

In 1964, Hannah Arendt expressed a profound insight in her impressive testimony about the 1933 Gleichschalt in Germany: "The personal problem wasn't what our enemies were doing, but what our friends - the intellectuals - were doing." In a remarkable conversation with Günter Gaus, she emphasized that this behavior was recognizable as a kind of basic pattern, especially among intellectuals: "I could see that among intellectuals it was the rule, so to speak, and among the others it wasn't."

This insight into the behavior of intellectuals in Germany spans various epochs, beginning with the German Empire, through the Weimar Republic to the time of National Socialism and beyond to unified Germany. It is a remarkable constant that shows how intellectuals and academics in different political contexts and periods have tended to conform to the respective ruling elites.

Nevertheless, we should also see in this realization a source of hope. The idea that there is always a minority of "hopefuls" who refuse to be brought into line and who are unwilling to accept the prevailing opinion uncritically is an essential part of democratic discourse and social change.

In every society, in every political system and at all times there are people who bravely swim against the tide and persistently drive change. Whether in politics, science or other areas of life - these individuals are the real beacons of hope. They stand up for ideals, defend the values of freedom and individual responsibility and make a decisive contribution to the further development of our society.

In a second step we can consider Karl Popper's concept of the open society. This idea promotes freedom of speech instead of "cancel culture", a first-past-the-post system instead of a numbing proportional representation system, piecemeal technology instead of holistic goals and the reduction of suffering instead of a utopian "heaven on earth".

The open society enables the free and diverse development of opinions and ideas. It creates space for dissenting minority opinions and encourages evolutionary, bloodless change. This model of elections allows the government to be voted out of office in a democratic manner and helps society to continuously develop and improve without falling into utopian ideas.

Karl Popper's concept of the open society encourages us to value and use the diversity of thoughts and opinions to create a better future for all. It emphasizes the importance of discourse, tolerance and finding common solutions, rather than resorting to authoritarian or totalitarian approaches. This is a way to address the challenges of our time and build a hopeful future.

The phenomenon of state-employed intellectuals not resisting political conformity is not necessarily limited to a dictatorship or a totalitarian system. In fact, it can also occur in a seemingly democratic society that has some characteristics of a closed society. Here are some aspects that make this clear:

1. **Proportional representation:** Proportional representation may result in political parties having to represent a wide range of opinions and views in order to win votes. In such an environment, state-employed intellectuals might be more inclined to conform to mainstream political parties and their positions in order to ensure political support and stability. This could increase their propensity for political conformity.

2. **Holistic Goals:** When a society pursues holistic goals aimed at sweeping social or ideological change, state-serving intellectuals might be inclined to conform to these goals in

order to be recognized and promoted as part of the political system. Striving for holistic goals could promote political conformity.

3. **\*\*Cancel Culture:\*\*** A culture of "Cancel Culture" can lead to public criticism or dissenting opinions being heavily sanctioned in society. Public intellectuals may be reluctant to express alternative views for fear of professional or personal repercussions. This could increase the readiness for political conformity.

4. **\*\*Utopian ideals such as "heaven on earth":\*\*** If a society pursues utopian ideals that strive for a perfect world, state-serving intellectuals may be inclined to conform to those ideals and support policies that achieve those goals promise. This could increase their propensity for political conformity.

It is important to emphasize that the presence of these traits does not necessarily lead to dictatorship, but can still influence the propensity of civil servant intellectuals to political conformity. In such a closed society, state-employed intellectuals might be more inclined to conform to prevailing political currents in order to protect their own position and security, even if the society has democratic structures.