

Notierenswertes am 25. Juli 2012

Hartmuts Betabloggereien des Tages

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http://a2e.de/dok/phm_pub120725

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0.0.1 gestern

1 Facebook back to normalcy?

The user interface was utterly broken for me this month, but today suddenly it seems to have returned to normalcy. It works under Conkeror on various machines as it used to.

2 Greenland icesheet melting rapidly

Most of what politicians can do about this is futile, I'm afraid. Any serious deal on this would have to start from curbing the reckless growth of world population in the Southern hemisphere. Wealthy lifestyle of the North is less of a problem and it's one that is being solved anyway. The revival of coal as an energy source in Germany (thanks to Fukushima) shows roughly how limited the options are.

3 Governmental Spending as a cure for Depression in Japan, EU and Spain

Many "conservative" economists in Japan are, like Paul Krugman, in favor of a big spending program with a goal like "doubling incomes within 10 years", hoping to repeat the success experience of prime minister Ikeda of the late 1950s. But even in Japan it is difficult to identify today a potential similar to that of the postwar era, where an industry was waiting to come back to a prewar level of technical superiority. Japanese economists thus talk about various political conditions under which such a program might nevertheless succeed today. I still find their reasoning insufficient, but in Krugman's texts it appears to be totally absent.

Krugman criticizes the lack of visionary boldness of the Spanish and German finance ministers:

“How about putting their money —or actually the ECB’s money —where their mouths are?

I mean, if the markets are all wrong and Spanish debt is safe, surely the obvious thing is to have the ECB step up by buying those bonds until the markets see reason.

Right?”

No, wrong, because the European nations agreed on the contrary in the Maastricht Treaty. Or, in other words, because “their money” is in the end the money of their respective taxpayers. The Euro was constructed on the premise that participant countries would be strong enough to deal with it. The unitary European state is not there nor is there a consensus for building it.

Why can’t a champion of expansive fiscal policies and anglosaxon-style central banking understand the political conditions of his game? And if he has so little faith in politicians, why does he believe what they say about the attractiveness of state bonds? Also, from where does he take his confidence in the success chances (in terms of return rate) of any pan-european public spending program? Which productivity potentials are there to be unlocked?

A Spanish infrastructure building program based on cheap euro loans was under way all the time anyway, and if there is such a big growth potential in Spain, then Spain could leave the Eurozone, based on the advice of the Wolfson prize winners, and prove its point by putting attracting creditors and putting borrowed money where its (or Krugman’s) mouth is.

C’è un dibattito sul’endettamento statale come via d’uscita dalla depressione anche in Giappone, e nel partito della spesa ci sono anche molti economisti “conservatori”. Ma questo presuppone sempre qualcosa: un stato forte e un potenziale di produttività da realizzare. Se questo esiste in Spagna, potrebbero uscire dall’euro e provarlo, mettendoci i propri soldi (“putting their money where their mouth is”). Semplici principi politici, scritti nel trattato di Maastricht, ma ignorati a Krugman e molti altri.

4 Fundamentalismus ohne Fundament

In diesen Tagen bekam ich bei der Carl-Friedrich-von-Siemens-Stiftung ein paar alte Aufsätze des Verfassungsrechtlers Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde über die Zerbrechlichkeit des säkularisierten Staates in die Hand, die viel zur Verbesserung der Beschneidungsdiskussion hätten beitragen können. Manfred Kleine-Hartlage hat wohl ähnliche Gedanken bereits zu Ende gedacht und kritisiert auf dieser Basis ein paar neuere Texte in ähnlicher Weise, wie ich es auch gerne getan (und gekonnt) hätte, als ich diesen Texten kürzlich begegnete.

5 Sarrazin: Fiskalpakt wird scheitern

Thilo Sarrazin beurteilt die möglichen Entwicklungen der Eurozone recht nüchtern. Vor 15 Jahren siegte in ihm unter dem Druck des Zeitgeistes der Technokrat über den Skeptiker. Werden die dem Buch "Deutschland schafft sich ab" zugrunde liegenden Annahmen sich in 15 Jahren noch als zu optimistisch erweisen?

6 Sinkende Niveau der Schriftkultur

"Eine halbwegs akzeptable Fähigkeit zur Teilhabe an der Schriftkultur bringen immer weniger Studierende mit", urteilt eine an Universitäten durchgeführte Studie, die unter Verschluss bleibt, weil die Autoren sich nicht mit den Kultuspolitikern verfeinden wollen.

Jacque Ellul is called a "technology doomsdayer before his time". It appears that a recent flood of reports about receding cultural competences has provided the conditions under which his works could receive greater attention.

7 Verschweizerung als Optimum

Sehr einsichtsreich erläutert ein Historiker, warum politische Bedeutungslosigkeit für Deutschland ein anzustrebendes Ideal geworden sein könnte.

7.0.2 morgen