

Dr. Erhard Busek, in memorium.

We at the *Forum for the Humanities* mourn Dr. Erhard Busek, a member who passed away on the night of March 13, 2022.

Erhard Busek was a great humanist, a democrat, and a man who stood heart and soul for the freedom and democracy of all. He was a politician on a grand scale, with an extensive knowledge of history, culture and law, and rich political experience. He supported democratic movements in Europe, focussing especially on Eastern and Central Europe, which he knew and understood as few others. He was personally in contact with and had befriended critical thinkers and intellectuals from countries behind the Iron Curtain. He knew what they were engaged in, and he was abreast of their activities and publications. He supported their efforts for freedom, peace and democracy.

Aware of the power of knowledge and education, Dr. Busek supported the education of young people in the spirit of openness and of productive dialogue. He had a natural gift for friendship. He selflessly disseminated his knowledge, erudition and friendships to people of good will around the world. He was a reliable friend and supporter of Slovenia and its efforts both in the 1980s and during the 1991 war – that is, at a time when most Europeans did not separate Slovenia from Slavonia and most politicians opposed the break-up of Yugoslavia, and his stance was not self-understood.

In the article “What is essential” (3.3.2022), one of his final pieces, he wrote in *Furche*:

The appeal “Become what you essentially are!” applies to all areas of politics. But also and especially to every single person. Of course there are governments, state leaders and clever people who make decisions. But the proper attitude begins with us, and this responsibility we cannot cede to others. And here there is another appeal in Christian thinking: *Metanoete!* – Think about it! It is by no means my intention to spread pessimism or fear, but rather to remind us all that we humans have always had the power to cope with problems and crises.

Until his death, Erhard Busek remained closely associated with the plans and activities of the *Forum for the Humanities*. We will miss his thinking, vision, creativity and friendship.