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Schadenfreude is not acceptable! How German Journalism Gets Me



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My dear readers,

It is time for thoughts from the island again. Before I share more, I hope you are all okay – despite the heat waves. As I said in my previous articles, what will be next? What else do we have to overcome, or is this our future - living and dealing with extreme situations, i.e. pandemics, war, climate chaos etc.?

This month's column is a deep-hearted text from me to you. I feel I must get these words out, a desperate feeling to write from the bottom of my nursing heart.

Last week I skyped with my parents who live in the North of Germany. Again, my mum mentioned how awful the National Health System (NHS) is run, the shortage of nurses in the U.K., and the paramedic vans waiting in the emergency departments for hours. It sounds like Great Britain is done with its health system.

But I am really tired and angry. I have no idea how German journalism has so much time to report about the Brits. Do German newspapers ever report about the Spanish, Italian, or Polish health systems? If not, what is it about the British?

Yes, Brexit is unforgivable and will have a huge impact on British society and its systems. Yes, we did not want to have Brexit, but we have it and guess what? We have to get on with it.

What is Germany thinking (well, the newspapers - whether they are the yellow press or the so-called broadsheet (SZ, Die Zeit etc.) by lashing out and pointing fingers at us in Britain?

I was furious when these accusations about the NHS happened during the first wave of COVID-19. How dare a country pick on their neighbour struggling with a monster of a tsunami wave of COVID-19, which cost thousands of lives? Please tell me one health system that is absolutely perfect and in line with everything. Aren't we all struggling and fighting against the demons of shortage of nurses, limited budgets for healthcare, and politicians who think they know best without any healthcare knowledge?

During the first wave of COVID-19, when I got infected on the ward as a staff nurse, I started a campaign and wrote to the German newspapers. I asked for solidarity and humanism. Not for Schadenfreude! No country should ever point their finger in other people's directions and highlight its weaknesses.

We in Great Britain know that the NHS must be stronger. We know that. But the NHS has become its enemy due to its 100% transparency, which most countries worldwide don't have.

These so-called experts and journalists in healthcare/science look up some NHS data and write stuff about us. But what they write does not reflect the whole picture of the NHS or us in Great Britain.

One can tell me, "*Hey, why do you bother so much about other people's opinions?*" Well, I do, because I am German! So that would be my answer, and I care about my old Heimat ('Home') and my new Heimat/my Wahlheimat.

German journalism, please give German nurses more space in your newspapers to express how they feel about their systems, and you will have enough to write about.

Schadenfreude is not really acceptable here at all.

Wake up and smell the coffee!

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