Talk in Altona mit Klaus Wowereit

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It took some cycling around in Altona to find the Fabrik, until a bunch of people with firearms made clear where it was going down. They were hanging around the artists' entrance and on the corner a bit further down the street was the main entrance of the Fabrik. Fabrik is like an industrial version of Paradiso, but smaller. I arrived around seven, and it was already pretty full.

If you're not SPD, you weren't supposed to be there. If Scholz looks into the audience and then concludes he can see there is nobody there who will benefit from the FDP tax plans, he seems confident nobody would be insulted by that. How wrong he is. But while walking out of there in the first five minutes would be a nice statement, I doubt someone there would have the intelligence to get the message.

Wowereit's talk was in that same annoying style Steinmeier has. That style is OK if you're suddenly standing outside on a tank in the rain trying to motivate some people to fight the revolution, but inside with a professional audio setup there are more captivating ways to tell a story. And the style projecting this whole urge to finally do something is a bit misplaced if you're representing a political party that is currently part of the crew running the country.

A party that ignores a petition with over 130k supporters and then talks about campaigning based on arguments is hardly believable. The audience and it's reactions make clear the SPD can still rely on plenty of ignorant followers who are not interested in arguments. They are more like "Show me the money!"

Scholz mentioned like a cheap populist that according to the FDP tax plan Dr. Josef Ackermann would get a tax break of over a million euros. Some lefties pulled that same stunt in The Netherlands. Trying to tax some rich guys to get some extra money, but then those rich guys quickly moved abroad and are no longer paying any taxes in The Netherlands. In the end that lost the country about ten times the amount they wanted to tax them. So how much are those applauding in the audience willing to pay to try to deny Ackermann an extra million?

What's totally missing in the SPD way of seeing things is where the reach of the German government ends. They are all happy planning their socialist state and fail to see that if they push to hard the money disappears over the border or into the underground economy. But deep down they probably remember the DDR where the reach of the government didn't end, and that's what they'll probably stumble into with all their good intentions. They are going all provincial about jobs, more concerned about shifting them between parts of Germany than being aware those jobs could end up in Russia or China.

Because the Berlin subway was going to be privatized the operators postponed maintenance to cut costs and pretend to be more profitable, and thus of a faked higher value, and that lead to shutting down large parts of the service when the authorities found out the trains failed to comply with safety standards because of that. Scholz then doesn't conclude there is someone in charge of the government owned subway that has fucked this up, but manages to blame ethics in private enterprises for it. And he looked like he believed it himself.

SPD fails to notice how their good intentions will be abused. The easiest way to make a load of money is to have socialists give tax–payers' money to you. The current financial crisis was triggered by democrats in the states that wanted something like to force the value of loans to be the same and not depending on the social background of the person getting the loan. Those intentions are good, but if in the real world for example the chance of a black person losing his job could be just a bit higher than a white person losing his job, and that will be reflected in the risk involving the loan, and influence it's value. I'm not saying it's a good thing those

differences exist in the first place, but if political correctness forces the economy to ignore them while everybody knows in the real world they are there, sooner or later there will be a very nasty correction, and some people will get very rich leveraging that situation. And it's clear the SPD is full of good intentions to make a lot of social laws, but they don't have the competence to see how those same laws give people smarter than them an opportunity to screw over the people they are trying to help. Whether it's the Hartz–Â¤ mother who has to give the money back her daughter has earned to buy a guitar, or the people constructing general agreements to artificially set minimum wages to Â¤ 3.80, wasn't anyone involved in creating those laws smart enough to figure out how that was bound to happen?

And trying to ban the NPD, does a competing political party really need to go into that dirty business to attract voters? How hard is it to see that like the existence of Â¤ 3.80 wages, the existence of a popular NPD is a symptom of a problem that needs to be taken care of and trying to just erase the symptoms doesn't solve anything?

Almost everything Scholz and Wowereit said had these kinds of flawed logic and limited context, but it seemed to be sufficient for most of the audience to vote SPD anyway. Maybe a lot of the smarter ones in the area were at the other meeting tonight.

by Roland van Ipenburg
http://www.xs4all.nl/~ipenburg/blog/posts/dull/2009/09/16/talk–in–altona–mit–klaus–wowereit/