

And the Federal Employment Agency is watching  
by Inge Hannemann

Dear Federal Employment Agency,

how many more dead, injured and defiled Hartz-IV social security recipients do you want to charge to your account? How many more permanently sick and frustrated employees who are shaped by subtle brainwashing do you want to smuggle through your "JobCenter machine" contraption?

These are questions which move me as a JobCenter employee. Questions to which I do not receive any reply - and they are questions which ought to be publicly discussed. The internet is filled with reports on starved, suicidal and seriously sick Hartz-IV social security recipients. No less severe are the anonymous statements and reports of Jobcenter agency employees who are no longer able to cope with the pressure to exert willful cruelty unto social security beneficiaries and the pressure to fulfill quotas. Anonymous reports, out of fear of reprisals and of being fired from their jobs through the headquarters of the JobCenter agency. Yet, several individual projects within the agency are staffed with temporarily employed workers. A factor which places every temporarily employed worker into a state of uncertainty. And this uncertainty is then precisely transmitted unto the outside. How can an employee, who himself is temporarily employed, transmit inner security and certainty? How should a temporarily employed worker handle this constant uncertainty that the next day could possibly be the last working day? As a result most temporarily employed workers react with blind obedience, driven by rational statistics - always hoping to receive an extension to their fixed temporary working contract on the last day of work.

This surely could be a calculated effort. Freshmeat - without receiving the chance to see through the system - and the fear of unemployment will cause people to act without rhyme or reason. A federal nationwide puppetery for over six million unemployed people. It's odd that hardly anyone, except the regulators themselves, claps. Encores are not demanded.

They run campaigns, such as [www.jobcenter-ich-bin-gut.de](http://www.jobcenter-ich-bin-gut.de), money from Berlin for further education and other measures are distributed, in Berlin unemployed people receive a personal coach, in Brandenburg unemployed people who are "too lazy to walk" receive a pedometer, the city of Bendorf raffled long term unemployed people at the Christmas market, and the city of Nienburg threatened the unemployed with cuts in their social security allowances when they failed to take part in non-smoker courses.

Absurdities that need no description. Thusly, money is being wasted on curiosities that cannot be more inhuman and degrading. Also known but hardly mentioned are monetary incentives, such as the EGZ (Eingliederungszuschuss), which employers can receive, provided the employer offers a fixed contract temporary employment for the unemployed. However, many times once the monetary incentive runs out, unemployment is once again financed. Yet, the practice of handing out monetary incentives defies all logic when temporary employment agencies that exploit low wages laws receive these incentives. It is thusly a financial support for continuous poverty and the maintenance of slave labour authorised by our government.

Of course there are always successful placements into permanent jobs - jobs from which a person can also live. I do not want to leave this unmentioned. It is striking that the duration of long-term unemployment under the Social Security Code II (SGB II) is steadily rising. Thusly, more than half of the affected unemployed people above 50 years of age received social security money for more than 12 months in 2011. A barely less amount affects the unemployed below 50 years of age. The number of those who again registered with the JobCenter agency seeking for employment after they had been temporarily employed, as most employments nowadays are temporary, also rose steadily in the year 2011. Thus more than 2/3 of the recipients of unemployment money are receiving transfer payments under Hartz-IV.

That's a number which hasn't improved since the introduction of Hartz IV in 2005. At the start it was around 60%, now it is above 70%. According to my calculations, there has been no reduction in unemployment under Social Security Code II.

What are the reasons given for deliberate arbitrariness, for inhuman statements from JobCenter agency employees, for a system that tolerates unemployed people to get sicker as a result of this? Finding fault with the unemployed, without looking at their own conscience, reveals a certain mentality of ignorance. Degrading and thoughtless actions, which happens daily in JobCenter agencies, leads to sicknesses. Threats, fear of being sanctioned and being treated as second, third or fourth class human beings through JobCenter agencies do not lead to employment; they lead to complete refusal, to permanent disability attestations, to resignation, to rage and to suicide.

I am aware that with these questions and this article I have exposed myself to further repressive measures through your agency, and perhaps even risk my job. I am also aware that humaneness can only emerge when things are getting stirred up, when critical voices are being raised, even from within its own ranks.

Likewise, as a free, accredited and acknowledged journalist, I presume the right of the fourth estate and draw attention to deficiencies. Thusly I want nothing else than a change in your minds for more humaneness and regard for human dignity as

prescribed in the constitution (basic law). The objective is humanitarian action and not management or administration.

Or have we already reached the stage whereby career advancement overrides human reasoning and action?