year to enact new legislation, as practiced in Switzerland. By making the state focus on its core duties, numerous laws, ordinances, executive orders, and administrative directives will automatically become void.

“We Are The People!”

Contact Information

Partei der Vernunft
Bundesgeschäftsstelle
Postfach 1151
78245 Hilzingen
Germany

Johannes Rossmannith
Executive Director
Mobile: +49 (0)152 5403 4785
E-Mail: info@parteidervernunft.de