



MORAL OF WICKEDNESS

BY GORANA OGNJENOVIC

Last spring Morgenbladet shockingly enough published an interview with the Torbjørn Røe Isaksen leader of the Young Right and political editor of the journal Minerva, where he elaborated his openly extreme views on the current Norwegian welfare politics by naming it “moral of weakness”.

Some months after that Morgenbladet published a comment by one of the Welfare researchers at Gjøvik Høgskole who pointed out how bitterly disappointing it was that none of Arbeiderpartiet’s, Venstre’s, or LO’s politicians saw it as necessary to reply to such extreme views (by the leader of the Young Right), in order to eliminate its credibility.

The problem is that it’s been months now since, and we are still waiting. Why?

It is quite clear that we cannot believe what is really going on, namely that Samuel Beckett is still our best friend, since Godot is yet to appear.

The answer to the question of why Godot isn’t coming of course arrived only after the autumn election, after we all voted for the new government out of despise for the previous, in a hope of improving the situation.

The answer is nothing like what we might have expected, the new government intends to not only embrace such extreme ideas, it also intends to realise them in practice.

What do I mean by ‘realising in practice’? As much we could read in and between the lines so far he intends to reform the system of welfare benefits in order to “produce” the money for the government’s fight against poverty. He will make social clients fulfil their duties in order to gain the benefits, as if the problems they have already now, which keep them from getting on with their lives, are not straining and humiliating enough. On the other hand, one cannot say that the new government shall not take the whole thing on another level since they are already now promising to go through the benefits of the ill and handicapped in order to get some money out of them too. Does this make sense? Of course not!

This is just another one of those pragmatic self-contradictory attempts to take the money from the poor in order to give it back, preferably in as small amounts as possible and then be able to sit on the bench and say “I just helped you, didn’t I? And now it is all up to you, sunshine!”



Whatever else they have planned as Christmas and New Years gifts for the members of the lowest parts of the income scale of the country we will certainly find out in due course.

As for the election and other alternatives we could have chosen, Herbert Marcuse (Herbert Marcuse, *One-dimensional Man*) wrote some decades ago: Politically advanced – democratic political systems are considered to be systems of countervailing powers because of their well-established pluralism of political parties. The problem is that these so-called countervailing powers are countervailing only per definition. Their false appearance is reflected in the fact that they do not ever include any form of power that might counter the system as a whole. They never include powers that might appear as opposite to what is socially desirable, and, therefore, potentially provide one with a real alternative view.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!