



Where is Churchill?

Julian Ries / 29.4.2022

"Warning about the consequences of a gas supply stop for Germany" - I can't read and hear it any more. Of course, a gas supply stop has immense consequences for the German economy and for German consumers. But when will we actually realise that the war in Ukraine is not only about Ukraine? When will we actually realise that it is about our Western values and quite specifically about our liberal democratic legal systems in Europe? It is not NATO that is a threat to Russia, but precisely these Western values that are a threat to Putin's regime, and to the regimes of other authoritarian to dictatorial rulers in Eastern Europe. This goal is perhaps not - yet - as evident as the war in Ukraine. But anyone who takes the trouble to look at what else Putin is doing in Europe and where and how he is trying to exert influence everywhere (Marie Le Pen, Viktor Orban, Aleksandar Vucic, Milorad Dodik) cannot help but see Putin's campaign as a campaign against a free and democratic West.

So where is the wake-up call? Where is the call to save energy on a massive scale? There is so much potential for savings, be it in transport, be it in heating offices or homes. But instead of letting the mechanisms of the market work and contributing to a reduction in consumption through higher fuel prices, politicians are thinking about how to compensate for these price increases. It would be much better to provide stronger incentives to save energy. For example: for every kilowatt hour and for every cubic metre of gas that consumers use less in 2022 than in 2021, they receive a bonus. Maybe it's not as easy as in the example, but there are certainly ways to do something. Every percent we save reduces our dependence and reduces remittances to Russia. Yes, this may lead to sacrifices among the population, yes, this may be inconvenient for a while. But if it were clearly communicated what we are doing it for, then it would be only half as bad. And for the rest, the terrible pictures from Ukraine and our solidarity with the heroically defending Ukrainians should be enough.

Does really more need to happen than has already happened in Ukraine?

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