

Bonner Querschnitte

Bonn Profiles – Press Reports

Phone: +49 / 4106 / 804806; Fax: +49 / 4106 / 804807
E-Mail: bq@bucer.de; <http://www.bucer.org/bq.html>

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Global Media Forum: Journalists, Defuse Conflicts!

(Bonn, 06.06.2009/24.05.2011) My announced contribution to the Global Media Forum on the relationship between civil society and the German Army went off delightfully. It was not the first time that my counterpart was retired Colonel Hans W. Odental. The moderation was conducted by Günther Knabe, who has many years of experience in Afghanistan and Asia, was most competent, and the audience came from all continents. The discussion integrated well with the overall topic of the Deutsche Welle's Global Media Forum, which was how journalists and the media can help assuage crises. Congratulations to the Deutsche Welle on a successful Forum!

There is hardly any country on earth like Germany where the civil society can so directly participate in discussions about the army. No one expects wrongly understood nationalism where everything that the army does will be found to be wonderful (as it was in the emperor's time). The number of those who basically reject the idea of an army is also small. This is also due to the fact that the *Bundeswehr* (German Army) may not 'conduct war.' Rather, it may participate in defense measures or peace missions (even if that has occasionally been linguistically exaggerated for the sake of political correctness). One only has to think about the report of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Armed Forces. There everyone can publicly learn about (almost) everything that has gone wrong in the *Bundeswehr*, and even soldiers who are treated badly find therein a public advocate.



Pic2: With Nooke and Bettermann

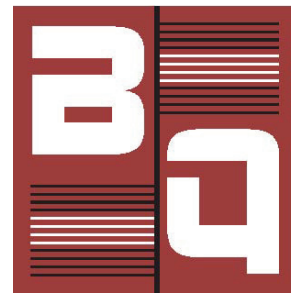
Unfortunately there are too few citizens, few too Christians, few too many theologians, and few too many ethicists who take advantage of the opportunity to thoroughly inform themselves about internal *Bundeswehr* questions and then to participate in discussions about the ethics of the 'inner leadership' of the *Bundeswehr*, either where they are stationed or where they find themselves in action. I have in any case always been cordially received by the *Bundeswehr* as 'moral support' just as much as a civil critic.



Pic1: Global Media Forum 2009

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Text & Technology:
Titus Vogt (ViSdP)
Vorderer Kamp 52a, D-25479 Ellerau
Phone: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 06
Fax: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 07
E-Mail: Titus.Vogt@bucer.de



A joint platform for the following Bonn organizations on the basis of the Evangelical Alliance:

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Culture and Science Publ.
www.vkwonline.de

Giving Hands – International Charity
www.gebendehaende.de

Help Worldwide – International Charity
www.hilfe-weltweit.org

Institute for Emergency Counselling, Terminal Care and Grief Counselling
www.bucer.de/ist

Institute for Prolife and Family Studies
www.bucer.de/lfw

International Institute for Islamic Studies of the World Evangelical Alliance
www.islaminstitute.net

International Institute for Religious Freedom of the World Evangelical Alliance
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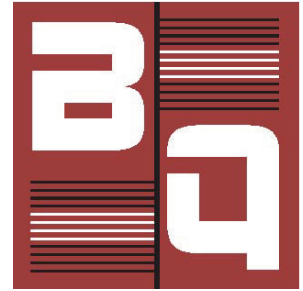
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www.hfe.org

Theological Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance
www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/tc/

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The first photo shows Günter Knabe und me during a panel discussion, while the second one is an official Deutsche Welle press photo (photo: DW/K. Danetzki). To my right are Günther Nooke, the Federal Government's Commissioner for Human Rights Policy and Humanitarian Aid, and Erik Bettermann, the Deutsche Welle Director.

Downloads and Links:

- Pic1: Global Media Forum 2009
- Pic2: Thomas Schirmacher with Günther Nooke and Erik Bettermann (photo: DW/K. Danetzki)
- For Erik Bettermann's appeal see: <http://www.dw-world.de/dw/article/0,,4300237,00.html>.
- For additional press photos: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/deutschewelle>

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Text & Technology:

Titus Vogt (ViSdP)
Vorderer Kamp 52a, D-25479 Ellerau
Phone: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 06
Fax: +49 / 4106 / 80 48 07
E-Mail: Titus.Vogt@bucer.de