DIALOGUES ON PARTY SYSTEMS AND GLOBAL DEMOCRATISATION

KATARINA SEHM-PATOMÄKI AND MARKO ULVILA (EDS.)

NIGD WORKING PAPER 2/2006

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INTRODUCTION

Katarina Sehm-Patomäki and Marko Ulvila

In April 2004, NIGD (Network Institute for Global Democratization) associates started discussions around the theme of a global political party. A quick round of consultation among our colleagues revealed that some, at least Heikki Patomäki, Vijay Pratap and Teivo Teivainen, had at some point given thought to the concept of a global political party in their works.[1] A virtual visit to the library disclosed that in general, surprisingly little has been written – academic or otherwise – on the theme of transnational association or operation of political parties. We also soon discovered that it proves important to speak of parties in the plural as opposed to the singular.

The project *Elements for a Dialogue on Global Political Party Formations* kicked off in September 2005. The objective of the project was to hear views on the idea of global political parties from a diverse political and social spectrum. The methodology paralleled an earlier NIGD project, *North-South Dialogues*[2], where NIGD invites experts to write analysis on a certain theme, based on a background paper. In this current project, the background paper was written by Heikki Patomäki and Teivo Teivainen.

In order to facilitate the inclusion of voices outside the world of writing, NIGD organised four dialogues encouraging discussions on political parties, democracy and globalisation. The first dialogue took place in Helsinki in September 2005, a second one followed in New Delhi in November. The third and fourth dialogues were held in January 2006 in conjunction with the polycentric World Social Forums in Bamako, Mali and Caracas, Venezuela.[3] At these dialogues, we presented and distributed early and partial drafts of the working papers.

This Working Paper, *Dialogues on Party Systems and Global Democratisation* includes complete reports from the four dialogues, presentations of the Party Internationals and selected background documents.

As part of this NIGD process, we have issued an accompanying sister NIGD Working Paper 1/2006 called *Democratic Politics Globally – Elements for Dialogue on Global Political Party Formations.* It consists of the above mentioned background paper and other contributions requested within the frames of the project. Additionally, in the paper we have included text boxes from the discussions held at the dialogues and presentations of the international associations of political parties.

Another accompanying NIGD volume, NIGD Discussion Paper 1/2006 entitled *Political Parties and Global Democratisation: Lessons from the Past and Future Prospects* summarises the new stage of our thinking following the work of the Working Papers, and defines an agenda for future work and debates. The specific focus of the NIGD Discussion Paper is to spark discussions in and among different and differing corners, groups and actors around the globe on political parties.

The Working Papers, the Discussion Paper, and additional material on NIGD's project on global political parties are available on the site http://www.nigd.org/globalparties

In Helsinki and Tampere, Finland, on 1 September 2006

Katarina Sehm-Patomäki
katarina@nigd.org

Marko Ulvila
marko.ulvila@kaapeli.fi

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1 For an initial e-mail about the topic see Annex: Should we have a global party?
2 See Rikkilä, Leena and Katarina Sehm-Patomäki (eds) (2002): *From a Global Market Place to Political Spaces - the North-South Dialogue Continues*, NIGD Working Paper 1/2002, Helsinki

3 The project organised also a dialogue session at the Karachi polycentric World Social Forum VI in March 2006 to present the project.

PART I: REPORTS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUES

Dialogue Report I

AN INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON PARTY SYSTEMS, DEMOCRACY AND GLOBALISATION

7 September 2005, Helsinki, Finland

Katarina Sehm-Patomäki and Marko Ulvila

On 7 September 2005, NIGD organised the first dialogue in a series of events addressing international political party formations and global party initiatives. The dialogue took place in Helsinki, Finland. Heikki Patomäki and Teivo Teivainen prepared a background paper for the discussions. Thomas Wallgren and Vijay Pratap prepared statements and invited comments were made by Sunilam, Ruth Genner and Tord Björk. Anil Bhattarai, Swanaam, Harsh Mandar and Suresh Sharma contributed to the discussion. The dialogue was attended by 20 persons.

Thomas Wallgren, University of Helsinki, Finland

As the current chair of NIGD, I would like to welcome you all. Our purpose today is to brainstorm and refresh our thinking regarding the concept of international political party formations. This is the topic of a new NIGD research project. We want to start the project on a good track, and for this reason we have initiated this session to share ideas and to conjure up fresh, open-ended, new thinking.

In this spirit, I will launch the discussions by noting the two main aims that inform this project: firstly the political aim, providing tools that may be conducive to comprehensive democratisation and just transformation, and secondly, the intellectual aim, enhancing our self-understanding. The links and tensions between these aims are an ongoing reflective concern for many of us, but I shall not pursue that topic here.

I will offer remarks on two large topics: the history and future of parties, and the discourse of global governance. And I will then close with some more telegraphic remarks.

In the modern world, parties fulfil the function of mediating between the will-formation that evolves from civil society and the execution of state power. In this function, parties are irreplaceable. In modern, complex societies, direct democracy needs, even in ideal cases, substantial service from a representative system, with elected assemblies. Hence, modern social formations need, as an essential tool for democracy, civil society based organisations competing for the votes of electorates in free and fair elections. Such organisations play the role of parties, regardless of what they are called.

It follows from this understanding of the role of parties that we can only have a strong sense of global parties when we have global electoral assemblies controlling entities that exercise public power. We can also speak of global parties in a moderate sense in which they have two main forms. One is international organisations, movements or networks whose members are parties, for example, the Socialist International. The other is international organisations, movements or networks whose members are not parties but who seek jointly to influence electoral politics.

The party formations that have dominated modern western politics throughout the 20th century clearly emerged from social movements. For a

long time, these parties also preserved their mass base and identity as social movements.

Even though modern parties have, for the most part, been organised nationally, the movements from which they were originally born developed and mobilised on the basis of global ideological perspectives. The most clear cut example in this respect is the Communist movement. For other parties as well – liberal parties, farmers' parties, even nationalist parties and others –organising as parties that take part in the competition for the control of power in a nation state was, so they say, a pragmatic step taken on the basis of a global ideological self-understanding.

Against this background I have a few suggestions and observations for empirical research.

One point of departure could be to question whether, during the past 50-70 years or so, if there has been a shift in balance between, namely, the national pragmatic expression which guides political party work on a day-to-day basis, and the global ideological identity of parties.

The suggested hypothesis I wish to offer is: it appears, that in the course of their evolution, the importance of the original, global self-understanding of the mission of the different parties has gradually eroded; nevertheless, when we speak of global parties today we must recognise that the major parties of today all have a moderate global identity at their core, even if this identity may be thinner now than some years ago. Today, in terms of new research on parties (by NIGD or others), one issue to look at is the connection between the balance of national and global considerations in the formulation of pragmatic party politics, and how these influence the actual use of power.

From the normative perspective, I would like to add the following concern: the integration of polities and economies through international commerce, finance markets and agreements creates, as many have argued, a need to consider politics at all levels from the international perspective – or the global perspective, if you like.

But if it is true that the global identity of modern parties has eroded, we should experience the unhappy situation of a widening gap between the reality and the ideal functioning of the main party formations of the western world.

I do not have any authoritative backing for my conjecture, but as a participant in public life, I would claim that this is in fact exactly our present situation. Liberal, conservative and socialist parties of all shades have lost their stamina in global intentions and practices precisely at a time when globalism should be strengthening.

The democratic political response to this situation can be of three kinds.

First, we can work to strengthen the global dimensions of the existing parties, making them better fit, than presently, to serve their function as mediator between global political developments and civil society.

Second, we can attempt the creation of new parties, with a strong or moderate global identity.

Third, we can intervene to reduce, restrict or counter the international integration of economies and polities, thereby reducing the need for the kind of global mediation between states and civil society that we may have too little of today.

The three strategies can be seen as complementary. In fact, I think it is a matter of some urgency that we do see them as complementary and not as competing strategies. If we accept that as our starting point we shall still need to discuss preferences and priorities. Only some of the factors that must guide political judgement about which of them we should give preference will be discussed here.

One relevant aspect here is the question of the fate of parties as movements.

Let me repeat and emphasis that the parties that have dominated the modern, western, political history grew out of strong, mass movements. From the perspective of the mass participants in the movements' party work, competition for state power, and the control thereof, was only one of the political instruments for change that the movements had an original interest in. However, at least in the western world and perhaps on other continents as well, there has been a gradual loss and a shift in balance. Parties used to be carried by movements so party programmes and politics essentially grew through a bottom-up process of communication, there has now been a gradual shift in balance so that party leadership and clerks, the party political professionals, have become more dominant whereas the movement identity of parties has declined.

In this process, parties tend to lose quality as an instrument of democracy in at least three ways. One, the will-formation of the party becomes elitist and the democratic mandate suffers. Two, parties become

dependent on meeting their voters through mass-media rather than through internal, participatory democracy. The dependence on media can have quite tragic results in situations where the media is commercialised. Three, as a result of the two previous factors, citizens may become suspicious of the very idea that parties can be carried by genuine social movements. The result will be a polity whose members conceive parties and social movements as different and perhaps even opposed entities.

In fact I would claim, on the basis of my experience as a political participant, that in Western Europe all these developments have advanced quite far. As a consequence, our parties are in a deep internal crisis; the weakening of both membership ratios and internal democracy corresponds to a dependence on media and a dramatic loss of accountability to the electorate.

Many political activists have, in this situation invested their political hope and work in movements rather than parties, and have learned to think, almost instinctually, that work in social movements and work in parties can and should be separate.

Paradoxically, it is among the political activists with this kind of orientation that dreams of global parties, in the narrow sense, often surface. The dream apparently is, that new social movements, in particular the so called "global justice movement" or the "movement of movements" that have the World Social Forum as its main point of common reference, could start anew as a movement-based global party that would emancipate these movements from dependence on the older, crisis-ridden parties.

Shared dreams are important in politics as they can motivate and bring people together.

One topic that requires attention, in research and in political experiments, is the question of how, and to what extent, a new global party formation, which is formed as an expression of the global justice movement, can avoid falling victim to the mechanisms that have driven the older, moderately global parties into their present crises.

I will now proceed to a slightly different topic, and a slightly different set of remarks.

Western polities are still dominated by the parties that grew out of the social movements of high modernity, mainly between 1750 and 1920.

But the picture is now changing, to some extent, right before our eyes. There are two new social movements with a mass base that have successfully produced party formations since the second world war. One is the environmental movement that has given birth to the green parties, and the other is the xenophobic and racist movements that given rise to new parties of the far right, or to neo-fascist parties.

The new Green parties and neo-fascist parties are classical party formations of the moderate global type in the sense that they grow out of international movements with a global ideological perspectives. In both cases, the new parties are based on a felt need in the polity to react to a so called global problems.

The greens largely react to global environmental problems. The far right is propelled by a concern about global migration and its cultural and economic implications.

Now, if this is a correct description, the popular image that I also used in my earlier reflections, according to which modern parties have lost their movement character, seems to call for some qualification.

Having said this, I would like to make a note regarding the World Social Forum process and the related social movements and organisations, such as, La Via Campesina or Attac.

As we all know, the WSF is a very diverse political entity united, at least on paper, by the few core principles defined in the WSF charter. I belong to the group who see the unforced diversity of the WSF-process as its most original aspect and its greatest strength.

Here I want to explain the essential reason for my welcoming of the WSF as an open space for diverse political expressions with only a few points of convergence.

As Vijay Pratap, among others, has been observing, over the last 20-30 years, the world has experienced the rise of a phenomenal democratic energy.[4] Today it seems clear that a greater proportion of the citizenship are, in all corners of the world, standing up in public life and taking initiatives. In this sense, life on earth is more political than it has ever been The emergence of such a fantastic plurality of initiatives is a new and major event in the development of democracy.

Many people who are contributing new political initiative meet at the WSF. People come with their various concerns about, dalit dignity, uniting the forces of the anti-capitalistic struggles, environmental problems,

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4   Pratap, Vijay 2004 Poliics, Morality, Identity – an Intimate Quest. New Delhi: Vasudhaiva Kutumabakm.

indigenous people's rights, gender issues, tax justice, public services, land rights, and so on and so forth. The emergence of a huge plethora of new forms and topics of political intervention is not a national or local trend, but a clear global trend.

If we have the correct, empirical observation of this emerging trend, we can ask: why has this activism not translated into party political action, and should it do so more?

I stressed above that parties are irreplaceable tools for democracy. I must also submit and confirm my agreement to the prevalent notion that through integration processes, the global political challenges have grown enormously and are putting the steering capacity of nation states under great pressure. I have also mentioned a change in the dominant parties, from global movement based identities to national pragmatic identities.

In this light, the need for new, global democratic institutions, and for new and truly movement based, global parties seems obvious. Given the need, should optimism about global parties follow?

The question is partly rhetorical. It is a great follies of our time to think that democracy and justice will follow if people and movements, who cherish these values, follow the slogan, "nation-states are overburdened by economic globalisation; therefore, we need more global governance".

Such a simplistic belief can very easily lead to the undermining of existing institutions of a reasonable democratic quality, and can lead to the further strengthening of fundamentally undemocratic transnational institutions, including the EU, the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO, and possible new ones.

As a concrete illustration, let me say that some proposals that are becoming popular in some quarters of the global justice movement, such as the idea of establishing a new Currency Transaction Tax Organisation (CTTO), also seem rather naive. The CTTO will be fine if two conditions are met. One, democratic aspirations are hegemonic in the founding process. The other, democratic aspirations are institutionalised without traces of the intellectual, middle-class romanticism that often, as it appear to me, stands in the way of a realistic assessment of the current state of play in the mediation between citizens and global political institutions. On both scores, the discussion about the CTTO has often seems somewhat underdeveloped.

Nevertheless, the question concerning the possible need for global political parties is not rhetorical. One aspect of the work that NIGD's new project will address is the need to develop a realistic, politically and intellectually refined analysis of the challenges and prospects for global democracy. One might say that the challenge here is to understand to what extent it is possible to advance comprehensive democracy through initiatives whose primary aim is global democracy.[5] This intellectual undertaking can potentially benefit many if it can engage both the knowledge encapsulated in various practical experiments, and new, creative political proposals that emerge from experiences of the global justice movement. Through its deep engagement in the WSF process, NIGD is, as I proudly believe, exceptionally well-placed in this regard.

I wish to close my tentative and selective explorations by taking note of four further issues that, I believe, are useful if we wish to shift from a merely ideological commitment to global democratisation towards a realistic views with experiments in global democratisation as a dimension of comprehensive democratisation.

i) The first issue is the placement of the limits-to-growth debate within globalisation discourse.

In the 1980s, the Brundtland report and other interventions shifted the focus of discourse on ecology from the need for cultural renewal in modernity, to a debate on the possibilities of dealing with the costs of modern notions of success through technical means. Nevertheless, it remains as clear as ever that the dream of affluence for all is problematic from the perspectives of cultural pluralism, social justice, human dignity, and ecological democracy.

Futhermore, discussions about institutional design at the global level will remain irresponsible unless they are placed within a framework in which the issues mentioned are seriously accounted for.

ii) The second issue is the technology and conditions needed for practices of democratic communication.

Democratic will-formation in mass-societies with a complex division of labour is heavily dependent on modern technological structures, including, print, mass-production of paper, computers, satellites to support the internet, exploitation of rare metals for cellular phones, air-traffic and so on. This dependence makes all assumptions about the neutrality of technology obsolete. There are two, hard questions that need to be asked.

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5   For one introduction to the concept "comprehensive democracy", see Pratap, Priya and Wallgren 2004 Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam: An Alliance for Comprehensive Democracy. New Delhi: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

One, given the current technologies, how can the undemocratic structures inherent in the current politics of technology, such as, "the digital divide," be remedied and how can new technologies be developed and used as instruments for democratic political communication?

Two, what are the required structural changes in technology are needed for radical democratic purposes. (In this context, it should be noted that any discourse on technology and democracy that does not attend to the issue of limits to growth will easily be lacking in long-term realism and will runs the risk of becoming politically counter-productive.)

iii) The third issue I wish to put forward is the concept "global problems." Even though it has frequented political debates for decades, it is far from clear if this is a useful concept. At minimum, the concept of "global problems" needs to be scrutinised and demystified before it is employed in any ambitious intellectual context.

To this end, we can begin to ask questions about the discourse on the environment, for example. It is often suggested that the environment is an area of action where the national and the local will not come up with answers because environmental problems are global. Climate change is often sited as a standard example of a global problem. But climate change is not a straightforward and uncontroversial example of a global problem. To define climate change as a problem is a very political statement. One dimension of the issue pertains to the question, is climate change better seen as a problem or as an opportunity. To be more concrete, say you have a lot of money and are interested in making more; climate change can be, above all, a wonderful opportunity for investment in cutting-edge carbon sink technology, emission rights business, and other new and growing areas of commercial activity.

Another controversial aspect in the climate change discourse is the extent to which conceptualising it as a global problem, rather than as a set of discrete, local problems, depoliticises ecological discourse.

There is also the question on whether the idea of defining global problems as an over-riding concern is the result of a discourse dominated by elites. A democratically processed definition of ecological problems and challenges might present water, land-rights, intellectual property rights or other issues with diverse local manifestations at the top. It is not clear if global parties should prefer the agenda of an ecological political intervention stemming from decentralized, locally based debates to the agenda derived from debates between educated, English-speaking elites.

My suggestion is to ask similarly critical questions that are required in other areas where there exists a tendency to a routinely classify various phenomena as "global." Tax evasion, financial flows, and world trade liberalisation are often referred to as global problems, or global challenges. We should critically scrutinise this manner of speaking keeping in mind the effects on political imagination, organisation and strategies of this conceptual ordering.

iv) The fourth (large) issue that needs to play a role in any ambitious study on the idea and practices of political parties is moral universalism.

Gandhi writes in the opening section of chapter 10 in his major, little book, Hind Swaraj: "I am so constructed that I can only serve my immediate neighbours, but in my conceit I pretend to have discovered that I must with my body serve every individual in the universe. In thus attempting the impossible, man becomes in contact with different natures, different religions, and is utterly confounded."

The quote is incredibly rich. The point I wish to raise is, the discussion of global parties needs to seriously address the difficulty in bridging the gap between lofty commitment to universal norms and values, and our limited capacity to translate such commitments into practice.

This is also exactly the issue where I see the greatest need for the design of practical experiments for global parties. The missing link in the global human exchange is the exposure of the winners to both the experience and desires of the losers. Thus, it often happens that people with a fine commitment to solidarity and democracy engage in paternalistic policies that have a very thin and nominal link to the reality of oppressed and marginalised majorities. Global parties, especially if designed as global parties in the moderate sense defined earlier, can play a role in addressing this problem. For this reason I welcome the initiative taken by NIGD, with VK and other cooperating movements, to use the WSF-process as an avenue for democratising the socialist and green international. Reflections and evaluations of these and other practical, concrete experiments in building global parties could be of value in NIGD's new research project.

Teivo Teivainen

This part of my input into this concept paper on global political parties was written together with Heikki Patomäki. The paper 'Global Political Parties: Toward a Research Programme' was written to spark the discussion for NIGD's project on international political party formations.

The issue of relations between political parties and social movement has been well highlighted within the World Social Forum process. The debate on the relationship between civil society actors and social movements has been continuously on the agenda; examples include: Brazil's Workers Party (PT), the Communist party in India, the Communist party in Italy, the Socialist Workers' Party in the UK, and others. Those debates are coloured by the dichotomy created between, on the one hand, very traditional understanding of political agency and political transformative action within actual political parties taking and engaging in power, however power is understood, and on the other hand, an overly depoliticised understanding of what civil society is and the known political and theoretical debates on the concept of civil society. My motivation for trying to invoke thinking about the problem of political parties is based on the desire to think about what political agency means in the global arena and global world today. Another way of looking at this is to think about how traditional political parties can grow global.

My interest lies in questioning the extent organisations of movements are engaged in the WSF process and are searching for some kind of political agency that will help transgress the dichotomy between political party and non-party kind of political actors in global politics of today and tomorrow. What are political parties, and what should they do when competing for office or participation in state power? What does political office mean on the global arena? What are the dangers of trying to think about political action on the global arena? What are the dangers of applying domestic analogies to analysis of global political institutions and global politics from a democratic perspective? The project and image of national politics are a double movement, where we sense a call for capitalism and a responsive replication of what they did in the Nordic welfare state in the 1920s – 1940s, only now it is global.

I remain sceptical of the romantic idea of discussing how global parties should and could evolve, and I am sceptical of parties in the global arena. Simultaneously, there seems to be a fear of thinking politically about transnational political action and transnational political agency. This fear is manifested in terms that keep to a depoliticised understanding of both transnational political identity and politics of transnational social movements where one clear part of the identity is not something that would result in a political party.

Is it necessary to move towards a more political understanding of the movements involved in the WSF, and elsewhere? I think there is a new kind of politics emerging, and there is an increasing amount of discussion on what kind of transformative political action will emerge from this, and what it means? In the WSF there is, for instance, an explicit prohibition against taking common stands. In the tradition of many alliances between emancipatory social movements and political parties, the debate centers on producing a common statement and agenda that transcends different single issue driven agendas, such as those of the feminist, ecological, anti-racist, or gay and lesbian movements, the statement then serves as a common platform for the overall political change that political parties are supposed to bring about. The persons involved in the internationals can probably speak more about this, but at the WSF, for instance, there is an incapacity - or inability - to engage in building this common framework because there is a fear that what would emerge from this type of thinking is the traditional, common political party. Traditional political parties reproduce the kind of mechanisms that the movements want to overcome; therefore, they are unwilling to take the step towards making a 'movement of movements' that would engage in political transformative action to go beyond traditional agendas.

Another perspective is brought up by the Peruvian, feminist researcher, Virginia Vargas who reminds us of the WSF slogans "another world is possible" and 'we are against all kinds of fundamentalisms'. Now, in my view, to be against all kinds of fundamentalism also includes being against all kinds of attempts by any one particular position to becoming hegemonic among the alliances and articulation of the WSF. The WSF as such is very healthy, good and beautiful. However, the WSF also brings with it the danger that it results in a shying away from wanting to think strategically about radical democratic transformation of our world. A true discussion on democratic transformation will result in an engagement, at some time, with some strategies, identities, struggles, and contexts that may

be in certain contexts, more important than other struggles and other identities.

The fear of engaging in this debate is rooted in the unwillingness to take a stand in debates beyond the kind of non-political articulation and non-political concept, for instance, of the open space of the WSF. I know that within this group here today, Vijay Pratap for one, will be able to share some well-thought perspectives on the open space idea. The discussion on the image of the idea of an open space as a political platform should ask: "to what end can the paradox of open space be taken when an open space means no common statements on political transformation can be produced?"

At this point I would like to invite Thomas Wallgren to further develop his previous point on the neutrality of technology and this relation to political parties.

Thomas Wallgren responds: I refer to Habermas' basic principle, or understanding that each individual's own needs and desires cannot be defined objectively. When it is not possible for everyone to speak up, we have to discuss and use time to identify what the individual desires are. But this is always the second-best option. In addition to Habermas, Foucault also has developed these principles. The individual reaction to any situation is always unpredictable.

The information technology community differs from the democratic community. I refer to Habermas' theory of democratic open space. What people desire, dream, and fear of can be translated into communication, but not everyone have equal access to participation in the communication.

In the Nordic countries, there used to be something called a tingmöte, where everyone had a say. This tradition still exists in Iceland, and has thus survived for over 1000 years, but it is increasingly being replaced by 'modern' mechanisms. What then is the significance of a national public space? We lose effective recognition of individual accession. From a Nordic perspective, in the 1970's, Norwegian Sigurd Vale looked into the material and economic implications on democracy.

I would like to refer to the case of tantalum, a central metal used in the manufacturing of mobile phones. Half of the world's production of tantalum comes from Central Africa, a region at war. However, none of the mobile phone manufacturers acknowledge the use of Central African tantalum. This proves the so called 'democratic control of the material flows of information'.

Teivo Teivainen continues: I raise the question about the theory of translation, for instance the current work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, to what extent is it neutral, meaning translation between movements and ideas does not create common platforms that could create something analogue to political parties? How can we work towards a more effective translation of movements' work toward strategising?

The feminist debates, in the 1970s, about the 'tyranny of structurelessness', initially stated by Jo Freeman and activated particularly in the US, suggested that both the state and political parties arose form patriarchal structures that are part of the problem, and therefore should not be part of the solution. Patriarchal solutions would only enforce undemocratic and hierarchical structures; therefore, we should have structurally free groups without hierarchical structures a little bit like the open space of the WSF today. Some structures will always exist, but if you pretend they cannot exist, they will never be democratic. To what degree has the WSF, and others, replicated this way of thinking?

Using the party idea as a guideline we may be avoiding what we actually need to talk about, which is a more critical look at the dichotomy between political parties and social movements.

Sunilam

Political parties face a number of crises today, I would like to continue our discussions by addressing these crises. This crisis is a phenomenon that is present throughout the world. I think the crisis can de divided into three main sets of problems. The first is a problem of credibility, what credibility is there for political parties? Secondly, the parties face dilemmas of non-inclusiveness. Finally, the problem of non-accountability, and non-transparency within parties.

Looking back on the historical development of parties, the socialist movement in India serves as a good example. In 1934, the socialist

movement joined the Congress Party. The Congress party, in turn, later fragmented.

What then are the main issues of crises within the political party system? In Europe, we note examples of the Social Democrat Party in Germany and the Labour party in the UK, it seems that the aspirations of the leaders and the people are not being met in the political party system. Furthermore, there seems to be a problem of concept.

In addition to the crisis political parties face today, my second observation for this meeting is on the parties and their power in government. The role of the parties, power and government constitute the framework of constitutions. In this context it is also interesting to develop opinions on the present UN structures, through the UN, are we creating a global government?

In our world, there are only two entities that work beyond the nation state. These entities are the multinational corporations (MNCs), and civil society. The subsequent question we should ask ourselves is, what do we think of civil society? Does it have roots deep enough to create parties? As Teivo Teivainen proposed earlier, should the nature of alliances between civil society, social movements, and political parties be discussed?

On a regional level, the closest thing to international parties and regional policy making is the European Parliament, but do the European people take their parties seriously? In European elections, voting percentage keeps falling, and the European Parliament is not embraced. In other words, it seems that people do not identify with parties. If people do not identify with parties on a regional scale in Europe, how could or would they identify with parties on a global level?

Discussing political parties on a global level leads to the questioning of how parties could be formed on a global level. Global political parties would need resources. If no resources are found, then organisations like the World Trade Organisation (WTO), or MNCs are next in line to take on the role of parties.

As peoples, we are concerned with local lifestyles. The political interest of a peoples, is to protect and take part in political decision-making on issues that relates to them. In order for some type of global movement to take place, we need a charismatic leader.

The internationals of the political parties must be studied, how do they function? If their membership does not seem happy,iIs this a membership of solidarity? What kind of membership do they rely on?

Ruth Genner

The greens are the only party matching the globalised world. One of the key slogans for the green movement has been "think globally, act locally," which has served like a red thread in the activities of the green movement. The main issues for the green party are human rights, peace, poverty reduction, gender issues, and climate politics. In general, the greens have adopted a strategy that leads us away from oil; in particular, the greens have supported the development of alternative energies, such as, solar energy and wind energy.

The greens tend to act in areas where you do not find specific national recognition. For instance, in Switzerland, the far right acts within national borders while the greens think globally.

In Switzerland, the greens have developed into a movement. This is a women's movement, an environmental movement, and in recent times it also developed into a movement against the Iraq invasion. In addition, it is also a movement for the peoples sans papiers, immigrants without official documents.

A key recommendation for international party formations should be to encourage people to seek work with in networks united by common goals. One example is work around the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), within this framework, the United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) Forum for Parliamentarians recently met in regard to the objectives of the Kairo Conference, the so called "soft" MDGs. This group of parliamentarians, work with an international organisation to advance common goals. This is one example of political parties engaged in international activity.

We should put building networks at the forefront of our activities. I think a good communication channel for this, is the Internet. By working together, we create new coalitions and groups.

Party funding is of course always an issue. In Switzerland, for instance, there is no governmental party financing, and the Members of Parliament are only in office part-time. The idea behind this system is to allow parliamentarians to remain in contact with the everyday lives of their constituencies by maintaining their 50 per cent employments with other employers outside parliament. The lack of public funding to political parties is a problem for democracy in Switzerland because corporations have too much influence through election funding.

Tord Björk

I strongly challenge the green party's slogan, "think globally, act locally." I suggest that the slogan be developed into "think globally, act globally." I also strongly oppose Thomas Wallgren's point on not supporting the Internet and other technological inventions as democratic tools and means to achieve democracy.

On the contrary, there is a notion that to be active in global politics, communication is necessary. Let me give an example, Pierre Bourdieu's fantastic study about the Berber community in the Algerian mountains claimed that the Berber communities were unable to think about anything as right, and they were closed communities. At the same time, it was these Berber communities that started to confront French imperialism. This forces academics to start to think about global solidarity and agency.

In other words, it is possible for these, so perceived, non-important, local people to crush the ideas of academics, or green or communist parties claiming that they are the ones on top of the world. If I look through world history, why is it that the most remote places of the world succeed in linking up, for example, in the innermost region of the Amazonia, rubber tappers link up with Indians, and then successfully link with Native American communities in both in low-land and mountain areas of Ecuador? Once when I visited Rio Branco, I brought money from home to organise some events on human rights. I was met with a firm NO, we are not interested in human rights, we consider it a Western concept, what we want is dignity, dignity for all, a concept developed by us. So it is not that people do not think in Rio Branco or other remote places, on the contrary, they do.

It is also not necessarily true that politics is made in the metropolises of the world; rather it is in the spaces where people live, in the oddest places and among the 'stupid' people. Politics is not made in institutions, it is made in the spaces where people are.

There is also a diachronic way of looking at the idea of global political parties. First, I would like to state that forming global parties is possible. The international communist organisation Comintern, also known as the third international, is the first existing global party. When Comintern was formed in March 1919, the Norwegians joined. Normally, the party line for local and national party chapters was dictated from Moscow, and naturally this also occurred for the Norwegians. All chapters agreed to this kind of direction from Moscow. The Norwegians approved of all directions - except regarding the participants of the Norwegian delegation to Moscow- and the Moscow quarters accepted this. I take this as a proof that it is possible to create a democratic community, but what were the characteristics of the Comintern? What made it able to gain approval for its demands from a local chapter? First, it was a mass movement party, and secondly, there was no technology for communication in Norway, it took twelve days for the Norwegians to meet amongst themselves.

I find what Teivo is going into in this discussion is interesting, namely, the shifting the focus away from the concept of 'parties' towards the concept of 'politics' instead. What is necessary to avoid are the domestic analogies, in other words, avoid transferring what we have on the local and national levels into something on the international level. One way to approach this new way of thinking is to look abstractly at the concept of global political parties. Looking carefully, one can quickly see that both the left and the right are part of the same oppressive system.

When the French revolution took place in Paris in 1789, it was not only a French revolution, but a universalistic revolution. In other words, the Haitians were also part of this universalistic revolution. The slaves of Haiti were the true revolutionaries because they claimed the equal rights belonging to them. The French, of course, later stated that they were wrong when they stated human rights for everyone, so they started a war against the liberated slaves of Haiti. Haiti was pushed aside and today remains barely at the level they were at that time. But whenever there is a global conflict involving a nation state, the nation state in the third world is actually a global political party confronting the rich nations. In short, what

is often missing in these discussions is that there are other things besides the WSF.

Another global conflict that started within the Comintern party was the East-West conflict. This conflict was solved by Finland. The instrumental idea at the youth festival was the notion of a youth global party. This was, and remains, a force in anti-colonial struggles. It was in Helsinki in the 1960s that the East-West conflict was solved, because this global entity came to Finland backed by a centrist-left government. At this meeting it was decided, for the first time, that a truly global network was to be formed around this entity, namely, the International Peace Committee.

In their present stage, I see political parties as generalists, in other words, they are attempting to address all possible issues. What is going on now in the world is a US-Americanisation of all political systems. Examples can be observed in the set up of single issue NGOs, and single-issue campaigns etc. Election campaigns often appear to be a package of single issues. Within this context, we face problems networking the systems instead of the democratic institutions. I however think it is possible to introduce some kind of democracy. If we do as Teivo suggests, start to look at global conflicts and start widening the political concept, we might find other alliances and other kinds of history, instead of thinking about formal democracy and those who have the money claiming that their politics equals global politics.

Anil Bhattarai

My points can be summarized in three comments. One, I find it very useful to understand why, in the present context, an international claim is generally monopolized by the West. By "West" I mean those who have money, who can travel, and who do not have problems getting visas. Any meeting that happens in Helsinki becomes international, and any meeting we have in Nepal becomes a national or a local meeting. Meetings in Nepal raise different issues than international meetings in Helsinki, they have very local roots, even when we talk about issues such as the World Bank or the Children's Fund, and the discussions evolve around some fundamentally local issues.

Secondly, it would be very generous to debunk this concept of the WSF and its open space. I took part in WSF IV, in Mumbai, as an ordinary person from Nepal who wanted to see for himself who attended, and what kind of issues were discussed. Since the WSF, I have been following the process in the news. I have not gone to Brazil myself, but I have looked for information very carefully, and I have actively searched for material. I see a lot of people who get very inspired when they go to WSFs. Is this reason enough for us not to have one single agenda? I see my friends from Nepal return very inspired and with a deeper sense of understanding about the reality surrounding them. Our understanding of Nepal will become deeper when we go to the Mumbai WSF; for instance, when we see people demonstrating in Mumbai it inspires us to take further action. A concrete example is, some people start to act differently upon their return from a WSF, part of this change may of course be due to other processes besides the WSF.

The problem that I raised in my first comment draws an emerging, single, common, idea type of processes, such as the WSF. Many specialised organisations driven by a single-issue agenda do not allow the possibility of loud thinking by people who come with new, open ideas. Also, I think the open space idea allows the WSF to be a truly democratic initiative because it invites the participants to create their own space, which is the most democratic of spaces, and the most democratic way of expression at that level. Thanks to this, most participants who attend WSFs are able to take active – and equal - part in the event.

My third comment is on the green party in Nepal, an affiliate of the Global Greens, I would like to speak in defence of the importance of listening to local expressions when forming global ideologies or global parties. A classic example is the formation of Global Greens, and how all the ideals that were eventually incorporated into the green movement, ideals of environmental justice, equality of gender, and so on were originally articulated. The position of the green movement is not shared by all greens. In Europe, the green movement stood for the exact opposite of the green party in Nepal. Today the Nepal greens are the most reactionary, patriarchal, and undemocratic and are supportive of autocracy in Nepal.

Based on my third point, I suggest this study looks further into the green parties' emergence, evolution, and examine case studies to see their real expression and manifestation in our local and national spaces outside

Europe. And to then explain why and how this development has been possible.

Swanaam

It is a fact that we are presently very interconnected in these intense times. A long time ago, Marco Polo returned to Italy from China and brought news, ancient Greeks knew only about the Mediterranean world, but today, the decision making and awareness is quite different. Global problems have to be resolved globally. Today, we have sort of global party if we consider to the force of political power.

I do not think it is possible to have real global parties, it is better to stick to research on this. Local problems will have to be solved locally, but there is no Chinese wall between local and global problems. It is all interrelated and interconnected. Some local problems will have to be solved on a global level, and some global problems will have to be dealt with on a local level, and some both levels depending on the issue's demand.

Research on this could prove highly beneficial. We have had international socialist formation approximately 150 years before the WSF. In Nepal, our two major political parties are both associated with Socialist International, one as member and the other as an aspiring member. These parties are rivals. In Nepal, in reference to the previous discussion on conflicting articulation within the green movement, I have not seen opposition to global parties.

Global question-raising is high on the agenda of this research project by NIGD, if we invest time and energy into posing the correct questions globally, it could, in itself, prove to be a useful contribution. We have been saying, "another world is possible," but what would this world mean in economic, social and other terms? The articulation of the problem of sadness, unhappiness, loneliness and sorrow is also something that we could develop. These are big problems in the developed countries, if the developing countries are embarking down this path of development it may be in their future, so having this type of research already accessible would be good.

Harsh Mander

Regarding the themes of the day, I would like to present half a dozen comments. The first is that I feel there is a structurally intrinsic inequality within international organizations, without exception. The danger of that is reflected in any kind of international political formation. I do not think, even if we assume that different nation states have an egalitarian kind of space for participation in international formation, that national governments are able the inequality. The inequality between countries will continue to infringe upon the genuinely egalitarian or democratic character of any international political formation.

Second, Thomas Wallgren made the very interesting point that many political parties arose from social movements, either from the left or from the right. We are optimistic that the World Social Forum as a social movement or a movement of social movements, may eventually lead to the formation of some kind of progressive global political formation.

Third, I wonder if we can honestly look at the WSF as a movement, or as a movement of movements. I am less optimistic about what we have achieved. I think we have achieved a great deal through it, but it is a zest of solidarity space. It is not an openly accessed, solidarity space because of the barriers pertaining to the ability to afford to attend these places and benefit from the idea of participation. Therefore, we should celebrate the WSF for what it is without illusions about what it is not nor could ever be. If it is not a social movement, I can never see it resulting in the formation of global parties.

Fourth, I think we see an exile of poor peoples' concern for electoral politics nationally, and all over the world. I believe that genuine social movements and peoples' organisations are intensely political. Much of their success today is not through the electoral political process, be it nationally or locally, it is via politics as a means through which marginalised people are able to infringe on the political agenda. Even if there are talks about global politics, the aspiration should not be to infringe on global politics through means that are not part of the competitive electoral processes.

Fifth, tensions remain unresolved between local, national and international action on issues concerning poor people, an example is the issue of food rights. Is the battle of food rights going to be fought in Seattle or Geneva, or is it going to be fought in the fields and on the farm lands

where one struggles against the landlord? Or is it going to be fought at the level of national policies and polities, or on any of these levels I just mentioned? I think that when we start thinking globally, we often exclude the importance of poor peoples' engagement with processes. A lot of local action in relation to hunger, for instance, excludes poor peoples.

My last and a little bit is on the complex point that global politics artificially homogenise diverse groups. This artificial homogenisation is not just about positive solidarity among movements, but it oppresses people into reconstructing a notion into some form of homogeneity. I think that might be damaging. The coming together of various groups of indigenous people, for instance, should not take place within the notions of given assumptions. A second form of homogenisation, coming from another source, is about globalised consumers and businesses coming together.

In addition, I think that through this process of globalisation and global politics, there is another form of homogenization that is asymmetrical. We see an increasing homogenisation these days of the Muslim world where is a great diversity, Arabs actually forming ten per cent of the Muslim world although they are keen to represent the entire Muslim world from Indonesia and beyond. Everybody buys into this myth within this so-called Muslim world there are people, poor people, destitute people, men and women, languages and cultures. In global politics we run the risk of homogenising myths. This, I think is the most dangerous aspect of globalisation of politics today.

Tord Björk comments: I would propose not thinking too much on the dichotomy between the global and the local. Rather, in this project we should aim at understanding that also at the global level, the key is the legitimation of the whole political system. Without radical notion, there is a lack of knowledge of what political parties are. This is very challenging. Looking at the specific global contexts with these kinds of developments, environmental movement etc., there was always a community behind. At the forefront were always people who were able to create resources and space of such a character that they could go forward and develop. At the moment, there is a global protest going on. If looking at these things carefully – as I tried to show with my Berber story earlier on - we note that it is possible for local communities to intervene and to establish different kind of knowledge production.

Suresh Sharma

I would like to comment specifically on the possibility and desirability of a global party. I have great doubts of the idea of a global party, but in these discussions, I do not want to speak about these doubts, rather, I would like to say that if anyone wishes to intervene, in a sustained way, and engage with a distinctly modern situation, then I am afraid this form called the party is something that one cannot do without. The primary communities have been mobilised, they have been able to act on a scale that is staggeringly large, and they have acted for periods that are not too short. However, all that has happened is a deepening of a certain kind of sensitivity and sensibilities, and a certain kind of expectations and sentiments. The ability to translate that into everyday facts of life in a modern setting is something that, without this mediating form called the party, does not seem to take place. We must be paid closed attention to this.

Without falling into the trap of flagging for my own country, in India there is a case of the anti-colonial movements. They have been successful when the core organisational presence has been democratic. This was perhaps the only ethical struggle of the 18th and 19th centuries where the insertions and aspirations of the struggle, from day one, were democratic and searching for forms of representation. The political party is essentially a representative artefact. It allows for participatory elements, but is quintessentially in its definitive sense a representative artefact. What has happened in India over the past 30-40 years is that this form called the party has greatly and, more or less, continuously eroded. Democratic sentiment and aspirations have deepened and gathered momentum, but this form called the party has become weaker and weaker. Some of the markers of this weakness were mentioned earlier today. One was identity; parties have become merely representatives of identities which does not help, even in theory, universal coherence. Worst still, I think, is the dynastic principle. Between the two, the party form has lost its grand possibility. The loss of this possibility is something of great concern, this is true not only in India.

The great irony is that some of the most effective party forms in Asia today are party forms that stand at a great and determining distance from the ideal practice of democracy. One of the grandest party forms in the world is China, but this party form stands at a determined distance from the

practices of democracy. It is not about if it wishes, or thinks it ought to be at a distance, globally or locally, it does not matter. The presence or absence of the possibility of this form is crucial.

I will close by submitting a proposal, we have talked about global governance, and we have all heard and read about the devastation of hurricane Katrina in the USA; I propose that people who are in search of, or engage in the moral discourse of global governance and politics of global governance send a small fact finding team to New Orleans with a small, symbolic team of volunteers. Go and be present in the most powerful state, and see not only the failure of the state, but also the mayor's failure to react, and observe the break down of social coherence on a very large scale.

Katarina Sehm Patomäki

Your contributions have been recorded and will be documented. NIGD will circulate the notes of this meeting to all participants. We look forward to developing this project and these ideas. We hope to see you at future NIGD dialogues, and we look forward to receiving additional written comments and contributions from you.

Marko Ulvila

I thank all the participants for valuable contributions. The NIGD project continues, and contributions in writing are welcome.

Discussants:

Anil Bhattarai, Nepal South Asia Centre, Nepal
Tord Björk, Popular Movements Study Group, Sweden
Ruth Genner, Green Party, Switzerland
Harsh Mander, Aman Biradri, India
Vijay Pratap[6], Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam/NIGD, India
Katarina Sehm-Patomäki, NIGD, Finland
Sunilam, Samajwadi Party, India
Suresh Sharma, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India
Swanaam, Janmoracha, Nepal
Teivo Teivainen, NIGD/San Marcos University, Finland & Peru
Marko Ulvila, NIGD, Finland
Thomas Wallgren[7], NIGD/University of Helsinki, Finland

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[6] Vijay Pratap's updated and expanded contribution "Remarks for the discussion on global political parties" is published in Sehm-Patomäki, Katarina and Marko Ulvila (eds) (2006): *Democratic Politics Globally – Elements for a Dialogue on Global Political Party Formations*, NIGD Working Paper 1/2006.

[7] Thomas Wallgren's updated and expanded contribution "Party systems, democracy and globalisation" is published in Sehm-Patomäki, Katarina and Marko Ulvila (eds) (2006): *Democratic Politics Globally – Elements for a Dialogue on Global Political Party Formations*, NIGD Working Paper 1/2006.

Dialogue Report II

DEMOCRATIC POLITICS GLOBALLY

5-6 November 2005, New Delhi, India

Vagish K. Jha

With the help from colleagues at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, Centre for Public Affairs, and Committee for Cultural Choices and Global Futures, NIGD organised a two-day dialogue entitled 'Democratic Politics Globally' on 5-6 November 2005 in New Delhi. The New Delhi dialogue was attended by some 50 Participants.

The programme of the dialogue:

Day one (5 November 2005)

C. Douglas Lummis – Right of Trans-Border Participatory Democracy & the 'Bleeding Heart Imperialists'

Sudha Pai – Democratic urges of the Dalits and Party Building

Madhav Nepal – Challenge of Party Building for Comprehensive Democracy in Nepal

Surendra Mohan – Experience of Building the socialist party in India

Devdutt – Some stray thoughts on Party Building in India and globalisation

Day two (6 November 2005)

Marko Ulvila – The party system in Europe – a Historical Outline

Aditya Nigam – Reflections on a Journey from Vanguardist Socialism to People's Participation in the Democratization Struggles

Abhay Dubey – Response of Marxist-Leninist Practice to Caste, Gender & Culture

Sanjay Kumar – Social Demography of Indian Political Parties

Arun Kumar – Black Money and Political Parties: An Indian Experience

Rajendra Singh – Can there be a Global Party on 'Water'

Devinder Sharma – Global trends in Food and Agriculture

Ritu Priya – Global Trends in Health

Day one: 5 November 2005

Marko Ulvila broached the basic idea of the dialogue and flagged specific topics to be taken up during deliberations. He said that the NIGD project wanted to engage people from academia, political parties and social movements in a dialogue about the party system in the context of globalisation. He informed everyone about the preceding meeting that took place in Helsinki on 7 September, and the meetings planned for January 2006. He clarified that North-South dialogue on democracy was the specific feature in all these meetings.

Douglas Lummis

Douglas Lummis began by talking about the "People's plan for the 21st Century" movement initiated by Ichiyo Muto. He said that the Minamata conference in 1989 called for the right to "internationalise the concept of democracy". It was here that the concept of "trans-border participatory democracy" was mooted based on the idea that if oppression had its origin across the border, then why should resistance not be allowed to cross the border? He narrated the story about people from a certain place in the Pacific going to Japan to protest against the dumping of nuclear waste, Japan had to stop the dumping, thus, the trans-border protest was successful. However, he agreed that this idea of "resistance crossing the border" could be elitist, since only a few can actually cross the border. In fact, the idea of democracy far removed from a locale close to the community was untenable; democracy must happen in the community and a specific locale, he emphasised. He went on to discuss the ideas of both Edmund Burke and Locke on conservative and liberal approaches to the Universal Human Rights. Burke denies the possibility of any 'universal' Human Right as being too abstract and fragile; a foreign citizen can be treated 'fairly' but not necessarily democratically.

Lummis went on to discuss a new trend which sought to justify imperialism, just as John Stuart Mill had previously done immediately after the British crushed the uprising of 1857 in India. Mill said that by colonising India, England was actually making it a more just society. In this context, Lummis pointed out that US policy had now shifted from "containment" to "pre-emptive strike". Now, the US had arrogated to itself the power to invade, replace the unfavourable governments, and arrest and put on trial a person from a foreign location undermining the nation-state. A number of intellectuals today find nothing wrong in this approach. Earlier, the right to vote was denied to servants. The proposition that 'each person has a life to live' is a profound and active proposition. It facilitated the acceptance of the right to vote as a universal right. Marx in his 1848 Manuscripts said that even the musical sense was the product of centuries of labour. Similarly, it takes years to develop the democratic sense, he opined.

In conclusion, Lummis spoke about his scepticism on the concept of 'international democratic structures' which he views as too far removed a reality, and desires that democracy return to the community. He, however, felt that on the international scale, attempts like Internet-communities are an attempt to weave a democratic sense at the international scale.

Suresh Sharma agreed that the idea of "representation without belonging" was untenable, and "belonging" can not be separated from locale.

Devdutt criticised Lummis for using occidental linguistic and theoretical categories to understand and analyse Indian reality. He said, the terms such as "governance" and "individual rights" were unable to capture the processes of struggles and resistance in their various forms in a country like India. Instead of civil society, samaj would be a category that could provide us better insight into these issues, contended Devdutt.

In his clarification, Lummis said that colonisation was the first stage of globalisation. He criticised the US for fostering a two-tier system of international law where one applies to US and its allies, and the other to the rest of the world. In this two-tier system, the US and its allies retain the right to make a pre-emptive strike, arrest a citizen of another country, or change governments. The other group of nations does not enjoy any such rights. He clarified that it was still a partial project since it was being used against weaker states while stronger ones, like China, are being spared. He concluded that this process signifies the re-emergence of the philosophy of empire.

Madhav Nepal

Madhav Nepal opened by saying that Nepal remains in an early stage of democratisation. He said that the political parties in Nepal took root in the 1940s, and today, the radical wing of the Communist Party, also known as Marxist-Leninist policies, CPN-UML, and Nepali Congress are the two major political parties in Nepal. Underlining the history of CPN-UML's work, he informed us that the Communist Party of Nepal led two movements, 'Moonchh Ukhado Andolan' (Uproot the Moustache) and the 'Re nahin jee kaho Andolan' (movement for the dignity to the oppressed) against the feudal forces in Nepal. The issue of land to the tiller was also raised by the CPN-UML. These movements raised the consciousness of people in Nepal. He said that the year 1990 gave only a limited and formal democracy to Nepal. There is a need to build democratic economic, social and political institutions. The feudal system also needs to be given a serious blow. He pointed out that untouchability, unequal opportunity for ethnic minorities, and regional disparity were the main issues facing Nepal. He enumerated three crises facing Nepal as: the crisis of democracy caused by the monarchy, the crisis of right to life created by the Maoists, and insurgency and the question of dignity. New issues like corruption, bad governance, misuse of authority, and centralisation of power are also coming up as major concerns in Nepal.

He informed us that CPN-UML was reviewing its 15 years experience of democracy in Nepal in the light of the role of the monarchy, political parties and the civil society. To attract people to our fold, issues like democratic space and comprehensive democracy are also being raised. He said that his party has demanded equal right for women in property, and the reservation of 1/3rd of the seats in the Parliament for women. He called upon the political parties to become agents of change.

Surendra Mohan underlined the need for a political activist to understand the society or *samaj* in which he/she wishes to work. Marking the rise in the backward castes since the 1950s, Mohan said that the Socialist Party was the first to give expression to the political assertion of the backward castes. He said that the backward castes put up a joint fight in seeking justice, but in the quest for power they were divided; The caste system was strengthened in the process. The backward castes moved away from the concept of "serving the people," to "getting a share in power" which is a unique behaviour in Indian society. He pointed out that values in India are relative, and defined in terms of caste/ class.

Devdutt wanted to know from Madhav Nepal whether CPN-UML has made any attempt to rephrase Marxism in the language of the Nepalese people.

Vagish K. Jha asked Devdutt if there was any possibility of dialogue if only "insiders" were allowed to speak for a community or group? Taken to the logical extreme, said Vagish, this could lead to the complete break down of dialogue since each one's experience is unique to himself. He pointed out that political engagement seeks to identify elements of commonality to wages shared struggles.

Suresh Sharma wanted to know the prospects of comprehensive democracy in Nepal without the intervention of the army.

Sudha Pai wondered how the political parties that were unable to foster democracy within the nation state, could carry it out globally?

Responding to queries, **Madhav Nepal** said that the role of the party was to educate and enlighten people about their rights. People are to be mobilised to fight against inequality and discrimination. He lamented that political parties were no longer interested in social change, only in garnering votes. He agreed that there were issues common to India and Nepal, but there was no common initiative among political parties or civil society organisations in the two countries. He analysed the three centres of political force in Nepal, namely the monarchy, the Maoists and the political parties. While the monarchy crushed democracy, Maoist violence killed thousands of people. He informed us that they were in talks with Maoists to get them to stop their terrorist activities and atrocities on people, and engage in peaceful political activities. The coalition of seven political parties, Madhav Nepal hoped, would be able to create an atmosphere for defeating the monarchy, and work as a catalyst for social change.

Sudha Pai

Sudha Pai initiated her presentation, "Dalit Upsurge and Party Building," by stating that the world witnessed two processes of globalisation and

resurgence, of different types of identities at the same time. To understand and examine democracy in contemporary India, the Dalit upsurge provides a useful window, she added. Following its independence, there was a long term process of democratisation in India. At the turn of independence, Indian democracy was elitist in nature. It was only towards the 1980s and 1990s that we witnessed a mass upsurge in the Dalit community as democracy dug its roots deeper down and a party like the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) was founded in 1984. It was a result of affirmative action, carried out by the state, that created a strong middle class among Dalits who were not prepared to tolerate exploitation silently any more.

This resurgence could not be said to have given rise to what would be called an all-India Dalit identity, there were marked regional differences in the nature of Dalit assertion. To appreciate this regional variation, Sudha Pai said, it would be worthwhile to look at the colonial period which was marked by three broad patterns of Dalit mobilization: (1) Dravidian Movement (2) Ambedkarite mobilisation (3) North Indian mobilisation of the Gandhian type.

The Dravidian mobilisation, which started around 1930s and was radicalised by leaders like Ramaswamy Naikar and Periyar, had a long history in the anti-Brahmin movement. Due to very high level of caste atrocities, the mobilisation of non-Brahmin caste was a major factor here; however, Dalits were up in arms and looking sceptically at the Dravidian movement because they felt that they got nothing, and only backward castes gained. This is especially true in Tamilnadu, which is a well-to-do state with a number of educated Dalits who are attempting to create a more specific Dalit identity; a number of small parties have emerged as a result.

The Ambedkarite movement took a different course in Western India; the British had invested a great deal in infrastructure resulting in Dalits, especially the Mhars, moving out of their villages to get wider exposure. This created a fertile condition for their identity assertion to thrive and impact the caste system. Thus, we see a rich tradition of Dalit literature and formations, such as Dalit Panthers, growing in this region, and maintained Sudha.

Contrasting the above two, North India saw no identity movement among Dalits. It saw a delayed movement of Dalit consciousness. This can be understood by the fact that in the colonial period, North India did not see much change, village structures remained almost the same. Thus, the Dalit mobilisation took a Gandhian form which was based more on welfare rather than the political, and most of the Dalits remained trapped in the Hindu identity. Having dwelt upon the three broad trends and their distinctive features, Sudha Pai moved onto exploring why a party like the BSP emerged after-all?

Uttar Pradesh (UP), one of the most backward states of India, has had strong caste resilience. The emergence of BSP took place after a long term process of "Ambedkarisation" and grass-roots activity. The 1980s saw important transformation in the socio-economic realm, movement from agriculture to industrialisation. The second round of the Green Revolution, together with other changes, brought about a major structural shift that improved the condition of Dalits, and created a favourable situation for Dalit assertion. Thus we see a struggle for minimum wages, improved literacy, and so on creating a critical mass ready to form a political party.

What is important to point out is the fact that the BSP did not emerge through a mass-struggle; it had its roots in the BAMSAFE, a Dalit employees union. Unlike Dalit Panthers, the educated Dalits moved to electoral politics rather than to grass-roots mobilisation. The BSP began as a radical social movement by creating a broad based identity among Dalits who were against the Brahmins. In the course of its existence, BSP has seen a number of phases. It attempted an alliance with Samajwadi Party (SP) to realise its "Bahujan" dream; it was short lived due to inherent contradictions at the grass-roots level between the Dalits and the other rising backward castes. It was in 1990 that the BSP finally decided to become a political party rather than a movement in order to achieve political power to benefit Dalits.

A party based on narrow ideological planks faces the dilemma of whether to support some other party, or form its own party. A second dilemma was how to mobilize; on narrow sectarian ground, or like the Ambedkarites vision. The third dilemma comes when you reach a plateau, the issue then crops up as to whether you align only with like-minded parties, or with anyone just to gain power.

Kanshi Ram had thought of two phases, first to capture power, and then to move onto the economic agenda. But once it came to power it was caught up in symbolisms rather than implementing any substantial action. Now BSP is shifting its stand and trying to broaden its base in order to bring upper caste into its fold, with the view of replacing congress and becoming a broad-based party with Dalit core.

In conclusion, Sudha Pai said, the deepening of democracy undertaken by the BSP has not succeeded in benefiting all Dalits in a comprehensive manner, but has definitely achieved their political empowerment by inculcating a sense of democratic participation.

In the ensuing discussion Ajay Mehra raised three issues. He pointed out the need to underline the Dalit-OBC (other backward classes) friction, and its impact on the democratisation process, as well as the Dalit mobilization. He also pointed out the phenomenon of Dalit mobilization by Maoists in states like Bihar, and sought to incorporate it into the analysis. While dealing with democratisation processes, Mehra said, the issue of internal party democracy also needed to be taken into account; it was a matter of concern not only for a party like the BSP, but also the Samajwadi Party and others. Finally, he drew attention to the fact that the examination also must take into account regional variations in the process of democratisation, rather than treating North India as one single unit.

Devdutt pointed out that before the BSP came into being, a number of socio-cultural formations had preceded it like, the BAMSAFE, the Jai Guardeo Party, and the DS-4, and pointed out the underlining internal linkages among them. He said that displacement of Kansi Ram was a historical process and needs attention too.

Vijay Pratap joined in by saying that we tend to become judgmental when we talk about parties like BSP. He said that socialist movement started with an aim to annihilate caste, and the Mandal Commission process facilitated community identification and legitimised community orientation in politics. But caste hegemony practised by the Congress party was missing from the analysis, he added. That way, the positive contribution of BSP in creating politics of community oriented mobilisation and democratic empowerment can not be underestimated, he pleaded.

Responding to comments and questions, Sudha Pai agreed that before BSP came into being a lot of social formation did take place and said that BSP, in that sense, was not a grass-roots organisation. It only mobilised existing socio-cultural organisations in articulating Dalit aspirations. She pointed out that in almost every city of UP today, there were a number of Dalit organisations, though many of them were critical of BSP in terms of its goal of empowering Dalits in any real sense. When it comes to voting they go for BSP, which is a positive outcome in the long term for the process of democratisation. Mayawati may be dictatorial in her approach, but her

interaction with the cadres of lower rungs is amazing and rather positive from the point of view of democratic values. The OBC-Dalit relationship was certainly complex, as they were vying for similar opportunities/jobs and social recognition, said Sudha Pai.

Devdutt

Devdutt began with the strong and categorical opinion that the liberal democratic point of view of the West, if we looked at the evolution of India politics, does not qualified any of them to be called a political party per se. He illustrated this point by citing example of the formation of some mainstream parties like the Congress and the BJP.

Congress, he said, was nothing but an instrument, the door and window of the imperial government at least until 1920, and at best it could be called a system rather than a party. Similarly, what is known as the BJP today had originally come out of the Bhartiya Jan Sangh, a political outfit sponsored by RSS to foist its ideology of cultural nationalism. In 1977, they merged in the Janata Party, and then resurfaced in 1978 with a new name. This essentially remains an outfit of the RSS, and fails to quality as a party in its classical Western sense.

The second point that he raised was about the concept of vote in India; it is drastically different from the liberal democratic perception of it as a political tool of the citizen. A vote in India, he emphasized, was like a personal possession. He/she does not behave as a citizen as such, he/she is a human being who is in possession of a vote, and at election time he/she gives it to someone he/she likes primarily due to non-political considerations. Vote is like charity here, and thus is not consistent with the idea of liberal democracy.

Even Western liberal democracy is under tremendous strain in the face of international violence and terrorism. It is baffled to deal with the phenomenon of multi-culturalism. The basic difference between the Western and the Indian political system has been that the West made its tryst with democracy in isolation, in relative peace, whereas in India we were doing so at a cross roads, and publically, pointed out Devdutt.

This act of "making love" with freedom and democracy at the cross roads has had all kinds of "seduction" offered by international agencies, whether it was the World Bank or the IMF, the CIA, or the KGB and so on. They were not giving people here the kind of time and space required to decide their way of democracy, or evolve democratic institution based on their unique historical experiences, said Devdutt. Thus, the proposition that democracy was marching in India was utterly wrong and far from truth - Devdutt was forthright in his views.

The Western notion of democracy, according to Devdutt, had been of a homogeneous society, and basically majoritarian in nature. The problems and limitations of such democracies are more than obvious of late when the USA, not able to use its own assembly, took the UN route instead to feign an alibi to justify its war on Iraq. He asked what kind of democracy this was.

Another fundamental assertion made by Devdutt was his criticism of a natural continuum proposed, or supposedly existing between local and global. He was categorical in asserting that the change of scale does not necessarily result in a qualitative change. Thus, micro-institution underwent qualitative change at the macro level. Thus, the idea of global democracy is nothing but notional generalisation hardly holding much water as a theoretical construct. He concluded by saying that the growth in consciousness of freedom, and quest for democracy needed to be redefined.

Commenting on Tord Björk's paper (reproduced in this Working Paper, pages 79-90), he said that it was completely wrong to call the South African struggle of Gandhi a struggle of Hindus & Muslims. The South African struggle actually was a struggle of indentured labour. Gandhi creatively used scarcity, so to say, by making *satyagraha* a tool in the hands of helpless classes there.

Representational and electoral devices have not been the only tools the people in India have used for asserting democratic rights. The Bhakti movement's, of the early medieval period, religious flavour and social core was an example of a powerful movement without institutionalizing, and this needs greater attention and study, he said. Today, the basic problem in India is to discover how institutions of civil society can continue to work on their own steam without getting institutionalised.

Biographies of "socialist" leaders from different parties is a study in paradox; they turn into affluent people and start protecting the interest of powerful lobbies, even if they gain political power by advocating for the poor and disadvantaged. He concluded by saying that political parties can not be agents of social change.

Finally, he questioned the Western perception of history moving in a linear direction; it loses sight of the "cyclical" inner movements without which a proper and complete understanding cannot be evolved.

This forceful presentation raised a number of seminal and pertinent points, and was followed by a question answer session. Reacting to Surendra Mohan's query if there was any political party in India or not, Devdutt responded that the Socialist Party of India was the only political party that evolved through a genuine process of mass-mobilisation by educating people and building a movement. Surendra Mohan said that the Socialist Parties knew that they had to operate in a patriarchal/hierarchical structure. The meeting ended with a lively discussion on Gandhi, and possible ways in which the process of democratisation could be strengthened. Vijay Pratap, Vagish Jha, Ajay Mehra and Douglas Lummis shared their views on the issue. Responding to the query, if political parties were not the real change agents, Devdutt said that it was the social movement and not political parties that empower people. Parties are the by-products of movement and not vice-versa, and social change would come about by building a movement.

Day Two: 6 November 2005

Marko Ulvila

Marko Ulvila began by saying that he was presenting a kind of political worker's understanding of the party-system in Europe. Tracing the history of social movement in Europe, he underlined four phases. In the first phase, the Catholic Church controlled the society. In the 16th century it was aristocracy which asserted itself against the Pope. The second phase was marked by the French revolution in which the bourgeoisie rose against the aristocracy. The third phase started in the middle of the 19th century when the labour movement was established and gained strength. By the 1950s

many West European governments were lead by social democratic parties. In the last phase, the new social movements of the 1960s and 1970s brought the issues of women, environment, peace, and international solidarity into the political debate, and the Green parties were formed.

The party system in Europe was not uniform and had a number of forms, he said. The UK and Western Europe developed the liberal democratic multi-party system. In Russia and in Eastern Europe, the Communist one party rule grew. In Western Europe there has also been spells of dictatorial rule (Nazi Germany, for example).

In Western Europe, trans-national decision making has increased over the decades under the rubric of European integration. The European Parliament is the first trans-national parliament in the world. Now the members of the EU hold EP election simultaneously, and one can see a degree of co-operation among the parties, especially the Greens and Socialists. The European Commission has recently agreed to fund the parties under the condition that they are pan-European. However, Ulvila lamented that people do not take active interest in the EU parliamentary elections, and the voter turn-out is much lower than in national elections. He was also sceptical of the fact that these European parties were not born from "people's movements", rather it was out of the compulsion of getting funding from the European Commission. Ulvila felt that the EU, in order to promote the economic integration of Europe, was in fact pushing the interests of big corporate lobbyists. On important economic issues, the corporate sector comes up with papers, which become the commission's Green paper, and which are finally transformed into laws, Ulvila said.

A number of participants raised questions on Ulvila's presentation. Arun Kumar wanted to know if there existed any alternative agenda for the European Commission. Vijay Pratap wanted to know the composition of the European Commission, and the reasons for low voter turnout in elections. He also wanted to know the agency to which the Commission was accountable. Devdutt asked if there was an emergence of a new 'social contract' in Europe, and what was the status of Eastern European countries within the European Union.

Responding to queries, Ulvila said that there was no pan-European civil society, except for some regional traces like the Mediterranean area, or in the Nordic Countries. As far as the unification of Europe is concerned, the elite have been in favour of it, and the social democrats have also supported it; however, the common people and the left are against the corporate led integration. He said that in Finland, the people are against the idea of unification, but there was no major party to articulate it on their behalf. He felt that the European Social Forum is emerging as a forum for pan–European participation. In a subtle way, people in Europe are also undergoing a kind of colonization by corporations, he felt. He was of the opinion that the European parties could learn a lot from the multi-ethnic and multi-cultural background of India.

Vijay Pratap pleaded to reverse the order of discussion, and proposed to start from the local in order to reach the global party system discussion. He pointed out that the domestic/local democratic institutions were being discredited as inefficient and corrupt. They were being replaced by NGO groups whose executives drew fat salaries. He pointed out that bodies like WHO now received fewer funds from governments, and more from the corporate sector. He pleaded for the reversal of this trend where the empire, or the global capital, is able to manipulate national institutions. The success of the WSF, said Vijay Pratap, showed that there was a need to have a global vision and agenda where the local created a global vision. There is a need to globalise the resistance.

Aditya Nigam

Aditya Nigam said that he would speak from the political theory perspective and not from that of an activist. He spoke of the twin crises of nation-form and the party-form.

The structure of the nation-form, which is the basis of all political process, was inherently violent; it aimed to promote a homogeneous national culture while crushing the minority culture. Illustrating the crisis of minority culture within the framework of the nation state, he cited the example of the US attack on Iraq; the progressive people hit the road protesting in different parts of the world and at the same time US media beamed images of the Kurdish people welcoming the US Army with open hands. He felt that if the imagination of the nation state remained as it was, expanding the concept to include, say the entirety of Europe, Indian subcontinent, or even the entire globe would mean nothing except bringing

in more complication. He disagreed with Marko Ulvila that the rejection of European unifications by France and the Netherlands was a victory for the people. He quipped, people were "the greatest fiction" of modern politics. The fear of immigrants, and Central Europe becoming part of integrated Europe led people in these countries to reject the referendum on integration.

The crisis of party-form is linked to that of the nation form. Political parties have been conceived within the idea of the nation state. Nigam pointed out that there were two models for the party-form. The first was the vanguard model which is followed by the left/communist parties. This form is almost dead except in South Asia. The resurgence that we see in Latin America is actually not due to the Communist parties which have been inactive in Latin America for more than 30 years. He said that it was not known that the Cuban Communist party was cooperating with the Batista government when Fidel Castro, who was out of the vanguardist party structure, took power. The failure of the vanguardist model is also seen in the failure of Comintern. It should serve as a warning for any attempt at building a global party.

The second model was the entrepreneurial model where parties were like commodities, differing from each other in label and name only. In the UK, Western Europe et cetera, there was very little difference between the political parties except in their names, said Nigam.

Against the backdrop of the failure of the party form, Latin America shows a ray of hope. Latin America being the worst victim of globalization, is experimenting with a party form, which is very close to the one that Congress was using during the early phase of freedom struggle. The Brazilian PT experiment has a lot of promise. Rather than being a party, it is an umbrella within which many shades of ideologies exist. It is more like a network, and has greater chances of being effective.

Devdutt drew attention to the role of political parties as intermediaries pushing for globalisation since the 1980s. He also pointed out that we needed to look closely at cultural-nationalism which denies the existence of minority culture and forced them to accept the dominant culture. There is another interesting phenomenon where the electoral verdict is being challenged directly by the assertion of people. It could be interpreted as people walking out of the liberal-democratic system at the micro level. It was also important, he said, to mark the way state was

filtering out the public-opinion. The government hardly ever discussed any of the provisions of the WTO in Parliament even through it was opposed by the people.

Douglas Lummis asked Nigam for his views about the Zapatistas. He expressed his suspicion about both the need and possibility of having a global party. Arun Kumar pointed out that, in a certain sense, there was popular sentiment which feared the loss of sovereignty of the nation state.

Suresh Sharma drew attention to the historical "large unities", like the Roman and Chinese Empires, and, to an extent, the idea of Chakravarty. The difference between the Roman and Chinese Empires was that while the Roman Empire aimed at global conquest, the Chinese restricted their ambitions to culturally similar areas. In another sense, the Church, or the Umma, inhibited the territorial ambit from forging an identity of people across the globe. He exhorted to explore this phenomenon a bit more deeply.

Responding to the issues raised by the participants, Aditya Nigam said that he had to think about the role of the intermediaries in politics. He agreed that the Zapatista was indeed a novel experiment, but he did not focus on it since the Zapatistas have openly said that they did not aim to capture state power; since revolutions aimed to achieve state power, they should end with the achievement of the state power. Political parties, on the other hand, have political power as their avowed objective. On Devdutt's point about "minority culture," Nigam pointed out that all nationalist projects were geared towards the assimilation of minority culture. Like the Umma and the Church, nationalism was also a proselytising project. He also regretted that none of the major public debates found reflection in the parliamentary debates.

Abhay Dubey

Abhay Dubey started with the clarification that what he was going to share today drew mainly from his personal experience and thus had a limited scope. Adopting an anecdotal style he narrated the time he joined the radical wing of the Communist Party, also known as Marxist-Leninist (CPI-ML) politics, in the early 1980s. This was the most glorious phase of ML

politics, and revolution was anticipated around the corner, a dream to be realized much sooner than later. But all those rosy pictures of a great future were literally shattered by three factors: *Mandal* (the legislature making backward caste reservation a reality), *kamandal* (a metaphor taken from the Saints "water-pot," which they carry with them, taken to denote the resurgence of fundamentalist Hindu religious politics) and *bhumandal* (globalization).

The backward caste reservation policy, adopted by the then government, took a major chunk of backward castes from the Marxist-Leninist (ML) fold. The subsequent Hindu fundamentalist revival cut off the middle classes from the ML ambit. It was these middle class people who formed the backbone of ML politics, and provided full time activists; this came to a halt with the fundamentalist revivalism. Globalisation sealed its fate, as it was, working class politics was in a blind alley. With this background, he said, he was going to examine the caste, culture, and gender understanding of the Marxist-Leninist politics to ascertain how much they could feel the pulse of the people and the nation.

Because of his literary background, the party asked Abhay Dubey to go on an extensive tour of the country. In this process that lasted for about five months, he met close to 165 organisations, which could be called champions of radical democracy, active at local level. In this extensive tour from the extreme south to the north of India, there were two questions that he faced everywhere. Firstly, people wanted to know the Marxist position on the issue of the caste reservation, and secondly, they wanted to know their view on the Punjab Akali movement, which was going on at that time. These two questions were of prime importance for the people cutting across the region at that time. What took him by surprise, however, was the fact that the political leadership of the Marxist-Leninist parties were terribly ill equipped, in terms of even basic understanding, about these burning national issues. While he was aghast at their other ignorance about issues of national importance, he added that this could not be attributed to those who provided leadership to the movement and were in the forefront. They were bright people who had sacrificed their lucrative careers for radical politics, and there dedication and selfless pursuit was impeccable.

However, even the top leadership had no clue whatsoever about those issues, he added. This was for the first time, he said, when he realized that party and its leadership did not know many things, including some such issue which he himself was aware of. Thus the party was completely off the mark in terms of reading people's mind, or appreciating the concerns and angst of the masses. This continues to be so, he added by narrating an incidence after he left this party and took up journalism. An old friend still active in Marxist-Leninist politics in Uttaranchal shared with him their great efforts in organising landless Dalits. Being asked by Abhay Dubey as to why such an effort was not taken up earlier, the activist friend retorted, that the Dalits had not attained landlessness until that time. Thus they had to become landless to possess full radical potential and be organized by the Marxist Parties; they were neatly weaned by those who were engaged in caste politics of Dalits like Mayawati. They may still be siding with the leftist parties for a short while on issues like minimum wages, but when it came to the vote they were clear about supporting the bourgeoisie party that based its politics on Dalit mobilization.

Before the radical Marxist-Leninist variety of communists took up the centre stage, Dubey said, the landless people were not considered to be peasants by the mainstream communist parties. Credit went to the Marxist-Leninist politics for mobilising landless people. The tragedy, however, was that by the time small or marginal farmers were reduced to landless people, their hatred for communist politics was concrete, and they were not going to become a lasting ally of the radical parties.

The party was oblivious of caste-class confusion, and a similar situation existed for the issue of culture. Citing an example of a condolence meeting with, the great writer, Nirmal Verma the other day, he found not a single Marxist intellectual representative. Dubey said that there had been an inexplicable hostility among the Marxist-Leninist Parties regarding the classical culture. The Marxists were so preoccupied with the classical position on culture, expanded by the great predecessors in Russia and China, that they explained away the Indian situation almost mechanically without bothering to attempt an honest appraisal of culture. Thus, while they stood half-heartedly for the folk culture, they almost demonised the classical tradition as something that took away the radical potential of the society. Thus they did not bother to develop any original, or honest understanding of Indian culture at all, said Dubey.

Coming to the issue of gender, Dubey explained that he looked at this issue in a more comprehensive manner than just an issue of women's liberation. It was an issue concerning the man-women relationship, man-

man, and women-women relationship. In fact gender, for him, was an issue that concerned the complex world of relationships, in society and the world, and was intricately linked with the issue of social change. But the Marxist parties had been so obsessed with their political goal that they did not bother about social change. In fact their preoccupation with political change was so blinkered that they could not read the nuances of political process either, he said.

Substantiating this point, Abhay Dubey pointed out that the communication revolution under globalisation, where electronic media and others means of communication have mushroomed, had impacted social behaviour and relationships in a major way, and social relationships have gone into a flux. Thus, the issues of alternative sexuality and divorce, that used to be taboo, had come to the centre. The Marxist parties have been completely out of this debate, and were non-players even as these issues sweep across society in a tangible manner. Thus Marxist parties, which were popularly known as change-seekers, were not concerned when the entire society became a crucible of change; perhaps because the change was not happening as per their liking, or wish, he quipped.

To conclude, Dubey said the Marxist-Leninist movement failed completely to appreciate crucial issues of caste, culture, and gender and thus lost its universal relevance. This also resulted in their lack of taking any clear stand, whether it was the caste-issue or the religious fundamentalism. They remained trapped in a time-warp. Thus, when you lose insight into society, you lose foresight on the course for the future, and this describes the tragedy of Marxist parties in India, said Dubey.

Joining in the discussion, Arun Kumar narrated the story of his father who was ostracised by fellow communists when he became strongly critical of Stalin following his return from a visit to the USSR in the early 1960s. He wondered as to why a number people in the Communist world turn strongly against the party once they left it. Douglas Lummis queried if the failings, to which Dubey referred, are attributable to individuals, or the ideology of communism itself. He also referred to Marx's writing on India which stated that the local culture is to go under the historical process of transformation. Dalit activist, Mahendra Pratap Rana, complimented Abhay Dubey for the candid and honest admission that the Communist parties failed to grasp the reality of caste in the Indian society; he attributed the emergence of parties like the BSP to the failure of the Communist parties to understand the caste

dynamics in India. He accused that some of the leaders of the Communist parties subscribed to the ideology of caste-discrimination even while publicly they maintained a progressive façade. He said that no purpose could be solved by denying the existence of the issue of caste-discrimination as the then minister, Omar Abdullah, did in the UN General Assembly. He pointed out that Ambedkar was acutely aware and concerned about the issues of women for whom he organised a huge meeting in Nagpur. In fact, he resigned from the Union Cabinet on the issue of securing equal right to Indian women.

Abhay Dubey said that he was drawn to the Marxist-Leninist fold by the stories of revolution. He did not agree that disillusioned Comrades turned anti-communist; rather they remained sympathetic to the Communist values although they may go into hibernation and try to think in alternative ways. He said that it was not the leader, who certainly had impeccable integrity, intelligence and sacrifice to their credit, but the ideology which was to blame for this failure to understand the Indian reality. As for the recent debate about West Bengal's Chief Minister inviting foreign capital into the state, he quipped that the ML-stream never considered the CPM as a Communist Party but rather as "social democrats".

Sanjay Kumar

Sanjay Kumar's presentation was based on the findings from surveys of voters conducted by the CSDS after the 1996, 1998, 1999 and 2004 parliamentary elections. The surveys had a sample size of 10 000 for the first three elections and 27 000 for the 2004 elections. The last survey in 2004 was conducted at 432 sites covering 108 parliamentary constituencies. Care was taken to make the sample representative of gender, caste, education, and economic status ratios the same as ratios obtained in reality.

The paper brought out a number of facts with regard to the social base of the Congress and the BJP. The support base of the Congress had been very high among lower-classes in all the elections, but it was behind the BJP when it came to the middle-classes. In 2004, Congress had improved its support in the upper-class, though the BJP continued to lead. The BJP was the clear winner among the upper classes in 1996, 1998, 1999

and 2004. The urban voter had a preference for the BJP, although both the BJP and the Congress had started with a similar support base in 1996. The rural had consistently been with the Congress. In terms of the age groups, the BJP enjoyed the support of the young and registered an increase in this section between 1999 and 2004. Among the middle-aged voters, between the ages of 35-45, support for the BJP had been dwindling while Congress had gained. Among the older voters, Congress was clearly more popular.

Voter analysis on the basis of education revealed that among the illiterates, Congress enjoyed the biggest support. Support for Congress was higher than for BJP among the middle-educated people, but the BJP was closing the gap. Among the highly educated voters BJP was consistently more popular than Congress. Male voters had a preference for the BJP while Congress continued to be popular among female voters. Caste-analysis of the voter showed that the BJP enjoyed a high level of support in all the elections, while among the backward castes, both enjoyed a nearly equal level of support. Congress had a clear edge among the Dalits and Adivasis.

Sanjay Kumar explained that these were just the initial findings. Care had been taken to adjust the figures for statistical error and biases. The figures show the national trend, but there were state-wide regional variations in it. He said that due to time constraint, religion based analysis could not be done.

Arun Kumar

Arun Kumar spoke on the issue of black-economy and the political parties. Tracing the extent of black money in India, Kumar said that Nicholas Kaldor had calculated it to be 3-4 per cent of the GDP in 1956. The Wanchoo Committee estimated the figure to be close to 7 per cent of GDP in 1970. In 1985, the NIPFP calculated the figure for 1980-81 to be between 18-20 per cent. S.B. Gupta's figure for the black-economy in 1987 was 57 per cent of the GDP which was found to be an over-estimation. Kumar's recalculation for this period put the black economy at 40 per cent of the GDP which translated into a figure or Rs. 13 lac crore a year. In terms of the loss of tax revenue, it worked out to be around 4.5 lac crores per year. He pointed out that out of this 40per cent, 8 per cent was generated through illegal activities like arms and drug peddling, and the rest had its origin in 'legal activities' such as real estate, construction etc. It was also noteworthy that much of the black-economy was concentrated in the tertiary sector which had been growing very fast, said Arun Kumar.

Talking about the consequences of the black economy, he said that it led to the failure of fiscal policies, as well as, planning and employment policies. At the micro-level, it meant that programmes relating to literacy, health, drinking water etc., suffered from a lack of resources. It also led to criminalisation and created huge income disparities. In fact, 40 per cent of the black economy was concentrated in the hands of 3 per cent of the people creating income disparity at a level of 1: 60. In fact, a large proportion of black money was kept away in foreign banks. He estimated that close to USD 150 billion was lost to foreign banks while another USD 150 billion was lost due to gold smuggling. If not for the black-economy, the growth rate of India would have been 5 per cent higher than what it was now. Each individual would have been 7 times richer in terms of per capita income.

This phenomenon of black-economy meant that the elites did not care about India because they had large sums of money stashed away in foreign banks and they had a wide network of contacts abroad. Collective action had also been de-legitimised in the face of retreat by the state from national life; also blamed on the black economy.

Speaking about the nexus of black economy with the political class, Arun Kumar said that the relationship between political-class, business men and the executive was formed at the time of the elections. Citing his own research, he said that against the legally sanctioned limit of Rs. 1,2 million for the parliamentary elections, on average the parties spent 10 times more. The sources of the funds for the parties were, big leaders, businessmen, friends and relatives et cetera. A head common for all the political parties and candidates was the expenditure to "keep the local journalists happy". Arun Kumar pointed out that the criminals were now an integral part of the political process. One can understand the consequences for the county since there was a quid pro quo between the various players of this political game.

Speaking about the possibility and necessity of global parties, he felt that global parties would themselves become an instrument of globalisation. Dominance of the global elite would grow and people would be marginalised even further. Even today, the agenda of the Indian NGOs was

guided by the global NGOs, and the emergence of the global parties would further aggravate the problem. He regretted that the democratic consciousness of people had suffered while the "market" had penetrated deeper into people's consciousness. However, since the idea of a global party had already been mooted, it would be wise if we came up with our own idea of a global party, which should be democratic in structure and aimed to create democratic consciousness globally, said Arun Kumar.

Joining the discussion, Sanjay Kumar said that the local issues like roads, unemployment et cetera, were taken care of by the national parties and the global party would not affect it. He said that a survey carried out by the CSDS had shown that voters in India were more concerned about the efficiency of the candidate rather than his honesty. People would rather vote for a corrupt but efficient leader, than for an honest but ineffective and inefficient leader. He wanted to know if overspending in the elections was similar across the political parties. Was there any correlation between spending in elections and the chances of winning?

Devdutt felt that the lack of moral repugnance against corruption was aiding in its spread. Lummis agreed that even in the US the voters preferred efficiency, even if the candidate was corrupt. Atal Behari Sharma queried that ultimately black economy created jobs and employment.

Responding to questions, Arun Kumar said that simple economic analysis would show that the additions to employment and growth due to black economy were much less than the reduction caused by it. India had been losing close to USD25 billion every year on account of black-economy. The figure was small compared to the world figures, yet quite significant for India. He pointed out that the process of money laundering was elaborate; the companies worked through shell-companies which were set up and wound up frequently to avoid being detected. It was this reason that Bofors corruption scandal could not be solved. Arun Kumar concluded that since corruption was present on both sides of the political class, it had ceased to matter for the electorate.

Arun Kumar

The well known water activist Rajendra Singh stated he knew one global party, the World Water Forum, which was run by a Mafia, he said. Founded in 1991 in Morocco it had its second meeting in 1996 in the Hague, and the next one in 2003 in Kyoto. Whether it could be called a global party or not is uncertain; it did engage in global governance or dictated decision on others, said Rajendra Singh. When he was present in one of its meetings he emphatically made it clear that water did not belong to the governments but it belonged to the people, to nature. Unfortunately the Indian government has also acceded to its demand and croaked in tandem in declaring water a commodity, and invited international players to come, invest and take away water. Thus, it was not World Water Forum but World Water Mafia, he said.

It was small efforts and endeavours that helped in changing the society and the world in the right direction. Gigantic efforts actually destroyed what was actually good, and struck at the very roots of collective wisdom. The pro-people process of change could only be ensured by preserving good practices evolved by the people, over time by moving ahead with humble initiatives, he added. It was sad that altogether 140 countries have signed, declaring water as an asset or commodity which could be traded in the market. However, traditional Indian society viewed each drop of water as sacred as that of the Ganges. It knew how to survive with water and how to preserve it. It is a life giving force rather than a commodity to a common Indian.

Thus, Rajendra Singh said, he was against any global political party where a villager would have no idea or participation whatsoever. A global party was not going to do any good for a humble villager.

But if people from all over the world came together to discuss the philosophy of water, an element that the human body is made up of, and traditionally known as *panchbhoota* (the five primordial elements that the world-living and non-living, is made up of), then he was willing to consider the utility of a global party, said Singh. He was apprehensive that even such a global attempt would not match the World Water Mafia which comprised of the most influential corporate and political powers that be. How could a poor villager who does not live and lead his life with any strategy stand up to those who are armed with frightening strategic papers and approaches, he asked.

However, an attempt to connect all the grass-roots movements around the world was worth it. He knew about 35 movements in US alone which were fighting against the privatisation of water, and all such groups,

all over the world could join hands. The diversity of living beings could not be destroyed without a direct and devastating impact on human society and life, Singh was categorical. Water was not a human-right, it was a natural right, or possibly, Natural Human Right, he said. Many representatives and officials, of even those countries who had signed on dotted line for privatisation of water, confided to Singh, in private, that community driven resource management at local levels had really been effective and useful for people. But the imposed notion of development was out to destroy them all. Citing the example of a government department that worked out plans for the sub-soil water extraction, also known as, "water resource development department", Singh drew the analogy that it was exploitation that was given a new name, development. Thus, meanings of words and phrases were changing and new meanings were being fabricated and we need to be guarded about them, he concluded.

Responding to Rajendra Singh's presentation, Bhuvan Pathak said that the philosophy of water included the philosophy of the entire human existence-it includes market, technology and all other spheres that had their impact on human life. Thus, any talk about water could not be meaningful if it was done in isolation, and it needed to include the overall design of the entire society in which water, of course, was of crucial importance. Secondly, he said that any talk about water had to be global - they needed to clearly understand how a decision in the Hague or New York impacted their springs, ponds et cetera, and they could not ignore happenings at the global level. Thirdly, he pointed out that it was doubtful if any puritan position existed about traditional wisdom and approaches about water, because the world and life was being constantly impacted upon by day to day changes and thus even world-views were shaped or framed by them. Finally, one needed to be careful taking about the *panchbhoota* logic, as it had little connection with the rights based approach. It may put the issue into a wrong perspective, felt Bhuvan Pathak.

Responding to Rajendra Singh's presentation, Atal B. Sharma said that the people should carry out struggles in their own territory and on their own turf, though alliances can be built globally. He said, as an example, WSF was organised in India, but farmers were not represented, and more than 9000 farmers have committed suicide in India. He regretted the tendency that anything rooted in India culture and tradition was denigrated as "Hindutva". He criticised the left for not taking a comprehensive view of the issues, and talked of technological solutions to environmental issues. Devdutt said that there was a consciousness of water in people's mind and wondered if it was possible to create resistance on this basis? Lummis agreed with Rajendra Singh that development is synonymous with "exploitation"!

Rajendra Singh clarified that the question of water was not an isolated issue. It was intimately linked to livelihood, health, empowerment and gram swaraj (village self-rule). It was also linked to the question of power. He said that wherever the "pollution" of education has reached, people think of water in terms of "rights" etc., but otherwise the consciousnesses of water as one of the *panch mahabhootas* (five primordial elements) that existed among people. In villages, there is a much greater receptivity and sensitivity about water than the cities where they are indifferent and wasteful in their water-issue. Even the traditional water-wisdom has eroded substantially in the last 90 years. He informed the participants that there were 80 geo-cultural zones where water –related work was being done by his people –keeping in mind the specificity of the area.

Devinder Sharma

Devinder Sharma spoke about the global dimension of food and agriculture. Even now close to 50 percent of the world population, or three billion people, depend on agriculture for sustenance. He spoke about the global crisis of agriculture. A few big corporations- seed companies and technology companies, controlled agriculture globally. Among these the two IPCs – International Planning Council and the International Planning Committee were important. The International Planning Council had all the CEOs of agricultural giants on its board. It actually set the global agenda on the issues of agriculture which national governments adopted and followed. The International NGO/CSO Planning Committee, on the other hand, was an NGO body which was set up during the World Food Summit in Rome. This was dominated by the western NGOs with money. This organization in a way controlled the dissent in the agricultural sector. So, the West

domination on the mainstream opinion as well as dissent on the issues of agriculture and food was complete.

Pointing to the dangerous levels to which patenting of life-form had proceeded; Devinder Sharma pointed out that more than 25 per cent (25,000) of the human-gene had already been patented. One company had patented more than 85 per cent genes of rice. We could fight this not by emotions, but by becoming more knowledgeable about the issues. This was seen in the WTO negotiation on agriculture where the public opinion and informed debate had forced the government to adopt a particular stand. He felt that our knowledge and skill could help fight these battles in any area.

Talking about the MNCs, Devinder Sharma said that they also couched their concerns in the same words as we did; they talked about equity, justice and the environment, but blamed the developing countries for all the ills. As an illustration, they would like the production of rice to be stopped as one kg of rice consumed 5000 litres of water, but would not mention the fact that one kg of beef required 70,000 litres of water. No western NGO had ever raised a voice against the ecologically destructive life-style people in the western led.

Devinder Sharma elaborated that food and agriculture had gone into the hands of 3 players a) the technology companies such as Monsanto, Cingenta et cetera, b) food trade companies - 10 of which controlled 80 percent of the trade in agriculture in the world, c) the supermarkets. He said that the US had been doing away with its farmers, but India could not since more than 60 percent of its people still depended on agriculture for their sustenance. He felt that the people who fought against these trends were often compartmentalized and they needed to be comprehensive in their approach to fight the issue.

Ritu Priya

Ritu Priya spoke on the global dimensions of the health issue. She pointed out that the people's perceptions about health had elements of - work conditions, environment, dignity, food and emotional health inherent in them. This perception was true almost on a global scale. The institutions that controlled and decided global health issues were WHO and the World Bank. Earlier it was the WHO that decided on global health issues, but now it was more and more the World Bank (WB) and private corporate bodies who do the deciding. Even in cases of the technical matters, it is the WB that is decisive. She pointed out that an article in the British Medical Journal had even argued that in research- matters the WHO should not be the deciding agency since it had a voting structure. Within a country, replacing the public sector, it was the private sector which was being relied upon more and more.

The idea of PPP (Public Private Partnership) was now spreading fast. In the 1990s we had the "Global TB partnership". There were 90 such initiatives which were being actively promoted by the Pharma companies, Insurance companies and management groups. As an example, she said that the CDC (Centre for Disease Control), which was a US government agency, was now involved in planning disease control with the government of India.

There were also networks of experts and researches, such as the Geneva based "Global Health Forum", which was similar to World Water Forum (WWF). These agencies were not transparent about who was behind them. Within the WHO also, there were two streams. One wanted to put money in the social sector and had the support of governments like India. The other stream, which was more progressive- the CSDH (Committee on Social Determinants of Health) looked at the working condition of people as a determinant of health. The ideological dominance of these global agencies was so profound that a large number of people now felt that health was not possible without going for vaccination, drip etc. The traditional approach to health was dying a slow death.

A discussion followed these presentations. Vijay Pratap wondered if the revival of traditional medical system could be the way out. Bhuvan Pathak said that the degeneration and distortion of democracy forced him to think in terms of *swaraj* rather than Democracy. Mahendra Pratap Rana also pointed to the subversion of democracy reflected in the "MLA capturing" in place of "booth capturing". Devinder Sharma said that unlike agriculture, the debate on health had not really been carried out intensely. He lamented that the educational system in the scientific institution always looked at India as backward and encouraged students to go for western – scientific methods. The malady of apex institutions like ICAR was evident in the fact that the heads of these institutions spent most of their time abroad, hardly ever visiting the rural areas. He expressed his apprehension about

the commitment the Indian Prime Minister had given to US recently on the second Green Revolution. He said that in essence the second Green Revolution would mean commercialization and contract-farming in the Indian agriculture. He pointed out that, the world-over, immigration could be the greatest spur to development in countries like India and should demand free movement of people across the countries.

Ritu Priya felt that a new kind of imagination was possible which would be based on the indigenous system but also drew upon the advances and research in the modern medical knowledge stream.

The meeting which had spilled over beyond its stipulated time had to come to an end as the other group waited outside to occupy meeting room. A quick vote of thanks was proposed by Vijay Pratap.

Discussants

Devdutt, India

Abhay Dubey, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India

Arun Kumar, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

Sanjay Kumar, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India

Douglas Lummis, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India

Madhav Nepal, Communist Party of Nepal (UML), India

Aditya Nigam, Centre for the Study of Developing Societies, India

Arun Kumar, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

Sudha Pai, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India

Ritu Priya, Jawarahlal Nehru University, India

Devinder Sharma, Forum for Biotechnology and Food Security, India

Marko Ulvila, NIGD, Finland

Dialogue Report III

DEMOCRATIC POLITICS GLOBALLY

Bamako, Mali, 21 January 2006

Katarina Sehm-Patomäki

The Bamako dialogue took place at the polycentric World Social Forum in Bamako and attracted about 30 participants. Prior to the World Social Forum, we had invited persons who had worked on the issue of political parties and also those who have profiled in their work on the World Social Forum. The session was conducted in a participatory mode. Katarina Sehm Patomäki presented a synthesis of previous discussions by the moderator, after which the floor was open to interventions.

Christophe Aguiton

Firstly, when you talk about global politics or even global social movements, as in global political activity the main problem is usually global governance. I think that the only way to have real global governance is not only with an agreement by the big powers, among the chiefs of the world, but also to have a public space. This is because a public space is the only way to

counter power and exercise the ability to work together and to act together in actions that further constitute the concept against the free capital, which is by definition global. The Haabermasian idea that you need a public space is a key issue when talking about global governance. The problem with the public space is the fact that we are doing it for a partial space. If you, for instance, look at the World Social Forum, which in some sense is a global public space, you see that it is a partial global public space. It is a partial public space, and until now, we have not been able to really build, not even on a European level, a common public space.

The EU Open Doors programme has an agreement with the Open Doors project of the Americas. Obviously, when capitalism and trade agreed on a common framework that opens space for people and so on…(even in Europe), we know that we are not in a real global public space. In Europe, we have elements for this space and for this reason we cannot say as a majority of the people that, "the Finnish ought to do that". In principle you can say that the minority accepts the power of the majority, but this is one of the key problems in a complex issue.

My second comment is more profound, I think. Now when you talk about global political parties we need a definition of what a party is and what parties are. In my view, the party, in a modern sense, came from the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century with the mix, or in fact an alliance and merger between two notions that were quite different from each other. The first notion is the Weberian notion of civil society, which is organized in a state with a lot of power at the end of globalization. This power created the possibility for civil society to organize itself. Even if you look at sociology, the discipline of sociology is to study national society, this is the beginning of sociology. If you know the book which says that says you have to change the landscape. Why is this so strong? Because civil society was able to build big unions and the movements and the creation of civil society involved the movements of political parties, in the sense of mass political parties. The issue and creation of mass political parties is all related as is a strong nation state to an organized society of unions, Christian associations, social democrats and so forth; all these parties belong to that tradition.

The second root in the modern sense of political parties is the strategical question. This is quite a new issue; we can perhaps say Lenin was the person who put this question on the table. If you look at the 20th

century, in the left and elsewhere, the strategical question was the point of division between parties, more so than the vision of the future. Everyone in the socialist world –in the 1930s at least – had the same vision for the future, non-capitalism, cooperativism, and so forth; it was the strategical question dividing the people.

To illustrate, when we were young, if you were a Maoist in the south, for instance, you had to go to the country side because you had to connect with farmers that surrounding the city. If you were a Trotskyite anarchist, to prepare the resurrections you had to go to the factory where you organize the workers, set up councils et cetera. And if you were a social democrat, you went to the political science department at the University where you were taught and learned how to be a good politician, then you would stand up in elections in order to enter the Parliament. All these create a total shift between parties, whether you were able to win over a young guy who decided to go to the country side, to the factory, or to the university. The life people chose decides the path of the rest of their lives. This is where mass based civil society and the strategical orientation mix and lay the base for the modern political party. When I said mix, the countries, the realities, strategies and roots are very important.

In Britain, strategy was really important, although the roots may have been similar to those in many countries, I am not sure that the people, following World War II, wanted to take it towards resurrection, for instance. This was of course, also because of the tensions between the East and the West during the Cold War. In the South, the strategies were more important. It is the mix that remains fundamental to our political parties today. Now, when you look at what is happening in our world, there are two main things that are relevant for this project on global political parties: the social roots, and the strategy challenge at work. The capacity for civil society to organize themselves with trade unions is finished – look at the unions! This is because globalization is a movement of integration at the world level and disintegration at the local level. And the capacity of building or creating alliances is finished, or at least very weak right now. The strategical debate has also totally changed thus we are still working on our "networking culture", additionally, the evolution of the technical network world is changing critical capitalism, us, our jobs. Therefore, I suggest we consider developing a certain strategy of alliances between the weak and the weak; I hope to pick up on this later in the discussion.

Jan Aart Scholte

My problem with the concept of global political parties is a little similar. As I understand it, by definition political parties have always existed to compete for and capture a form of state power, a representative office of some kind. Civil society is distinct from that because capturing power is not its aim. So when you talk about some things like the World Social Forum, which I understand as being very much a civil society forum, and say, in this do we have a political party, I cannot say I see the World Social Forum showing any signs of wanting to adopt any forms that we traditionally understand to be of political parties. I am wondering if you are confusing the concepts. If you want to say is there a new kind of politics emerging, one that is less rooted in representative democracy, then I would abandon the language of political parties. If only, because it the historical baggage and conjures notions of competing for office and seeking to capture the state. There is no world state therefore, there are no offices to competed for in the traditional political party way. Then we will want to say that we need new forms of democracy that are: deliberative, participatory, grass roots', municipal etcetera, but let us not call them political parties, because I think it gets confusing. Adversely, you might take away a lot of the radical potential from the idea.

Fiona Dove: I wonder if it would be useful to talk about new political agency rather than political parties?

Lauri Holappa

I am not sure that this new discrepancy being built between civil society and political parties is that important – or even reasonable in any way. The idea that political parties exist only to capture offices is a simplistic idea. When we think back to the beginning of the 20th century, political parties were part of civil society. Parties were building new interpretations of how the economy worked and so on. The main contribution brought forward by

the political parties was not that they could capture offices or that they would have ministers in the cabinet; rather, and from my point of view, their main contribution was the new Marxist interpretation. We should maybe widen our understanding of political parties to some kind of organized historical blocks, or something similar.

Viriato Teotónio e. Tamele

If we comment on something, we should always look to see how this object is organized. For me, this idea of a global political party is a kind of a top down approach. It is interesting to hear what you are saying because, first, you are saying that the thinkers are starting to think of a global party, singular when others who have contributed to this project think of different global parties, plural, inform what I gather from reading the background documents. I come from Mozambique, where we have one party, but before the parties we had different fronts of liberalization convening in one party and in one form. Then they united fronts, and once we became an independent country, we had one party, because of these ideas of democracy and so on, one we therefore call it a "party". I am more interested in talking about this idea of having multiple or different parties or fronts; it is more interesting than the use of the concept "party", singular. Maybe it will be something that is a really bottom-up approach? The idea for a Pan African model if we want to create the African Union, this is a top-down approach. They have started to do something they called "to organize the African Union", very recently they changed the name to the African Union, which is not different than the previous Organization of Africa. My idea is that instead of discussing parties, it is more important to explore the different fronts from bottom up. This idea of global political parties is very interesting. But if we look to parties, it implies they are seeking power. So what kind of power would a global party look for? Maybe what we really mean is a "front", a front being something that strives for changing something. I propose that the idea of different fronts is a good concept to look into.

Fiona Dove

This is a really important issue, to talk about political agency and how do we move towards effect real political change. Personally, I have never been a member of a political party. I have been a member or a participant in the national liberation movement, but not in a party. So, I am kind of anti-party for a large part of my recent life. This was until I met someone who described seizing state power similarly to what Lauri Holappa just raised. This person was explaining that seizing state power has never been irrespective of parties; rather, parties have been a gathering point where people who come from different movements, different tendencies gather within a certain space – here I am talking about left parties. Parties then can be seen as coordinating centers of analysis for making sense of the struggles that everyone is conducting in their own dimensions. In other words, the party can be perceived as a coordinating centre without using the social democratic or representative democracy idea of a party where it is simply about elections or taking state power. There is a possibility for another kind of party space where it is about challenging power and coordinating efforts among movements. Now, I am not sure whether this could work on a global level and I cannot imagine how this would be done.

I cannot help agreeing with Jan Aart Scholte that maybe using the word party in the context of the struggles we fight right now, would probably turn a lot of people off thinking we were pretending to be the presidents of the world or something. But I do think we need to have some kind of common strategic sense on where we are going. I think this would limit the fragmentation within the movement. The point in history we, as a global movement, consider ourselves to be a part of right now, is really extremely important. Earlier on, at another session we were talking about the importance of having victories from time to time, and about building on things we have achieved together. There are many struggles going on and there is a lot of resistance – for good reasons, I think. People are scared of centralization, scared of power practices that control and direct, and we do need want to coordinate more closely because then we are actually getting quite strong. In short, I think that parties are not just as Jan Aart Scholte described, but a party can offer a bigger political space. In Korea for example, there is a new party playing that role, in Italy, there is the Partito della Rifondazione Comunista party playing that role, there are a few new

parties in Thailand which have the idea that parties do not necessarily contest power, but parties are the coordinating points meant to engage people politically in general, not only issue based. In a way, we are seeing a reversed ideology these days; however, we need some thing to unify us and we need to find a space where we agree on principles and broad strategies and can build these strategies. As Viriato Teotónio e. Tamele was saying, we can agree on the broad front against global institutions of power.

Katarina Sehm Patomäki

If we talk about political agency, or front, what then could this agency be, what forms could it take and how would it place itself in the political settings?

Nicola Bullard

My question is, what is on the other side? If we are organizing to change things or to shift the balance of power, it is important to think about how the political system works. The war on Iraq is a good example, as is the NO vote in France to the EU constitution (in May 2005). In both cases we had millions and millions of people expressing straightforwardly their viewpoint, but it still did not change the politics. Since these expressions do not change the politics - as in the decision of a government or translate into action, it is like a voice in an empty space. The image I have is of a machine where a gear is missing and our energy does not get translated into change nor does our energy change the other side. There are other problems as well which are real obstacles: uneven representative democracy, very low participation, institutionalization, bureaucratization of power and parties and so on. I guess in different countries you would see different types of problems. To me it is interesting to think about not only how we might organize ourselves, but what is the new way in which the balance of power – or polity – has changed and can be changed? Who has the power? Where

is the power? And what is needed to translate our power into something which actually changes policies and politics?

In the past, I think there was a simpler system: you had the party, you got people to vote for your platform, they then had the numbers in the parliament and things changed (or didn't). This was the ideal of parliamentary democracy. It does not work like that any more. Even though millions of people protested against the UK's decision to participate in the occupation of Iraq, it still happened, did it not? So, where is the gap? Why is it no longer possible to translate popular public opinion, even mass mobilizations, into real concrete changes? I think we have to look at both sides of how politics works. We can see something new there as well. Where is the power? With the financial markets? Of course. Is it with the transnational corporations, TNCs? Of course. It is in operation at levels that are very much outside the scope of some national governments' capacity to influence. And interests are realized in such a way that many governments are much more loyal to the stock exchange and the IMF than to their peoples. We need to look at the reality of how change and politics happens.

Mark Randazzo

I think that we should start with discussions on what parties are about. Essentially, they are about promoting a shared vision of society. You either start with: a vision and you develop your party around that, or you develop a party, around certain criteria. Social movements like the World Social Forum, at least in its classic form are not supposed to come up with a shared vision of society. There are certain shared criteria but then it is supposed to be this open space, and has been part of the problem of part of the debate, and it has been part of the problem about trying to move towards power – how can you move towards power if you do not have a declared vision of society.

But there are other social movements. I think of Via Campesina as being very interesting example in the sense that it is not a party, but it has the vision of society around food sovereignty, for example, that is negotiated over a long period of time in many different countries, around a global vision of society based on the relationships of farming communities,

rural communities, and rural economies of different places in Africa and Brazil have some shared commonalities. And in some ways you can see that Via Campesina is vying for power, although not state power in the classic sense that Nicola Bullard was describing, but it is definitely seeking to go beyond just working locally in its own domain. It is trying to push food sovereignty and the associated rights to the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, FAO, in other words it is trying to influence multinational stakeholders. I think food sovereignty has been picked up by certain governments, for instance here in Mali it is in the constitution. It is interesting to see what can emerge from the social movements that we have seen evolve over the past couple of decades, and what are the different ways of thinking about what we try to push forward as a shared vision of society, once it is elaborated. It does not necessarily mean only taking over the state, but it definitely means influencing the state, through not having, as Nicola Bullard was saying, protests to which the state does not have to respond. If you think about TNCs, TNCs do not, at least not directly, take state power, or have themselves elected but they certainly influence everything that is going on. I think this is a more subtle kind of notion. Also, I like the sense of political agency more that political parties because I think than 'party' means party in a classic sense, vying for state power. The notion of social movements needs to be discussed in terms of political agency, in increasingly sophisticated ways, that are broad-based and global. This is something that is definitely worth talking more about.

Christophe Aguiton

Political parties are now weaker than they used to be. In the past, political parties were part of civil society, while today, they are less and less so. Rather, they have become electoral machines, state power machines, or even personal power machines because they are following the lead of international institutions. If you are contend to look at the world like this, you note that the parties are finished, their power is no longer a problem and we can have another vision of the world. I am thinking of something Antonio Negri said elsewhere, a sort of a simplistic world where global capital is facing global civil society which in turn is thinking that "one day,

we will have the power"; I do not believe in this at all. Even this idea that some seems to have in their minds, of "let us change the system without taking power" – we have done that, too! We have changed our society without taking power, and we are doing this very strongly.

Nicola was saying that there is a real risk that even though we are changing society, because we have nothing currently at hand everything will be like before. We have this weakness. I think that the way to resolve this weakness is to think about the strategical problem and not only of the sociological realities of parties. If you look at strategy, things have changed a little bit because we were in the world following World War II, but even before the war, co-workers were very strong and the strategy expressed by the power was really a strategy from the strong to the strong. If you look, for example, at the cold war, the tension and the power between the USSR and the communist world, and the USA and the freedom world was so strong that the energy striving to change this was unbelievable. Look at the price paid by the Vietnamese to be able to achieve a freedom country. There was incredible energy leading into May 1968, for instance, from all over the world, however, we were unable to change anything in the long term. This was the world in which many of us grew up in. In this time, a strong strategy was a necessity. This is probably why in our political thinking, we always focus on these ideas that we must take the power, and create strong political parties. But now I think we live in another historical period, in which all the partners are very weak, and this may be confusing. Many are theorizing about this, among them Immanuel Wallerstein who has reflected on the other extension of the empire and the relative weakness of the US. On the one hand, the US is the only superpower and they are able to change the world, but they change the world to a very weak position where very few people are struggling against them, the demonstrators of resistance – although I do not approve of their methods, this is beside the point in this context – must change everything. We are in a world where the instability is very strong and a weak strategy can change a lot of things.

It is also true that on the international level. I was impressed when I was involved in the ban land mines campaign with a small NGOs; Italians together with very weak countries like Cambodia, Mozambique and Angola were able to change the coalition of force in this topic. You could also think about how Evó Morales in Bolivia, or another small movement around a certain issue could change things. If we look at the idea with the

importance on the strategy, the question of power is important. But we are not in a world where the most important concern is for a party to take power and have a strong, direct approach to all kinds of strategies, rather than to have a flexible attitude and a sort of indirect approach. There will probably be many opportunities that emerge after this discussion on how to do it, what kind of tools, and so on. I would prefer to begin this discussion on global political parties from here because this is more or less what we do here in the World Social Forum context.

Jan Aart Scholte

I would like to express a concern that perhaps when we jump from this language of political parties to the global we abandon the notion of what political parties are now. Is it the case that political parties, as they exist, are organized to capture the state? Is it the case that they are historically bankrupt? And are they historically bankrupt in terms of the democratization of a global world? I am open to the answer being yes, but I am asking these questions because it seems that otherwise we are jumping to the presumption that it is not. I mean political parties that organized around capturing the state are now also regional powers, such as in the European parliament and some African regional parliaments - and Central American parliaments have direct relations with parties of the region and so on. If those parties were to incorporate global concerns and global affairs into their manifestos, into their election campaigns, and into their conferences and so on when they meet they could begin to make up some of their deficit? They could incorporate far more research and advocacy work within their party organization on global issues – could they do more? When they get their office, and are within national legislation could they do more to scrutinize and monitor their states' involvement in global affairs? When they organize regionally, they are not using regional intuitions and regional party politics as a way to militate and improve the effect of globalization because it hits the ground in different regions? There are so many other things. I wonder when you talk about "let us abandon the old language of political parties" and come up with a new one. Maybe it would be a healthy reform, or people will want to throw it out the window, but it

seems that many assume – although this may be true – a bankruptcy of the political party. Like Fiona was saying, I have never been a member of a political party and I do not think I will ever make myself one – I am not disciplined enough.

They are legislators rather that political parties as such, but there is the global network on environmental affairs, the Inter Parliamentary Union, and networks of legislators on the World Bank (they attempted it on the World Trade Organizations although I do not think it got very far) so there are lots of things that standard political representativity and political parties potentially could do. We choose not to engage with this when we attend the World Social Forum, this is my choice too, although I am not sure if a lot of people for whom politics are the World Social Forum, would find these spaces conducive. They might find global politics through national political parties a way that they can express their politics more effectively and more happily, and it should be their choice to do so. Personally, I do not think that political parties – as they exist – offer a chance to do that.

Antonio Martins

There are two bases for this debate as proposed by NIGD. Firstly, as Christophe told us, we now have a new form of globalization, where we have a new centre for power in the global arena. We do not have power only in the national sphere, we also have some very strong institutions, we all know which they are, which have power to significantly influence national politics and the lives of the peoples much more strongly than national institutions. This means that we will have to create international democracy, global democracy, global ways of influencing expression of making re-vindications to this new sphere of power which is so capable of changing our lives.

Secondly, we must develop thinking on how to make the ideas which appear in the World Social Forum or civil society or social movements real, and how to turn them from ideas into practice? These are the preoccupations that we have. The problems facing world political party is first, I believe, that even in the national sphere, political power is much more split and diffused than just in the institutions. People notice this and

are less and less interested in institutional politics because they understand that the real things or matters are not debated in the institutions where the vote influences.

Simultaneously, last year many new forms of creating politics were created in the sense of changing the world and creating a common future. These new forms are not political parties and have little to do with representation. These new forms are much more direct forms of creation, mainly among young people. These people do not want to vote every four years, people want to do radical but common things and on their own, things that they feel will change the world. They do not want to delegate these important issues to someone else, who then in turn delegates these issues further. And some of these forms, which in my view are political although not party oriented, have become strong, in a good sense. Strong in the sense of capable. As an example of this I would like to mention the networks which were constructed to inform and to mobilize people on world trade issues of the World Trade Organization (WTO). These networks have a lot of capacities and combinations to produce materials and see many aspects of the international trade system. I ask myself, would any party in the world be as capable as this network to debate and to motivate? I doubt it. Therefore, I believe that the problem we should pose to ourselves is how to make our goals real without counting on world political parties? How to establish alliances which are much more complex – because people are proud of their diversity? For instance, in the debates on trade, how can we value small actions which are done in terms of cooperatives and the solidarity economy? How do we debate with these people, how do we say that your work will be enhanced if we construct another system of trade; a system that radically changes world trade? How do we debate this, how do we establish the articulation between many activities that are very credible in their local surroundings, and how do we enhance our purpose of mobilizing towards much wider change. In my view, this is our greatest challenge.

Djenda

I come from Togo, and I represent a federation of NGOs in Togo. In 1990, Togo went through a difficult combination of political, economic, and social crisis. This crisis was a marked of rupture for cooperation between Togo and the European Union. Since then, elections have been marked by incredible outcomes for the people. In 1991, independent political parties were authorized in Togo. President Eyadema used his control over the security forces, first, to prevent the elected government from asserting power, and then to undermine multiparty elections.

The talks presented to the people were that this was a natural beginning of the democratic system. This has put the country in an abnormal situation on a political level. Civil society organizations that were close to the EU succeeded in improving the situation. As I said in the beginning, the EU was the first to suspended its cooperation with Togo, and other donors then followed suit.

With this group present here today, I would like to share the real situation of my country to show what a political system should be like in order to avoid similar conflictual situations. The most recent election process, in 1998, was seriously flawed, leading to an opposition boycott and the continued suspension of almost all foreign aid. When we have elections in Togo, voting is flawed. This means that every time we vote, the people ask where to go and vote? This means that when you go to vote in the district that you are part of, people ask where you come from. Because of this, we now have conflict between the ethnics and between the North and the South. At this very moment, we have a regime with its strong hands on the military, economy and so forth. This has now more or less weakened the society because at the other end we have the EU that has imposed a democratic model that does not taken into account certain realities, such as the fact that the country is not one nation but rather a regrouping of several entities. In Togo, the western democracy model brought to us signifies that the majority governs and the minority is in opposition abiding the rulings of the majority. For us, this means that there is one ethnic group in charge that rules and all others abide. Politics has become a joke.

This is where we have arrived: every time there is an election the party, which is the army, creates disturbances to remain in power, meanwhile we are waiting for our country to become an united nation and one society. But this does not work, Togo, consequently, remains in a very difficult situation.

Jan Aart Scholte

I think that this cultural aspect is important in discussions on constructing global political parties. The cultural level becomes an intercultural enterprise where all parties have their own national organization. For instance, in one of the background papers to this discussion, Vijay Pratap cautions that the project of a global political party could be quite an impost imperialistic and racist project, where one dominant party rule the political imagination and political practices are prescribed for all. And that can happen within the World Social Forum as well as anywhere else.

Christophe Aguiton

This is very true. If we look, for instance, at the composition of the members of the International Council of the World Social Forum, there is a predominate number of Latin Americans – notably Brazilians – and Latino Europeans. These two cultures are so big that it is difficult for other cultures integrate. Within the IC there are, of course, other issues concerning the European representation to date, for example, there is no one from Poland, Turkey, Greece – and this list is long – on the list of participants,.

Mark Randazzo

I would like to pick up on the comment that political parties are expressions of more or less common visions of society. I think that we have to cope with the economic global vision of society within the diversity that exists and that we want to maintain. How is that possible? The World Social Forum, along with the thousands that come can basically agree that "another world is possible", but that is as far as it goes…and for good reason. The traditional problem of the left is always that there is a lot of diversity and

visions – how do you come up with a single global party projecting a common vision?

Jan Aart Scholte

That is why politics have to change; "global" does not equal "universal", they are not eminent. You hear the pluriversal circulating a lot more, and it appears in one of the background papers here, too. I do think that this is what the WSF process, in a deep sense, is trying to do, singular but plural at the same time. I think those kind of politics are possible, but they do not fit well with political parties as traditionally understood, and this is why I am going on about the language of political parties being used here. Or even worse, "party" in singular.

Ulla Hägg

I represent the Swedish Social Democratic Party. This question on the table today is very important and interesting. A lot of you are talking about your reasons for not joining a political party. Instead, you prefer to struggle with other organizations and I am somewhat horrified by this. I think that parties need to change a little, but I think that there is great potential for every political, democratic party interested in a global way to solve all the big questions. It is only when you are in power and a large interest in the economy that many of your intentions are spoiled. I think every organization should have contacts everywhere, and we should meet. I have never been to a forum like this before. It is so huge that it is difficult to find these contacts and to do what you intended. This is so huge that I miss out on meeting the persons who may be interested in working with me. I think that these meting spaces are important; we exchange information on what is going on in our countries and what we would like to do. I intend in many ways to make contacts and continue working with these questions. But I am not as negative towards politicians. There are many good politicians and

parties who are willing do this, but as has been said here today, this is very complicated because in your country, this question is very big. You have to be a very strong politician with lots of power in order to work with these questions. I think the United Nations is very important in actually organizing this because it can get around the issue of having a large interest in gaining economic power since interests are all over the world. Of course the veto power problem at the UN is a hindrance for real politics, but basically I want to say that I am not as negative toward politicians, and that is why we are here. What we need is contacts and ways to find solutions. But we cannot solve everything at once. The most important issue is to listen to each other and understand how we think in every country.

Tuomas Ylä-Anttila

What Ulla Hägg was saying about the economy made me think of another difference between civil society organizations, which has to do with money. Whereas civil society organizations are usually funded by voluntary contributions, a political party that aims at taking state power also aims at taking the right to use tax money. The state is the only entity that has the right to tax. The mechanism here is about taking money through the state, at the last resort by force, and using this money to the poor from the rich, for example. So, if an association or a social movement transforms itself into a party that stands in elections, they also have a chance of getting their hand on the tax money. They can, first, use this money to fund their own political work and second, they get to take part in deciding how tax money is spent in more general terms. This is one important difference between civil society on the one hand and political parties on the other. At the global level these kinds of mechanisms do not yet exist. As long as there is no global state or other authority that is able to levy taxes at the global level, a global political party would be in a different position from national ones in this respect. If we want to have global taxes to fund global political action they would need to be levied by executive states because they are the only ones that have the right to do so, and they have the police and the army to make sure the people, companies, or whoever is supposed to pay their taxes actually do so. A UN tax or the like would also have to be supported and

agreed upon by states to gain legitimacy. So a global party, in the sense of a community of people who think like mindedly as brought up by some of the previous speakers, might come into existence. But as long as there are no global mechanisms of taxation, it would be in a position quite different from that of the present national political parties.

Katarina Sehm Patomäki

Picking up on the point raised by Nicola Bullard on the mass mobilizations on 15 February 2003 around the world, the gathering of millions and millions of people in opposition to the US attacks on Iraq; even the New York Times reported that the world's second superpower is global public opinion. However, and as Nicola reminded us of, these global mass mobilizations did not change the policy by governments. Perhaps of even greater importance is the fact that both initiators of these Iraq attacks, US President, George W Bush and UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair were re-elected in 2005. So my question here is that what then is global will, and how does this translate into national politics? Is there any particular political action that you can imagine now in retrospect that should or could have accompanied those expressions of global will in the mass demonstrations in order for these to have had an impact on national politics?

Nicola Bullard

The UK demonstrators could have occupied Westminster Abbey! At least in Australia, the marches on 15 February 2003 were more in the line of peaceful walking than political marching. Part of the problem is the lack of our imagination about strategies and tactics that make these people really feel extremely uncomfortable, and how to push them. I know from speaking to the people inside the WB and the IMF that they really hate having thousands of people surrounding their buildings and meetings. This makes

them really nervous. I think this is a good thing and we do not do enough of these mass mobilizations. One part of fighting power is confronting it directly. These days, political parties do not do that at all. This is also part of what I mean by asking "where is the power"? How do we occupy their space, as well as creating our own space? To occupy Westminster is partly a joke, but it is partly true as well because then you are starting to enter what they regard as their sanctum. Maybe there were things we did not do with those 15 million people that might have worked. Maybe we could have developed more diverse tactics? But it was also interesting to recall that both leaders, Bush and Blair were re-elected in 2005.

Gemma Galdón

Something else about the Iraq war and those demonstrations on 15 February 2006, I just do not think that those people were really serious about the whole thing. What if those 15 million people had said "I am not only willing to give up my Sunday to take part in a demonstration" but "on Monday I am not going to work". I think this would have changed things. I also think that this says a lot about social movements and how we relate to people and to our political powers. In the social movements, we have not been exploring that rather we kind of associate activity in the work place as something like trade unions, political parties and so forth; things we do not want to have anything to do with. When actually what we see is that we only get victories in civil societies when we are structured. If we look around, that is what makes things happen. So, how come we are not exploring that path? This is my question to social movements, where do we go? How come we have kind of given up on activities in the work place, and why do we identify that as something old fashioned?

Mark Randazzo

I come from San Francisco, and the day when the war, or the US invasion of Iraq, started we were about 2500 people who protested and shut down the

financial district for two days – the whole downtown of San Francisco was shut down. It was partly shut down because it was an unusual tactic that came out of the movements from Seattle, direct action. This took the police by surprise, and actually the way the police dealt with the situation contributed to the mess because they closed everything off and no one could go in. This marked a strong will and was a good thing, but this still does not necessarily get to the question of how you really gain power, anymore than occupying parliament buildings or the Westminster Abbey. At least in the US, this is because around three quarters of those who march on a nice Sunday afternoon are simply not going to march during the week. Part of the reason is that they do not want to get portrayed in the press and so forth. At least in the US, a lot of people care and are prepared to come out and march – in particular if it is sunny. But really, what you are asking is for society to change. And yet, we have benefited enormously from our own policies: our military is in 180 countries in the world in some form or another; Americans maybe know that vaguely somehow, but yet, they do not want to look at it too closely because we may not like it. Meanwhile we want to be able to go to the shopping mall and over extend our credit cards. What we are really asking. If we are asking people to change things very drastically to gain power, the only reason people would do that, I would assume, is because they think that something better is going to be on the other side.

Stopping the war is important. But then what? There will be other wars. So, we return to the question of whether any of these movements, or any of these disruptive tactics can have any thing more than a very short term impact, at least in the US, because the media is corporatizing every thing and it turns back against you. The movements are portrayed as being outside the main stream and disruptive and even in San Francisco, which is a very progressive city, people read all these stories about the ambulance that could not get through to get the pregnant woman to the hospital, and the mothers who could not get their children to school. If this is all about larger ways of getting real power, than I think disruptive tactics, which are useful, may not be talking about the same things.

Gemma Galdón

I think this comes down to the question of to whom we are we talking. And I think that this is why political parties are important. We might not like it, but people look at political parties as their political activity. For most people, what they do politically is that they vote every four years, and as long as that is the case we have got to deal with it. And we have to do something in that area. Even if we think that political parties are bankrupt or that they might not suit the times, as long as most people look towards them we have to be there to give some answers, analysis action, and hopefully try to change things.

Mika Rönkkö

When we discuss global political agency, I would like to point out that the major problem globally is capital. Capital is genuinely both global and transnational. It is like a slippery soap that we cannot grab. I tend to think along the same lines as Mark: even if you manage to stop the war, the corporate power is still outside democratic control. Thinking about political parties leads us into a state-nation model. The Attac movement has tried to raise the issue of the power of the global financial markets that are out of control. We would need some sort of global agency that could somehow get some sort of discipline over the financial markets. The financial market is one of the developed markets in terms of the freedom of capital. In a global world, what does this mean? This is one of the major problems. Capital is 'too free'. What kind of agency can we imagine? Are we totally trapped into this nation state framework, or can there be something else? If we demonstrate and stop going to work, this may help a little bit in some corners, but what is the next step – that we stop using money?

The UN is controlled by a few dominant forces, national states; therefore, it is not capable of taking a lead in this.

Jan Aart Scholte

One thing on political parties, I want to pull together a few comments. I think you, Nicola, were saying that global institutions do not like when there are people in the street pressuring for something. If you look at whether it is the IMF, the World Bank, the UNDP or others that one might be regarded as more friendly institutions, they have all instituted large networks of officials for 'engagement' with civil society groups, civil society liaison offices, or what ever you call them. There are whole networks for civil society engagements. And what about political parties? Nothing. The IMF has one person, who is part time, looking at parliaments. That is it for the whole IMF in the whole world. The parties are no where. This is because there is no pressure from the political parties, and I think this is true of all the global governance institutions. This is, once again, evidence that political parties are not realizing their potential.

The debt problem is a good concrete example, the political parties should deal with the debt problem but they are not. It is civil society that is most vocal.

Mark Randazzo

I am not quite understanding the statement that political parties exist to gain state power. This is not so? Political parties are there, and continue to exist once they are in government. The Breton Woods institutions are run by political parties, the political parties that have succeeded in elections. I am wondering if what we really want is for political parties to act not totally towards getting state power but also to exert influence on society in the same way as civil society tries to. I just wanted to remind us of the fact that political parties do interact hugely with those institutions that they run, but this is only when they have taken state power.

Jan Aart Scholte

Do we really want to believe that politicians are shaping the world? In a sense we have to believe that they do, because otherwise we would not keep going to the ballot boxes. And to some extent, they do shape the world, of course, but the degree at which they actually are is uncertain. And in response to Mika Rönkkö, I think that in reality there is a lot of regulation of international capital. The thing is that a lot of it we do not see. National governments do a lot of this through their trans-world networks of senior level civil servants of financial ministries and central banks. In fact, if you will, there is a global state that is decentralized and that is governing global finance. The thing is that we do not know very much about it, we do not do very much about it, and we do not understand it.

Christophe Aguiton

It is really interesting to look at people interested in global affairs, both here and in the international institutions. Political parties cooperate and contribute from time to time to these discussions. A lot of the political structures, for instance the local authorities, the local municipalities, the mayor and so forth, always have a lot of representatives at the social forums since the beginning. If you look at the municipalities, they are trying to get their game in place to come on board, but it is quite uncomfortable for them because they have the nation state in the middle. It is clear that local authorities absolutely want to have this link. The fragmentation of political parties is not national, it is not the parties as such, it is the municipalities with elected people with its local presidencies and personalities and so on, this is a proof of the weakening of the parties, as we know from before and the emergence of a new kind of collective action or new players. This is really some thing we must work on. Finally, I would like to add a few words to the discussion on "agency". I think we have a lot of thinking to do at the global level, of course we are doing part of that here, at the WSF, but we should develop thinking of "global politique", and I believe in this very

strongly. For example, we should strive at being able to develop international treaties on forbidding nuclear weapons, on the abolishment of the death penalty, on granting rights to women, or similar things. After discussing this global "agency" we must take this next step; when you build a new structures you must make sure that they will work?

Katarina Sehm Patomäki

In this discussion, the majority of you seem to put your thumbs down for political parties. At the same time, you systematically bring up that the concerns of the people around the world are not being listened to. As examples you have mentioned the massive demonstrations of 15 February 2003 against US attacks on Iraq, and the debt problem of developing countries. This list can of course be expanded; maybe we could add water concerns as a third category of issues attracting mobilizations among peoples. What then, do you foresee as the shape and organization of the new political agency? And as Christophe just asked, what could or should the structure of this global politique be?

Nicola Bullard

I think it is complicated to think in terms of global structures. I can only imagine working on a "problem to problem" basis. You begin by identifying the problem, what needs to be done, who else is interested in working on it, and at what level things need to be done, for example local campaigns, national legislation, international agreements, and so on. Say, for instance, that you want to deal with water. What is the international water regime? who is working on water, who is interested, what sort of regulation is needed, which political institutions are relevant for this matter, and so on. Then we can start to build alliances and a multilevel campaign that addresses the many issues about water. Christophe gave the example of the land mines campaign, which is already some years old, but I think there are

many examples of this already happening but perhaps we need to be more systematic in this approach rather than talking about global institutions or global structures in general. I honestly think that this is the only way to work. If you look at the big system and how to have everything in place in this big machine it is really impossible, because the world is too chaotic and too multilevelled. What's more, we want to maintain diversity and we want to maintain the possibility of democratic participation and . we do not want to simply reinforce the existing power relations. That would be my approach.

Kristine Booth

Thank you, Nicola for saying that because my fear is that we are getting a little bit too complicated, a little bit too quickly. My experience is with marginalized groups that are not organized in any formal sense, meaning those who are illiterate, or those in rural communities that already have such a great level of disconnect from what may or may not be taking place, they do not know the process, procedures or programmes that could be in place protecting them; therefore, how would we know, or be able to address what their interests and needs truly are? If we want to build the transnational structure, potentially a lot of people could be left behind, once again. I am thinking also – to avoid what was said before – about making sure it is culturally appropriate, that it is a problem by problem approach.

Fiona Dove

I think where we come into the picture, without overstating our strength, is that we have been quite good at de-legitimating this globalization process, neoliberalism and so forth. We should perhaps pay more attention to getting our message out in popular languages, sharing materials internationally, and conquering the media. I was in Venezuela for three months, and previously I never understood how important public media is for democracy. In a country like that, and I am sure this is repeated in many other places, there is a completely private media, with no space for any other voice. When people hear the same stuff day after day after day and they start believing it. I am from South Africa, and we had a media like, the people who watched TV or listened to the radio heard the same things over and over again, and people started to believe in it. This is a little bit of a controversy, but I was watching the local channel in my town and lo and behold, focus on why the World Trade Organization is bad for you – on Dutch TV! It is important that this video came from Thailand, and that it involved people from all over the world. It was shown one week after the Hong Kong meeting, and could, of course, have been shown before that meeting. The public seldom gets exposed to the argumentation, sees who the actors are, and why the Hong Kong meeting was as controversial as it was. This got me thinking, that maybe this struggle is not just about building structures. We could try that, but we would probably fail because we have got to build legitimacy to our vision. We have to de-legitimize these institutions, and break its hegemony. It is a wonderful, old concept that I think we should go back to in our strategizing, but it is about building a counter hegemony. I think we come to a point, as we have seen this in history, where one or two responses we could persuade enough people, using a simple language -stop talking cryptic language. If we put more attention on the media, getting our message out and simply sharing our material, we can build a kind of hegemony that will eventually hold these institutions to account for themselves, by force. They will understand that they have only one choice if they cannot accept being held to account, that is repression. Once they go that route, we can talk revolution, if you like. We as a progressive group, are generally reaching out for our own friends, networks, and particular individuals, but not to the masses out there. And it would require a lot more sharing and coordination, which authorizes the linguistic issue. I think that agencies with money should put pressure on Northern NGOs to put money toward translations. We need to be talking and debating in national local languages to move forward. One of the biggest obstacles we face at the Transnational Institute is to find money for translation. I feel passionately about this question of language. In short, my main point here was on counter hegemony, and how to build that, I think that other things will then float and flow from that.

Cecilia Carlsson

I think that we need to focus more on our visions in a concrete way. We are very good at saying what we must not do: do not drink Coca-Cola, do not drive your car, do not do this, we do not want this, we do not want that. I was thinking about my mother, who still cannot understand what I want or what I think that the world should look like. I need to explain to her what I think will happen to me in this new world. Can I drive? Will there be a work place for me? What kind of food will I eat? Will there be buses for everybody? When will shops be open? Will there be chaos? People are mainly concerned about the practicalities of their daily lives to the point they tend to overshadow people's concerns for global welfare.

Nicola Bullard

I would like to add to Fiona Dove's comment on counter hegemony, which I agree with absolutely. As Fiona pointed out, after oppression we have repression followed by a revolution. But there is already an extraordinary amount of repression. . If you look at what is happening with the Patriot Act in the US and similar legislation in other countries, the space for people is getting smaller and smaller, but with very little reaction or resistance. Consumerism,too, is an incredibly repressive system but people have assimilated it into their psyche. They think this is freedom, because they think they can buy what they want. This is not the worst issue, of course. Maybe we can call it a non-freedom, but the point is how can we break out of that mindset? Neo-liberalism is an insidious system but most people don't know how it effects their daily lives: mostly they experience it at a personal level rather than at a systemic level. It becomes individualised. We need new tools to explain and understand how neo-liberalism affects our daily life. We need what I call "emancipatory slogans" which help people to understand not only how this system makes them "unfree" but also helps to create a practical vision of what another world might look like.

Mark Randazzo

Portraying growth through a book called, Friendly Fascism, in the early 1970s, it described what friendly fascism is, providing an analysis of US society and where it was heading, it is actually rolling out just the way we are seeing it, and it is that notion that Nicola was talking about. Fascism would come, slowly, incrementally, but it would come in a very friendly way. Corporations would make life comfortable in many ways and people would buy into it. There is also this image of the frog in the water: the frog sits in cold water and you turn on the heat and as the water gets warmer the frog dies. By contrast, if you throw the frog in hot water it jumps out. There are so many outrages that happen in the US, I mean just for the Bush regime – Clinton was no better of course – but you get used to it. Another outrage and you cannot believe that they survive it. People just become used to it in some way. I can talk about many things to many people, my parents for instance, and they will still be convinced that the US is the best country in the world, all of these slogans are so deeply embedded. I think it will take a lot more than even good campaigns. I do not think that campaigning toward the 'other side' is going to do it. In Hong Kong, I was at a debate where the head economists from the World Bank, and a series of activists were analysis World Bank data on trade showing how few people and countries would benefit from neoliberalism. In this debate there were statistics were flying and brilliant people from Tuft's University and elsewhere, using the Bank's own statistics to show that this guy was wrong. But there was never a time when anyone had the right data. It is like when I discuss and argue politics with my Father, there is nothing that he can say that is going to bring me to his side. As far as I am concerned, this is all about power, and this brings me back to the party political question, but I go back to my point I brought on before, on Via Campesina. Without romanticizing Via Campesina too much, it does take on an issue area – earlier we spoke of the land mines or the agricultural questions –bringing together people, not people who are writing simpler things for people to understand, but it is those people themselves that are at the grass root and who have their vision. They build it up from there, they have a membership of some 20 million or more in the world. It deals with the diversity issue we were talking about before by negotiating across all these various cultures, it reaches out to landless farmers to other people. It has power, it is willing to

fight, for instance in Hong Kong, it was the Korean farmers that were pushing it. The only thing I think is going to happen is some kind of general global strike. It is going to be some kind of a major, global confrontation. But I think it is only going to be able to come from having 10, 30, or 50 Via Campesinas across all different sectors of people really taking their time over many years to educate themselves and come up with that alternative vision, to have an alternative. One thing I am impressed with from Via Campesina is that is has that alternative vision. It also talks about what it does not want in the WTO and elsewhere, but it does have an alternative vision. We must have more and more of those visions. This is what I like most about the World Social Forum, that it is a place for that kind of ideas to move forward. I do not quite know, again as I said in the beginning, how this translates into party political power, or global political parties. I think something very organic is coming from people where they are struggling in their own lives day-to-day with their day-to-day concerns, and they are linking to others and understanding that they have to act at the global level as well. This is the only way we are going to get there.

Katarina Sehm-Patomäki

We thank you for your valuable input. We would be most happy to receive contributions in writing throughout the project period.

Discussants

Christophe Aguiton, SUD, France

Kristine Booth, Women's bureau, Gambia & CIDA, Canada

Nicola Bullard, Focus on the Global South, Australia/Thailand

Cecilia Carlsson, CEMUS, Sweden

Djenda, Federation of NGOs, Togo

Fiona Dove, Transnational Institute, South Africa/the Netherlands

Gemma Galdón, Transnational Institute, Spain/the Netherlands

Lauri Holappa, Social Democratic Youth, Finland

Ulla Hägg, Social Democratic Party, Sweden

Antonio Martins, Liberdade Brazil, Brazil

Mark Randazzo, Funders Network on Trade & Globalization, USA

Mika Rönkkö, NIGD/Attac Finland, Finland

Jan Aart Scholte, ESRC/Warwick Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation, The Netherlands/UK

Viriato Teotónio e. Tamele, Mozambique

Tuomas Ylä-Anttila, NIGD, Finland

Dialogue report IV

TOWARDS GLOBAL ACTION – THE POSSIBILITY AND THE NECESSITY OF GLOBAL PARTIES?[8]

26 January 2006, Caracas, Venezuela

Hanna Laako

As part of the project "Elements for a Dialogue on Global Political Party Formations", NIGD organized a fourth dialogue at the Caracas WSF on the possibility and necessity of Global Political Parties and Democratic Politics Globally. The dialogue was initiated and facilitated by Teivo Teivainen and Hanna Laako. Other speakers were Roberto Espinoza, Kjeld Jakobsen, Francine Mestrum and Marco Berlinguer. There were altogether some 40 participants.

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8 This report has benefited from an article "Partidos políticos globais?" by Katarina Peixote (http://agenciacartamaior.uol.com.br/templates/colunistasMostrar.cfm?idioma_id=1&alterarH omeAtual=1 on 27/01/2006) reporting from the NIGD Caracas dialogue. The report is available also in English at http://www.nigd.org/docs/GlobalPoliticalPartiesKatarinaPeixote.

Teivo Teivainen introduced the background of the issue with special emphasis on raising the question of if we need global political parties. At the beginning of the discussion Teivainen noted, "there is some frustration with the demands of civil society. Which kind of actors are in fact political actors which are part of these actions, and up until what point?"

Largely, the discussions have been approached from two aspects, particularly when reconsidering the notion of the political and thee responding with alternatives.

On the one hand, there is a discussion that emerges when reconsidering the notion of the political in the 21st Century. This refers especially to the changes in the arena of world politics and globalisation, such as, the worldwide expansion and networking of governments, multinational corporations and social movements including their actions and effects, the increasing acknowledgement of significant global issues to be resolved, and the possible retreat or crisis of the nation-state and indeed, the lack of global political parties. In this sense, the issue of global parties comes about as a potential way to think about the traditional parties in a transnational setting, and their role to act globally.

On the other hand, this debate appears to emerge as a response to the so-called TINA-thinking ("there is no alternative"), which argues for negotiating terms of surrender to corporate globalisation. This responsive side is especially critical of the consequences of the hegemonic economic globalisation on political processes, and argues that this is not acceptable for the majority of the people on this planet. It refers to the voter's diminishing influence on economic issues and the decisions that affect their daily lives. In this sense, the dialogue on global parties contributes to the necessity for global action in the form of a party that could more effectively articulate, represent, communicate and assert people's voices to the trans-national institutions of global governance.

NIGD has arranged this dialogue at the Caracas World Social Forum in order to continue evaluating and discussing this theme. There is a slight expectation on the part of NIGD that the issue will create an useful debate, especially on the axis "horizontal or vertical action" since the World Social Forum is generally known as a political space instead of a political actor. The Forums tend to defend, sometimes with great idealism, the sort of ad-hoc, horizontal and transparent political action experienced, for example, in Seattle in 1999. Then again, as the Forum is largely composed of local-level

social movements, often with little inclination towards traditional parties, it was naturally expected that the idea of Global Parties would be received with reservations and scepticism.

Hanna Laako discussed the challenges of nation states and traditional parties in terms of the nature of the contemporary political. She argued that as globalisation has created multiple levels of decision-making, and multiple actors are more and more horizontal between one and another; therefore, the states and the traditional parties cannot be considered as the only principal actors in politics. In this sense, the political of today challenges the inter-state relations as well as the traditional parties.

Laako also suggested that we ought to be preoccupied with these questions precisely for the consequential reasons of so-called neoliberal globalisation, the exclusions and poverty, the fragmentations and divisions it has created. According to various authors, she argued, what appears to be important for the struggles of the future are the kinds of coalitions that could be created between different actors. This could be significant for two reasons: firstly, to influence the direction of world change, to diminish the negative effects of globalisation, and to contribute to alternatives. Secondly, to simply deal with matters of common goods which are of a global nature and cannot be resolved at the national level. Therefore, one way to approach the question on the possibility, or necessity of Global Parties would be to think about the kind of coalitions that may be created. If, for example, traditional parties could acknowledge the global and more horizontal nature of actors and politics, perhaps a coalition between movements and parties could be an option. On the other hand, a new actor could emerge from below, which not only resists but also actively seeks to fulfil the alternatives. This would not need to be a party in its most conservative sense, rather it could challenge the concept altogether.

The discussion on this issue began with a constructive and strong critique by **Roberto "Tito" Espinoza** from CEADES (Colectivo de Estudios Aplicados al Desarrollo Social y Fórum Social Pan-Amazonico). He immediately argued that this sort of analysis presents only a mid-point to worldwide changes, especially in regards to the crisis of traditional parties and social movements. It was acknowledged that a more profound critique was needed on traditional politics in comparison to the new political, and it should not continue with the typical and obvious classifications. Tito made

a special reference to actors, such as the World Bank, in relation to the Southern states and the indigenous movements and their propositions for global action. The World Bank has strongly influenced the crisis of the state and those of the North in a different manner. In this sense, it was eurocentrism that was underlined, and there was an expressed, urgent need for decolonisation of the concepts used in the discussion, such as the nation-state.

Tito's diagnosis was based on the argument that political parties are a eurocentric product, organised on the basis of the nation state. The eurocentric left, and the Marxist political parties only succeed to think of representation within the confines of the State. The accumulation of capitalism comes with the blood of the peoples. Capitalism is marked by whites and protestants, who call us scum as did the French Minister, Nicholas Sarkozy, during the Arab rebellion. The argument continued with a description of colonialism regarding the gas pipeline linking Venezuela and Brazil as a part of IRSA (Iniciativa Para la Integración de la Infraestructura Regional de América del Sur). The latter being a program that is heavily criticised by ecologists and environmentalists. In Latin America this is occurring mainly because of the "free trade" privileged prerogatives which preside over environment requirements.

For Tito, the colonial attitude he defines is inadequate with regards to representation of social movements. As such, Laako says, the form of representation should not be partisan because it would be polluted by the mark of domination from the beginning. How far can one get with the popular indigenous organisations, she asks, however wide and universal they might be, and however intercontinental they represent themselves? Tito is not exactly answering the question. The refusal of partisan representation rests on a very fragile argument, which, by the way, is not the privilege of an indigenous, radical position.

This contribution provoked other opinions from Latin American, social movement actors arguing that the political ought to emerge, and is emerging from below – from the local level. They were of the opinion that the challenge was how to respond to the expectations of the people. Therefore, it was argued that social movements at the local level were more accessible, tangible and effective in this respect; more successful both in terms of participation, and at listening the ordinary people.

Moreover, it was pinpointed that when dealing with practical matters affecting the daily lives, if it cannot function at the national level, then how could it work at the global level. Various speakers from Latin American social movements underscored that, at the end of the day, change was only possible at the local level, including that for the democratic system that is not functioning at the national level. Therefore they questioned if it was possible to skip the national level and succeed in creating democracy with efficient political parties at the global level.

Having said the above, the debate strongly moved towards an axis of "parties or movements", and "global, local or national"; there seemed to be a slight agreement that the national level was indeed in crisis, but whether this should mean action on the global level or rather local, was creating differing point of views. In the same manner, there appeared to be agreement that some joint action was needed, but whether it should be composed of the movements only, and/or parties produced various opinions.

In the dialogue, there was a strong American representation (since it was the American Social Forum) from both the North and South. There were participants on both sides who were in favoured of local action, at least as a point of departure, instead of national or global action. On the other hand, this contributed to several strong arguments that the global level should not be dismissed. This was especially due to the global nature of various common issues, such as global warming. In this sense, concentrating purely on the local level was seen as insufficient.

Francine Mestrum of ATTAC Belgium pointed out that due to the political parties crisis, we "went" to the movements, but this has a risk, as it leads in a neoliberalism direction, if trade unions and the World Bank will not consult the parties, nor will the social movements.

Indeed, somewhat surprisingly, the suggestion of collaboration between the traditional parties and social movements was raised on many occasions, both from the Northern and Southern sides. These propositions emerged from various approaches, for example, there was an argument criticising social movements for having a weaknesses in development and organisation; therefore, they need new subjectivity and flexibility. There were examples of several country-cases, such as those of Brazil and Italy, where it was raised that a combination of party and social movement forces could be effective.

For example, the experience of the Communist Refoundation in Italy deserves attention because of its obvious potential in Latin America. **Marco Berlinguer** from the Transform! European network, a kind of movement arm of the Refoundation and a partisan organisation that is very conscious of the degeneration of the political system, speaks and debates seriously about the urgency of political refoundation. What is the method, in this example, by which the distance between representation and vitality collapses? According to Berlinguer, the Refoundation worked from the beginning with the alter-mondialisation movements. "We had the idea of being at the forefront, and that we should penetrate the movements. And we believe that from this mobilisation a new kind of subjectivity emerges with practice as a priority. It is very clear to us that we are living a radical turnaround in history. We also seriously bear in mind that the means and aims are intrinsically linked, without any power concentration, and in order to overcome the problem of transnationality, one of the main challenges is the crises of the nation state. This is why we founded the European Left Party (May 2004). We need to elaborate new forms of organisation, with new ideas of horizontality and flexibility which are able to create a new strategy and a more efficient political action."

The Refoundation example is not, as it could be perceived, about an Initiative confined to the electoral agenda. That is not a way to build an alternative, but a way to become consumed by the economical avalanche, as Mestrum registered lucidly. The example is of a radical commitment to today's policy requirements, as history is made from now onwards and will be told from now backwards. This historical consideration is the only bridge to learn ways to legitimise political representation.

There were also a couple of suggestions both from the North and the South that the new global action could come about through parliamentary action. The crisis of the state was seen rather as a dilemma between the representation of national issues by the parliamentarians in comparison to the global issues that were not tackled in the parliamentary arena. This dialogue in turn contributed to the discussion on the relationship between social movements and states: how could the social movements increase their influence on states in general?

A few Northern speakers argued that there could be a sort of world governance composed of parliamentarians and the civil society. There were some examples of these kinds of spaces taking place. However, it was acknowledged that they did not have any formal power; there are ways for the formal system to block negotiations with the civil society.

As the dialogue took this turn, it appeared that there was general agreement around the need for global action, and the possibility for some sort of political parties was not completely dismissed as was expected in the beginning. Instead, there was an inclination for the possible creation of a global actor as an option for the world's lefts to pressure and advance their alternatives.

Indeed, it was underscored that the left could learn from the examples of common activities and forces between parties and movements. Equally, it was highlighted that we should not follow the path of the neoliberal world that is depoliticising institutions and actors.

Finally, the dialogue attempted to deal with the questions of traditional representation, mainly considered as being part of the problem and not a solution. As well, the concept of participatory democracy, as one example, was criticised for being part of this depoliticising project that does not really question the flaws of the democratic system. The discussion began to return to the original question: there are no global parliaments, and no global state, there are only spaces of encounter at the level of global governance – at which level can the parties take the power and carry out actual changes?

These questions were addressed by **Kjeld Jakobsen,** from PT of Brazil. In this respect, the dialogue came back to the original dilemma: the left has traditionally favoured a strong state; however, it is difficult to convince the parliamentarians of the global reality since they are selected at the national level to represent national interests. Moreover, action emerging from the national level could also appear imperialist to other national levels, therefore it is not able to provide sufficient global action. Parties are not governments – so how is it possible to create governments of communities? Could the Social Forum function as a political actor? Do we need global political parties and do they represent an option or possibility?

According to the active dialogue of the 40 or so participants in Caracas, what seemed certain, among the various approaches mentioned was the need for some sort of global action to emerge from below. There appeared to be a need to re-evaluate and question the national level politics, and for a deeper analysis of the new political. The options for coalitions, in particular between the parties and movements, provoked various perspectives, but most of all, they were all discussed, not immediately dismissed.

This indicates that there is room for initiatives, imagination and experiences – the discussion continues.

PART II: INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

INTERNATIONAL LEFT COLLABORATION AND SOCIALIST RENEWAL[9]

– a revolutionary perspective

John Percy

We are internationalists. Internationalism is a fundamental part of our socialism, but how do we organise, what form should that internationalism take? Let us briefly review the efforts to date.

First International

The International Workingmen's Association was formed in 1864, and lasted till 1878. It was based on its forerunner, the Communist League, for which Marx and Engels wrote The Communist Manifesto.

After the defeats of the 1848 revolutions, demoralisation and dispersal of the revolutionary forces set in. The labour movement was revived in the late 1850s, with a big economic crisis in 1857. The Italian war for independence in 1859, the US civil war of 1861-65, advances by the French working class and a big upsurge of workers' struggles in England provided the political background for the founding of the First International at a meeting in London on 28 September, 1864.

The International had some important achievements, and led some important struggles. It provided a practical demonstration of international working-class solidarity and helped popularise the ideas.

of Marxism. But Marxism had to contend constantly with the bourgeois liberal ideology of the British trade union leaders and the variety of petty-bourgeois socialism, especially followers of Proudhon, and anarchism, led by Bakunin. After the defeat of the Paris Commune in 1871, these destructive forces became overwhelming, leading to the decline, disintegration and final dissolution of the First International in 1878.

How effective was the First International? It was not based on parties, but brought together trade unions and workers' societies from most of the key countries in Europe and North America. It was dissolved by Marx and Engels when it no longer had essence, when it became just a form and in danger of playing a reactionary role. Afterwards, with the form dissolved, Marx could argue that the essence of international collaboration still persisted.

In 1878 he wrote, attacking the contention that the International had failed:

> In reality the social-democratic workers parties in Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, Portugal, Italy, Belgium, Holland and North America, organized more or less within national frontiers, represent just as many international groups, no longer isolated sections sparsely distributed over various countries and held together by a General Council on the periphery, but rather the working-class itself in constant, active and direct connection, held together by the exchange of ideas, mutual assistance and joint aims ... Thus, far from dying out, the International has developed from one stage into another and higher one in which many of its original tendencies have already been fulfilled. During the course of this constant development it will experience many changes before the final chapter in its history can be written.

Second International

Marx opposed any premature attempts to proclaim a second international. But with the upsurge of the labour movement in the 1880s, and the growth of working-class parties, especially the Social Democratic Party in Germany, a 1889 conference in Paris, bringing together parties based on Marxist principles, announced the formation of the Second International.

Early debates excluded the ideas of the anarchists, who opposed political and parliamentary action, practised terrorism and made a fetish of the general strike. The parties in the Second International grew and increased their support; the circulation of their party papers rose, and the new authority of the International and its impressive congresses was high. Debates on reform and revolution seemed clearly resolved in a Marxist framework.

It seemed to have a strong, healthy organisation, a structure to express the international solidarity of the workers of the world, a way to unite the parties, and to organise trade union solidarity. But the cancer of opportunism and revisionism in most parties of the Second International was not far under the surface. Leaders of parties in parliament started accepting posts in government; theoretical representatives, such as Eduard Bernstein elaborated excuses justifying such behaviour. The degeneration had its roots in the super-profits of imperialism, allowing the capitalists to toss some crumbs the way of a small layer of workers. The parliamentarians, trade union and party bureaucracies developed a comfortable existence; their interests became more aligned with the bosses than with struggling workers in their own countries and the exploited peoples of the colonies.

So the Second International's degeneration was masked with big speeches, fine words, and good-sounding resolutions. Anti-war conferences denounced war and their bourgeois governments, until their real nature was unmasked in August 1914.

Here you have an international, with a form, structures, leadership bodies, debates, congresses, publications, resolutions -- sometimes even good resolutions, but it was riddled with opportunism. In essence, it was a shell. There was the form, but no real internationalism when it counted. After 1914, it was dead with no possible pretension to fulfil the real tasks of international solidarity.

Third International

The Communist International was founded in 1919 in Moscow, in the midst of civil war, invasion by imperialist powers and acute economic crisis for the fledgling Soviet state. It was very much based on the Bolshevik party and its revolutionary socialist program. Most of the delegates were Bolsheviks or exiles stranded in Russia. There were not many genuinely revolutionary parties around the world, certainly few with anything approaching a mass base.

The Bolsheviks always stood for a new, genuinely revolutionary international. After 1914 and the victorious revolution, the new international was going to be set up. But its timing and the nature of resulted from the needs of the Russian Revolution and the revolutionary potential in Europe. Lenin and the Bolsheviks used the founding of the Third International for an emergency task: to defend the revolution by extending it.

The Bolsheviks had overwhelming authority among revolutionaries. Their resources, authority, political understanding, experience and practice far outweighed those of any other party. No other party had a team of revolutionary leaders steeled and trained over nearly two decades. Thus, the Comintern was lopsided from the start.

The revolutionary wave receded, no revolutions succeeded, and the Soviet Union remained isolated. With the degeneration of the CPSU, the degeneration of the Comintern followed. It became a tool controlled by Moscow. Its purpose was to implement Moscow's foreign policy, not to help make revolutions elsewhere. The Comintern became put a brake on revolutions, sapped initiatives and prevented the development of independent Marxist parties. Eventually it became a betrayer of revolutions.

The formal dissolution of the Comintern in 1943 was a concession to imperialism, a demonstration of good faith to Moscow's wartime allies. But it was already a shell. There had been no essence of internationalism there for a long time. It had the form of an international, but it was not internationalist.

Fourth International (FI)

With the degeneration of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) and the Comintern under Stalin, the remaining revolutionary currents in the Soviet Union and abroad gathered around Trotsky, the former leader of the Red Army, second only to Lenin in stature as a leader of the revolution.

Trotsky and his followers kept the revolutionary perspective alive. Trotsky made important analyses of what went wrong in the Soviet Union. But there were many unfortunate distortions in the resulting opposition organisations, which was, perhaps, inevitable given the objective conditions.

Following the failure of the German CP to respond effectively to the rise of Hitlerism in 1933, the Left Opposition changed from being an opposition within the CPSU to calling for the overthrow of the Stalin leadership and a perspective to building a new international. After five years of debating whether to set up the Fourth International, it was finally established in September, 1938, at a one-day conference in France with twenty-two delegates.

But it was a shell. The structure of the Third International was an emergency, temporary instrument to build parties, with a perspective of revolutions within months, but it had real forces backing it. The Fourth International, with no state power behind it, lacking a mass base, lacking resources or apparatus, tried to copy the form of the early Comintern. It described itself as the "World Party of Socialist Revolution".

The only resource the Trotskyists could point to was the program, so this was elevated. A tendency developed towards endless elaboration of the written program, with prescriptions for everybody else's revolution. But isolation from real struggle continued.

Splits inevitably resulted, leading to a multitude of groups claiming to be the "Fourth International". Today the FI is not embroiled in bitter factional struggles, although it does have debates and divisions. The FI is not dominated by one party, as most of the other Trotskyist "internationals" are, and it is not centralised, partly because of financial constraints, and perhaps wisdom gained from past disasters.

Our experience in Australia with the Fourth International was rich in lessons from the first year of our current, in 1965, to when we left in 1985. In the early years we were desperately eager for international contact. We were internationalists; we were won to socialism in the struggle against the Vietnam War. But we had no party, and only minimal contact with the FI. When the first representative of the FI visited here in 1969, we yearned for advice, instructions: how do we build a party, what should we do next? We enthusiastically wanted to join the FI.

But it was a double-edged sword. Less than a year after we formally became a section of the FI, in January, 1972, our party split, with the help of the International! The FI was in the middle of an intense, factional struggle. It had some useful results -- the educational value of the polemical discussion. But it also led to splits, and a tendency to separate off from real problems here. We healed that split ourselves, in 1977-78 (probably against the real wishes of the two sides in the Fourth International).

The reasons we left the FI, in 1985, are many. Our thinking then was prompted by the Nicaraguan revolution, a better understanding of the continuing impact of the Cuban revolution, our experiences in bitter factional fights within the FI, and the beginning of the degeneration of the US Socialist Workers Party of whom we had previously looked up to. We concluded that the FI was an obstacle to fully participating in the process of building new revolutionary parties, and a new, mass, international revolutionary movement.

Doug Lorimer concluded in his 1985 report to the national committee meeting of the Democratic Socialist Party on leaving the Fourth International:

> Does this mean we are turning away from internationalism? Such a view could only be made by those who confuse a particular form of international organisation with internationalism. Our conception of internationalism involves developing international collaboration. It involves the fraternal exchange of views and experiences among revolutionaries based on a willingness to learn from others, while thinking for ourselves. The forms through which this occurs are totally secondary.
>
> Far from turning away from internationalism by leaving the Fourth International, we are turning toward a more real internationalism, toward collaboration with those revolutionary forces that are really extending the world socialist revolution.
>
> ... We want to have relations, exchanges of views and experiences, with anyone who wishes to have such fraternal relations with us. But we refuse to have such relations held hostage to a particular organisational form.

Today the Fourth International is not embroiled in bitter factional struggles, although it does have debates and divisions. And the FI is not dominated by one party, as most of the other Trotskyist "internationals" are. It is not centralised, but it still persists with the forms — a world congress, votes, an international centre, the shibboleth of Permanent Revolution. It is based on small groups not rooted in the mass movements; that is true of most revolutionary parties today, but the FI's life seems dominated by the smallest groups, those least connected with the mass movement. And often the centre has been staffed by individuals who are not members of parties at all.

"World parties"

Although in practice the FI is moving away from it, most of the other attempts at Trotskyist internationals still try to implement that "World Party of Socialist Revolution" structure, with a "leading staff" at the centre. These are mostly tiny forces, multiple general staffs directing the world revolution with centres in London, Paris, New York, and Latin America. Their "sections" are sometimes just a handful of individuals.

Recent experiences with the Committee for a Workers International, the international based on the Militant group in Britain, have been unfortunate. At one stage it looked like they were moving away from that narrow conception. They began to reach out to other parties from other traditions, away from the caricature of an international where the true line came from London and the task was to create factions and splits in other parties.

I think the International Workers League (LIT), the international Trotskyist organisation centred in Brazil, still has that perspective of building the "World Party of Socialist Revolution". Their program is the one true basis on which to build it, but unfortunately, they still seem to have this perspective, which can lead only to further splits in the all too small forces of revolutionary Marxism.

An LIT statement insists that it rejects "all proposals for a federal organisation of the International. The imperialist epoch of crises, wars and revolutions demands a world party, and a federation is not a party.

We affirm the necessity of a world party based on the principle of democratic centralism, constituted at the national level by Leninist combat parties".

It's worthwhile for us all to review the many internationals, the many splits, even the many bizarre cults, especially in the Trotskyist movement, but also in the Maoist movement. There have been many unfortunate experiences in the workers' movement of sectarianism and cults.

Real internationalism

The capitalist class is certainly getting more organised internationally -- admittedly with a lot of bullying from us imperialism -- the IMF, World Bank, WTO.

The liberal NGOs have had multiple opportunities for organising internationally. The Greens are taking some steps towards international organisation; they have a conference planned for Australia in 2001. Even the anarchists are getting more organised internationally.

Surely, revolutionary Marxists should be able to find a way towards closer international collaboration, and less factionalism and division.

We are critical of existing "internationals", but we want to maintain collaboration and contact with parties in them, and the international organisation too. We are open about our views on what we think are the best forms for international collaboration, as we were open when we left the Fourth International in 1985. Comrades in international organisations should take our criticism -- our sincerely held positions -- as constructive. We hope that more and more parties can relate, debate, discuss in a comradely way, and implement a new practice without the sectarianism and the excommunications of the past.

What would be the result of a newish party today joining one of the existing attempts at an international? Does its international practice increase? Do doors open, or doors shut? Generally it is the latter; rather than heading in a direction that would increase their international experiences, increase their collaboration with other parties and solidarity with other struggles, they enter a more closed world. To one extent or

another, you are supposed to shun other parties, because they do not have 100% political agreement with the international centre.

What has been our experience in Australia? On leaving the FI, did our horizons narrow? Look at our international practice over the last 15 years. We have made extraordinary efforts to gather information, analyse it, make it available to others around the world. First with Direct Action, and then with Green Left Weekly, we established correspondents in Europe, Moscow, and South Africa.

We have run our own party education schools, and made places available for comrades from a range of parties in the region. Our international solidarity work, with Central America through CISLAC in the 1980s, and with Indonesia and East Timor through ASIET in the 1990s has been exemplary.

We have organised frequent impressive conferences with an international orientation -- the two Socialist Scholars Conferences, the International Green Left Conference, the Asia Pacific Solidarity Conference. We have put considerable resources into international travel, attending other conferences, and meeting and working with other parties. We initiated Links magazine as a broad socialist international discussion journal, and have continued to subsidise it.

For a small party, with modest resources, that is more real international work, more internationalism, than most parties in "internationals", and most "internationals".

The point is: internationalism is an activity, not an organisational form.

Because we are internationalists, we are eager to help others build revolutionary parties, build better collaboration, build a real network, build parties that can make revolutions in all the countries of the world.

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL[10]

The Socialist International is the worldwide organisation of social democratic, socialist and labour parties. It currently brings together 161 political parties and organisations from all continents.

The Socialist International, whose origins go back to the early international organisations of the labour movement, has existed in its present form since 1951, when it was re-established at the Frankfurt Congress. Since then it has been increasingly active and grown considerably in membership, particularly in recent years doubling the number of its members during the 1990s. Labour, social democratic and socialist parties are now a major political force in democracies around the world. Numerous member parties of the International, in all continents, are currently leading governments or are the main opposition force.

The supreme decision-making bodies of the International are the Congress, which meets every three to four years, and the Council, which includes all member parties and organisations and which meets twice a year.

George Papandreou, President of PASOK, the organisation's member party in Greece, is President of the Socialist International, elected in January 2006. Luis Ayala (Chile) is the Secretary General, re-elected at the last Congress. The Vice-Presidents, who are also elected, together with the

President and the Secretary General, make up the Presidium of the International, the leadership of the organisation. Former Presidents and Secretaries General of the organisation

From 1976 to 1992 the late Willy Brandt, former Chancellor of Germany and winner of the 1971 Nobel Peace Prize, was President of the Socialist International. Pierre Mauroy, former Prime Minister of France, served as President from 1992 to 1999, and António Guterres, former Prime Minister of Portugal, from 1999 to 2005.

The secretariat of the Socialist International is located in London and coordinates the activities and initiatives of the International, convenes its meetings and conferences, issues statements and press releases and produces its publications.

The International established for the current inter-Congress period, in addition to the statutory Ethics Committee and Committee for Finance and Administration, committees on subjects or regions, as follows: the Economy, Social Cohesion and the Environment; Local Authorities; Migrations; Peace, Democracy and Human Rights; Africa; Asia and the Pacific; CIS and the Caucasus; Latin America and the Caribbean; the Mediterranean; the Middle East; South Eastern Europe and working groups within some of these committees on the Bretton Woods System; the Kurdish Question; and South Pacific Democracies.

These committees or working groups have specific programmes of activities and meet regularly.

The Socialist International also frequently sends missions or delegations to various countries or regions. In recent years these have visited on many occasions the Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe.

The Socialist International is financed by annual affiliation fees from its member parties and its fraternal and associated organisations. The International's budget is decided democratically by all members at its Council meetings. The 2006 Budget totals £1,125,000 (pounds sterling). During 2004 the International registered a total income of £1,012,000 with a total expenditure of £1,029,000, which broke down into £71,000 for communications; £113,000 for administration; £406,000 for the Secretariat; £87,000 for conferences and council meetings; £85,000 for delegations and missions; £94,000 for committees and other meetings, as well as £174,000 for Socialist International Women.

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10 The following text is from the Socialist International documents in the web site http://www.socialistinternational.org/.

As a non-governmental organisation, the Socialist International has consultative status (Category I) with the United Nations, and works internationally with a large number of other organisations.

Declaration of Principles

Adopted by the XVIII Congress, Stockholm, June 1989

I. Global Change and Future Prospects

1. The idea of Socialism has caught the imagination of people across the world, promoted successful political movements, decisively improved the lives of working men and women, and contributed to shaping the 20th century.
However, justified satisfaction about the realisation of many of our goals should not prevent us from clearly recognising present dangers and problems. We are aware that essential tasks still lie ahead which we can master only through common action, since human survival increasingly depends upon the joint efforts of people around the world.

2. Current economic, technological, political and social changes reflect a profound transformation of our world. The fundamental issue we now face is not whether there will be change in future years, but rather who is going to control it and how. The socialist answer is unequivocal. It is the people of the world who should exercise control by means of a more advanced democracy in all aspects of life: political, social, and economic. Political democracy, for socialists, is the necessary framework and precondition for other rights and liberties.

3. All the peoples of the world should be involved in the process of transforming our societies and promoting new hope for humankind. The Socialist International calls on all men and women committed to peace and progress to work together in order to translate this hope into reality.

4. The challenge of global change opens up enormous possibilities:

- The internationalisation of the economy and wide-spread access to information and new technologies can, if brought under democratic control, provide a basis for a world society better suited to cooperation. It is obvious that a world family is no longer a utopian dream, but, increasingly, a practical necessity.

- The technological revolution can and should be used to preserve the environment, create new employment and provide the means to liberate people from routine work rather than ruthlessly impose unwanted idleness.

- On the basis of suitable and humane democratic structures, freedom, equality, security and prosperity can be achieved within the framework of a democratic world society.

5. However, many current trends also give rise to unprecedented threats:

- Proliferation of the technologies of destruction promote a precarious balance of terror where there are inadequate guarantees for the security of humankind.

- The physical conditions for life on the planet are threatened by an uncontrolled urban and industrial expansion, the degradation of the biosphere, and the irrational exploitation of vital resources.

- Hunger, famine and death threaten whole regions and communities in the South, even though the world has enough natural and technical resources to feed itself.

6. This transformation of social and economic structures is at least as dramatic and far-reaching as the transition from laissez-faire to the corporate capitalism and colonialism of pre-World War I days. The social cost of these transformations - unemployment, regional decline, destruction of communities - has affected not only the very poor but also working people in general.

7. The rapid process of internationalisation and interdependence in the world economy has given rise to contradictions within existing political, social and national institutions. This growing gap between an international economy and inadequate international political structures has been a contributory factor to the poverty and underdevelopment of the South, as well as to mass unemployment and new forms of poverty in many areas of the North.

8. Real progress has been made since World War II in vital areas such as decolonisation, the growth of the Welfare State and, more recently, disarmament, where the first hopeful steps have been taken. However, age-old injustices remain. Human rights are still violated, racial and sex

discrimination are rife, and individual opportunities in life are still determined by the region and class in which people are born.

9. Faced with such crucial issues, the Socialist International reaffirms its fundamental beliefs. It is committed, as ever, to the democratisation on a global scale of economic, social and political power structures. The same principles and political commitments which socialism has always held have to be attained in a world that has changed radically since the Frankfurt Declaration of 1951.

10. The Socialist International was founded a hundred years ago in order to coordinate the worldwide struggle of democratic socialist movements for social justice, human dignity and democracy. It brought together parties and organisations from different traditions which shared a common goal: democratic socialism. Throughout their history, socialist, social democratic and labour parties have stood for the same values and principles.

11. Today the Socialist International combines its traditional struggle for freedom, justice and solidarity with a deep commitment to peace, the protection of the environment, and the development of the South. All these issues require common answers. To this end, the Socialist International seeks the support of all those who share its values and commitment.

II. Principles

Freedom, Justice and Solidarity

12. Democratic socialism is an international movement for freedom, social justice and solidarity. Its goal is to achieve a peaceful world where these basic values can be enhanced and where each individual can live a meaningful life with the full development of his or her personality and talents and with the guarantee of human and civil rights in a democratic framework of society.

13. Freedom is the product of both individual and cooperative efforts - the two aspects are parts of a single process. Each person has the right to be free of political coercion and also to the greatest chance to act in pursuit of individual goals and to fulfil personal potential. But that is only possible if humanity as a whole succeeds in its long-standing struggle to master its

history and to ensure that no person, class, sex, religion or race becomes the servant of another.

14. Justice and Equality. Justice means the end of all discrimination against individuals, and the equality of rights and opportunities. It demands compensation for physical, mental and social inequalities, and freedom from dependence on either the owners of the means of production or the holders of political power.

Equality is the expression of the equal value of all human beings and the precondition for the free development of the human personality. Basic economic, social and cultural equality is essential for individual diversity and social progress.

Freedom and equality are not contradictory. Equality is the condition for the development of individual personality. Equality and personal freedom are indivisible.

15. Solidarity is all-encompassing and global. It is the practical expression of common humanity and of the sense of compassion with the victims of injustice. Solidarity is rightly stressed and celebrated by all major humanist traditions. In the present era of unprecedented interdependence between individuals and nations, solidarity gains an enhanced significance since it is imperative for human survival.

16. Democratic socialists attach equal importance to these fundamental principles. They are interdependent. Each is a prerequisite of the other. As opposed to this position, Liberals and Conservatives have placed the main emphasis on individual liberty at the expense of justice and solidarity while Communists have claimed to achieve equality and solidarity, but at the expense of freedom.

Democracy and Human Rights

17. The idea of democracy is based on the principles of freedom and equality. Therefore, equal rights for men and women - not only in theory, but also in practice, at work, in the family and in all areas of social life - are part of the socialist concept of society.

18. Democratic socialists strive to achieve equal rights for all races, ethnic groups, nations and denominations. These rights are seriously in question in many regions of the world today.

19. Forms of democracy of course may vary. However, it is only possible to speak of democracy if people have a free choice between various political alternatives in the framework of free elections; if there is a possibility for a change of government by peaceful means based on the free will of the people; if individual and minority rights are guaranteed; and, if there is an independent judicial system based on the rule of law impartially applied to all citizens. Political democracy is an indispensable element of a socialist society. Democratic socialism is a continuing process of social and economic democratisation and of increasing social justice.

20. Individual rights are fundamental to the values of socialism. Democracy and human rights are also the substance of popular power, and the indispensable mechanism whereby people can control the economic structures which have so long dominated them. Without democracy, social policies cannot disguise the dictatorial character of a government.

21. There can be no doubt that different cultures will develop their own institutional forms of democracy. But whatever form democracy assumes - nationally or internationally - it must provide full rights for individuals and for organised minority opinions. For socialists, democracy is of its very nature pluralist, and this pluralism provides the best guarantee of its vitality and creativity.

22. Freedom from arbitrary and dictatorial government is essential. It constitutes the precondition whereby peoples and societies can create a new and better world of peace and international cooperation - a world in which political, economic and social destinies will be democratically determined.

The Nature of Socialism

23. Democratic socialists have arrived at the definition of these values in many different ways. They originate in the labour movement, popular liberation movements, cultural traditions of mutual assistance, and communal solidarity in many parts of the world. They have also gained from the various humanist traditions of the world.

But although there are differences in their cultures and ideologies, all socialists are united in their vision of a peaceful and democratic world society combining freedom, justice and solidarity.

24. The national struggles for democratic socialism in the years to come will show differences in policy and divergences on legislative provisions. These will reflect different histories and the pluralism of varied societies. Socialists do not claim to possess the blueprint for some final and fixed society which cannot be changed, reformed or further developed. In a movement committed to democratic self-determination there will always be room for creativity since each people and every generation must set its own goals.

25. In addition to the principles which guide all democratic socialists, there is a clear consensus among socialists on fundamental values. Despite all diversity, it is common ground that democracy and human rights are not simply political means to socialist ends but the very substance of those ends - a democratic economy and society.

26. Individual freedom and basic rights in society are the preconditions of human dignity for all. These rights cannot replace one another, nor can they be played off against each other. Socialists protect the inalienable right to life and to physical safety, to freedom of belief and free expression of opinion, to freedom of association and to protection from torture and degradation. Socialists are committed to achieve freedom from hunger and want, genuine social security, and the right to work.

27. Democratic socialism also means cultural democracy. There must be equal rights and opportunities for the different cultures within each society as well as equal access for everyone to the national and global cultural heritage.

EDITORS NOTE: the declaration continues to 100 points with sub-headings Peace - A Basic Value, Initiatives for Peace, North and South, Globalisation, The Environmental Challenge, Social Control of Technological Development, Disarmament and Development, Shaping the Twenty- First Century, Political and Economic Democracy, Culture and Society, The Role of Men and Women in Modern Society, A New International Culture for Political Dialogue, A New Model for Growth, Solidarity between North and South, With the Socialist International Towards a Democratic World Society, The Unity of International Socialism, A New Democratic Order.

LIBERAL INTERNATIONAL[11]

The Liberal International is the world federation of liberal political parties. Founded in 1947 it has become the pre-eminent network for promoting liberalism, strengthening liberal parties and for the promotion of liberal democracy around the world. There are a number of common principles which unite all liberal parties from Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe; human rights, free and fair elections and multiparty-democracy, social justice, tolerance, social market economy, free trade, environmental sustainability and a strong sense of international solidarity. Naturally in the application of these principles in different national circumstances there is diversity among liberal parties. All members adhere to the organisations Manifesto's.

Liberalism

Liberals are committed to building and safeguarding free, fair and open societies, in which they seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community, and in which no-one is enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity. Liberalism champions the freedom, dignity and well-being of individuals. Liberalism acknowledge and respect the right to freedom of conscience and the right of everyone to develop their talents to

the full. Liberalism aims to disperse power, to foster diversity and to nurture creativity. The freedom to be creative and innovative can only be sustained by a market economy, but it must be a market that offers people real choices. This means that Liberals want neither a market where freedom is limited by monopolies or an economy disassociated from the interests of the poor and of the community as a whole. Liberals are optimistic at heart and trust the people while recognising the need to be always vigilant of those in power.

Human Rights

Human rights is a core component of liberalism. We believe that these rights are a pre-condition for progress and stability and can only be secured by true democracy. Liberals recognise the essential need to promote political and civil rights and therefore oppose all forms of dictatorship. Education, the fulfilment of women's rights and respect for the environment are essential. We campaign for respect for the rights of minority groups, which is in all our interests, since in one way or the other we are all minorities.

Free Trade and Development

Liberals believe that the poverty of large parts of the world can be alleviated through freedom to travel and to trade and to this end are committed to the further opening of 'western' markets for products from the developing world. But a social market economy has to be accompanied by democratic institutions. Development finance can only help reduce poverty if the recipient government institutions adopt practices of good governance, including full trans-parency and accountability based on the rule of law. Without freedom, openness, political choice and autonomous institutions to enforce the provisions of the law, there is no hope of controlling corruption or creating development. That is why liberals emphasis that international development assistance should also focus on developing the political foundations.

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11 The following text is extracted from the Liberal International documents at their web site http://www.liberal-international.org/.

Annex: Oxford Manifesto 1997: The Liberal Agenda for the 21ˢᵗ Century:

The Liberal Manifesto, adopted by the 48th Congress of Liberal International on 27-30 November 1997 in The Town Hall in Oxford, UK

Inspired by the founders of the Liberal International who fifty years ago launched the Liberal Manifesto, 475 Liberals from every continent have returned to Oxford on 2730 November 1997 to consider Liberal responses to the challenges and opportunities that emerge on the threshold of a new millennium.

Over the past 50 years, substantial progress has been made in establishing open societies based upon political and economic liberty. However, there is still a long way to go. New generations have to define liberal priorities in the face of new opportunities and new dangers.

There remain many challenges to Liberalism: from the violation of human rights, from excessive concentrations of power and wealth; from fundamentalist, totalitarian, xenophobic and racist ideologies, from discrimination on grounds of sex, religion, age, sexual orientation and disability; from poverty and ignorance, from the widening gap between rich and poor; from the misuse of new technologies, from the weakening of social ties, from competition for scarce resources, from environmental degradation in an overcrowded world, from organised crime and from political corruption. Our task as Liberals in the 21st Century will be to seek political responses to these new challenges which promote individual liberty and human rights, open societies and economies, and global cooperation.

Our Liberal Values

We reaffirm our commitment to the principles of Liberalism set out in the International Liberal Manifesto of April 1947: that liberty and individual responsibility are the foundations of civilised society; that the state is only the instrument of the citizens it serves; that any action of the state must respect the principles of democratic accountability; that constitutional liberty is based upon the principles of separation of powers; that justice requires that in all criminal prosecution the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, and to a fair verdict free from any political influence; that state control of the economy and private monopolies both threaten political liberty; that rights and duties go together, and that every citizen has a moral responsibility to others in society; and that a peaceful world can only be built upon respect for these principles and upon cooperation among democratic societies. We reaffirm that these principles are valid throughout the world.

Freedom, responsibility, tolerance, social justice and equality of opportunity: these are the central values of Liberalism, and they remain the principles on which an open society must be built. These principles require a careful balance of strong civil societies, democratic government, free markets, and international cooperation.

We believe that the conditions of individual liberty include the rule of law, equal access to a full and varied education, freedom of speech, association, and access to information, equal rights and opportunities for women and men, tolerance of diversity, social inclusion, the promotion of private enterprise and of opportunities for employment. We believe that civil society and constitutional democracy provide the most just and stable basis for political order. We see civil society as constituted by free citizens, living within a framework of established law, with individual rights guaranteed, with the powers of government limited and subject to democratic accountability.

We believe that an economy based on free market rules leads to the most efficient distribution of wealth and resources, encourages innovation, and promotes flexibility.

We believe that close cooperation among democratic societies through global and regional organisations, within the framework of international law, of respect for human rights, the rights of national and ethnic minorities, and of a shared commitment to economic development worldwide, is the necessary foundation for world peace and for economic and environmental sustainability.

The advance of Liberalism, 1947-97

We welcome the progress made over the past fifty years in putting Liberal principles into practice in a growing number of countries:
the return of freedom and democracy to the former communist countries in Europe

the spread of democratic government and the rule of law.

the end of colonialism, with previously-subject peoples gaining the opportunity for self-government.

the retreat of the state from control of national economies, with widespread acceptance that market economies create wealth more effectively and distribute it more widely.

the transformation of education from a privilege for a minority to a life-long process for a rising proportion of citizens.

growing respect for human rights, both within states and as a subject for international oversight and - where necessary - intervention.

a growing national and international awareness of the human rights of women and children.

the extension of the rules of equality to sexual minorities and the recognition that homosexuality and lesbianism are legitimate expressions of personal proclivities.

the consolidation of an open international economy, within an agreed framework of international regulation.

the strengthening of international law and of global and regional institutions.

increased freedom of information, communication and travel, both within and across national boundaries.

acceptance that shared responsibility within the world community extends to a common obligation to tackle world poverty and to protect the global environment.

The challenge for our generation

We recognise that these achievements have been won so far for only a minority of humankind.

The challenges we face in the next fifty years are to build on what has been achieved, to extend the principles of liberalism throughout the world, and to harness the forces of change to consolidate rather than to undermine the development of open societies.

The challenges we face include:

1. The challenge of extending democracy.

Liberal democracy has at last become widely accepted as the global model for political organisation. But only a minority of states are yet properly democratic. Authoritarian regimes, military elites usurping power, abuse of state powers for partisan purposes, criminal elements gaining influence over government, power-seekers exploiting popular hopes and fears, still block the path to liberty. We call on all governments and peoples

* to discriminate in international relations in favour of governments which observe the rules of human rights and democracy;
* to abolish capital punishment all over the world;
* to strengthen the rule of law and to promote good governance within a genuinely democratic framework;
* to redirect public spending from military expenditure towards investment in social capital, sustainability, and the alleviation of poverty;
* to limit the sale of arms, and to prevent the sale of the means of repression to non-democratic regimes, and to promote the effectiveness of the UN register of conventional arms;
* to combat corruption, organised crime and terrorism;
* to promote media free from undue control or interference by government or dominant companies;
* to instil through education the crucial importance of tolerance to the very existence of a civilised society

2. The challenge of violence and of global governance.

In a world filled with violent conflicts, one of the most critical tasks is to find effective means of avoiding violence. An increasingly interdependent world also requires a high standard of international cooperation to promote a secure, sustainable and equitable world order. Transnational crime, intractable disease, environmental pollution and the threat of climate change pose additional challenges for international cooperation. Liberals are committed to strengthen global governance through the United Nations and through regional cooperation. We call on all governments to join in the initiative to establish an international criminal court with jurisdiction over war criminals. Our objective in the 21st century is to build a liberal world

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order securely based upon the rule of law and backed by appropriate global and regional institutions.

3. The challenge of improving democracy.

We recognise that democratic practices must be extended further to meet the expectations of more educated societies and to protect against disillusionment with representative government. Citizens deserve better access to information, more effective parliamentary controls on executive power, wider opportunities to play an active part in public life and to question their governments. The principle of subsidiarity must be fully respected, to give the maximum autonomy to regions and local communities. Effective decentralisation of political power to self-governing communities remains the best way to empower every citizen.

4. The tension between self-government and human rights.

Self-government, more specifically state sovereignty, can conflict with individual freedom and human rights. Authoritarian regimes abuse the principle of sovereignty to bar intervention to support those who are denied freedom. Liberals insist that human rights are indivisible and universal, and do not depend on citizenship of a specific state, or on membership of a particular ethnic or social group, gender, religion or political party. Adequate sanctions should be found by the international community against governments which refuse to observe the principles of an open international society.

5. The challenge of poverty and social exclusion.

Poverty, unemployment, and social exclusion blight the lives of men and especially of women, children and the elderly, and present major dangers to civil society. Poverty breeds despair and despair breeds extremism, intolerance and aggression. The central question in the alleviation of poverty is how to provide people with the means to fight poverty themselves, to lift themselves out of poverty. We call for an active policy, creating opportunity for education and employment, assistance for those who cannot help themselves, resting upon a partnership between

public and private provision. Public institutions and welfare systems must be as flexible and as locally administered as possible, aiming to promote individual responsibility and respond to individual circumstances.

6. The challenge of lean government.

The age-old misconception that it is government's business to organise people's happiness is heading for crisis, if not collapse, all over the world. In most industrialised countries, exaggerated and ill-targeted systems of social security and redistribution threaten to break down, and state budgets to impose ever-increasing debt burdens on future generations. In developing countries, attempts to promote development exclusively or predominantly by government action are bound to fail, through overloading government and stifling private initiative, the only factor that can produce really sustainable development. Liberals recognise that the capacity of government is limited, that 'big government' and the growth of state expenditure are themselves serious threats to a free society, and that limiting the scope of government and retrenchment of government spending must therefore be given priority.

7. The need for a new contract between generations.

We recognise the tensions between the immediate pressures of demand and consumption and the long-term interests of community and environment, with which governments as trustees for society must be concerned. We seek a new contract between generations, recognising the benefits which current consumers and citizens have received from earlier investment and the responsibilities they carry to maintain and renew the natural environment, cultural treasures, public assets and social capital for future generations. Prices should reflect the underlying costs of pollution and of the exploitation of natural resources.

8. The challenge of scientific and technological progress.

We welcome the economic and social opportunities presented by new technologies and scientific innovation. But we also recognise the need for public scrutiny of their potential impact, and misuse, and for national and

international regulation. The precautionary principle should be the governing principle in all sectors of human activity. This is particularly true for the threat of climate change, which mankind has to address immediately. Binding agreements and timetables for substantial reductions of the consumption of fossil fuels are urgently needed. Consumption must be kept within the regenerative capacities of the ecosystems. All chemicals, genetically engineered substances and industrial products should be carefully tested before they are commercially utilised. We also welcome the revolution in communications, which offers new opportunities to promote creativity, decentralisation, and individual autonomy and initiative. Liberals insist upon diverse channels of communication, provided through competition in the open market. Information, networks and other communication structures must be widely accessible, with open systems for producers and consumers and public interest bodies.

9. The challenge of creating open markets.

Open societies need open markets. A liberal, open and tolerant society requires a market economy. Political freedom and economic freedom belong together. With the markets of ideas and innovations, with the competition for the best solution, the market economy creates a dynamic progress that provides the best opportunity for an independent life. With the underlying principle of private property and a legal framework to prevent monopolies, open markets generate private initiative and the economic means for social assistance. Bureaucratic regulations of market economics and protectionism are therefore barriers for new chances and new jobs in developing countries as well as in the industrialised world.

In order to achieve an ecologically and socially sustainable development the emphasis should be shifted from taxation of labour to taxation of energy and raw material consumption. Without such a change the environmental problems and the unemployment will continue to increase.

10. The challenge of world-wide development.

Corrupt and authoritarian government, weak states and societies, unemployment, impoverishment, illiteracy, and over-population all contribute to environmental degradation, generate flows of migrants and refugees, and provoke revolts against political and social order. It is in the long-term self-interest of the developed world to encourage human progress, and assist economic development within poor countries; it is also a moral responsibility. Since open global markets best serve to promote prosperity, within both rich and poor countries, Liberals will have to aggressively re-emphasise, and to the best of their ability implement, their firm conviction that free trade, by giving the best opportunities to the economically weak, is the safest way towards overcoming poverty in the world. Resistance to economic protectionism therefore remains a key Liberal commitment.

At the dawn of the 21st century we commit ourselves as Liberals to work together to meet these challenges. We reaffirm the Liberal commitment to place the freedom and dignity of every human being at the centre of our political life.

INTERNATIONAL DEMOCRAT UNION

Miika Kopperoinen

The International Democrat Union (IDU) consists of over 80 Conservative, Christian Democrat, and like-minded political parties from the centre and centre right. Formed in 1983, the IDU provides a forum in which parties holding similar beliefs can come together and exchange views on matters of policy and organisational interest.

Founder Members of the IDU included Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, then Vice-President George Bush Sr, Jacques Chirac - now President of France, Chancellor Helmut Kohl, and many other party leaders.

We believe in the ideology of liberal democracy, freedom of the individual, and the need for economic growth to be based on individual initiative and free, competitive, enterprise economies. The IDU has a clear role in the modern world where today's idea in one country is tomorrow's policy in another.

Working together

Through the IDU, member parties can exchange policy ideas, assist each other in winning political arguments, and winning elections. There are regular meetings, for both the full IDU, and its Regional Unions and Organisations. Officers of the IDU are elected at Party Leaders' Meetings held every three or four years.

At IDU Executive Meetings, known as briefings, are given on local and topical issues, as well as considerations given to applicant parties. Apart from

Executive Meetings, the IDU holds annual events such as the Young Leaders Forum. A major event is held every four years to coincide with the Republican Convention, the most recent one was held in August, 2004, in New York.

Moreover, the IDU organises campaigning seminars for politicians and party workers. These involve exchanges of information on campaign technology, fund-raising techniques, opinion polling, advertising, and campaign organisation. The IDU plays an essential role in enabling like-minded, centre-right parties to share experiences in order to achieve electoral success.

Membership structure

The IDU has over 80 Member Parties from over 60 countries who belong to itself, or one of its Regional Unions. It is known as the only international organisation of its kind with full members from both Russia and the USA. Many of its members come from the newly established democracies of the 1990s.

In addition to this full membership of the IDU, parties can join one of the Regional Unions, or the Women's and Youth Organisations under the IDU umbrella.

Democratic challenges and globalisation

Level of democracy varies a lot in different areas throughout the world. The idea of democracy has roots in European history, and it has been adopted as the governmental system through a long process in many countries around the world. However, there are countries lead in non-democratic ways and countries where democracy is used to legitimise (often corrupted) administration or even dictatorship. Cultural influences, traditions and religions, determinate possible ways of developing democratic systems.

Freedom is the key element for democracy. Freedom of speech and freedom of peaceful organizing are basic values of open societies. The right to private ownership for every person and free markets are needed to reach the acceptable levels. Limitations in freedom of founding and acting in non-military organisations are violations against positive developments. A big challenge for efficient democracy is how to share information and get people aware of possibilities. That is a major problem in areas where infrastructure is weak and society do not offer any educational system. Illiterate people have difficulties finding information, and people need to have access to sources of independent distributors of information.

Acknowledging and accepting cultural diversity is a key element in developing fruitful co-operation between different groups and nations, from the local to the global level. Especially at the global level, tensions between religions and national interests create a challenging atmosphere for developing possibilities to solve problematic questions in democratic ways.

Annex: Main principles of the IDU

HAVING REGARD to their common convictions that democratic societies provide individuals throughout the world with the best conditions for political liberty, personal freedom, equality of opportunity and economic development under the rule of law, and therefore

BEING COMMITTED to advancing the social and political values on which democratic societies are founded;

STRESSING our commitment to the promotion of basic personal freedoms and human rights secured by private property rights and in particular, the rights of free speech, organisation, assembly and non-violent dissent; the right to free and fair elections and the freedom to organise effective parliamentary opposition to government; the right to a free and independent media; the right to religious belief; and the right to equality before the law;

OPPOSING the use of violence, imprisonment, forced exile and confiscation of property as a means of achieving political objectives;

HAVING REGARD to their common beliefs in an open society, where power is dispersed widely amongst free institutions, dedicated to creating conditions that will enable each individual to reach his full potential and to carry out his responsibilities to his fellow men; and where the central task of government is to serve the individual and to safeguard and promote individual freedom;

STRESSING the moral commitments of a free and open society, supporting the institutions of the family as its fundamental social and cohesive force, as well as social responsibility towards the weak and less fortunate, particularly by encouraging self-help and individual enterprise and choice in the provision of services;

HAVING REGARD to their common views that political democracy and private property are inseparable components of individual liberty and that the free market economy provide the best means of creating the wealth and material prosperity to meet the legitimate aspirations of individuals, and of tackling social evils such as unemployment and inflation;

BELIEVING that this is the most effective and beneficial way of providing individual initiative and enterprise, responsible economic development, employment opportunities, low taxation and consumer choice;

HAVING REGARD to the threats imposed by oppressive ideologies;

REJECTING any form of totalitarianism, which brings so much suffering and restricts so many freedoms today;

HAVING REGARD to the important global tasks which render necessary and desirable a closer and efficient collaboration of their organisations, inspired by their common convictions;

PLEDGING THEMSELVES to work towards closer co-operation among all the peoples of democratic nations, while recognising the right of each

individual nation to preserve its identity and to safeguard its vital interests, to use their influence and above all their political values for the greater good of the world, especially by promoting the mutual responsibilities of all nations for global economic development;

DECLARE their dedication to a just and lasting peace and freedom throughout the world; and

FURTHER DECLARE that the cause of peace will be advanced by adherence to the principles expressed in this Declaration; and in

ACTIVELY INVITING other organisations to subscribe to them.

London 1983

GLOBAL GREENS

Margaret Blakers

Greens will support each other personally and politically with friendship, optimism and good humour, and not forget to enjoy ourselves in the process!
Global Greens Charter, Article 10.11

When Green Senators Bob Brown and Kerry Nettle confronted US President George W Bush in the Australian parliament, it heartened anti-war activists around the world. Germany's, then Green Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer's forthright opposition to the Iraq war had the same effect.

For Greens, politics is not just about the pursuit of political office; it is about achieving change as community activists through elected office. We come from civil society movements and we carry that ethos into elected office. Parliaments are places for activism as well as for the making of policy and law.

The idea of taking campaigns for the environment, peace, and justice into the parliament is 33 years old. The world's first Green Party, the United Tasmania Group, formed in March 1972 in Australia's southern state of Tasmania in opposition to the damming of Lake Pedder. It was followed in May by the world's first national Green party, New Zealand's Values Party,

and in 1973, Britain's Ecology Party was the first European Green party. Ecology parties flourished in Europe. In 1979, Daniel Brelaz, from Switzerland, was the first Green MP in the world elected to a national parliament. In the same year, Green and radical parties from West Germany, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Italy established a Coordination; in 1993, the European Coordination of Green Parties became a Federation (EFGP), which in 2005 became the world's first supra-national party, the European Greens.

Outside Europe, Green parties started appearing in the 1980s: the Brazilian and Mexican Greens in 1986, the first Asian Green party in Mongolia in 1990, reformed Green parties in New Zealand and Australia in the early 1990s, and since then a flourishing of new parties in the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific.

Since the earliest days, the Greens have been global. Petra Kelly was an inspiration, travelling tirelessly and taking up international issues like Tibetan independence. Bob Brown from Australia, and Natalia Escudero from Mexico met at European Greens meetings in the 1980s. Greens from around the world met informally at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, and in 1997 at the EFGP funded Rosalie Steward in New Zealand to compile the first "International Directory of Green Parties". By then, Australia had decided to usher in the new century by hosting a Global Greens conference in 2001, preceded by the 1999 Milenio Verde conference in Oaxaca (Mexico).

The first Global Greens conference in Canberra, in April 2001, was a revelation and an inspiration. Over 800 delegates came from 70 countries. The week before, young people from 20 countries attended the first ever meeting of Global Young Greens. Coming on the heels of the 'battle for Seattle', and the shock announcement, by newly elected President George W Bush, that the US would not ratify the Kyoto Protocol, the need for global political movements to counter corporate globalisation was clear. Wangari Maathai from Kenya spoke passionately about the need to give a face to, and act against "this animal called globalisation…worse than slavery, worse than colonialism". Ingrid Betancourt from Colombia said: "we should understand the essence of what we are outlining to the world. The salvation of the planet, the right to live, is nothing else than a fight for values… To outline a new economic order, a new social pact is not a utopia. It is simply

the basic thing, the minimum thing to continue working as societies in a globalised world".

These speeches were highlights in a week filled with discussion on topics like: democracy, globalisation, indigenous issues, climate change, peace and security, the Johannesburg Earth Summit, experiences of Green politics, sustainability negotiations between North and South, tax and trade, and songs and poetry.

Satoko Watanabe, from Rainbow and Greens Japan, encapsulated the feelings of many when she said how much stronger she felt to find that, "I am not alone: there are so many silent messages in the world: voices of trees, voices of coral reef, voices of war victims and voices of future generations…We have to voice these silent messages and I think that is what the Greens are for".

The conference produced tangible outcomes that will endure, most importantly the Global Greens Charter. It begins: "we, as citizens of the planet and members of the Global Greens" and commits us, as Green parties and political movements from around the world, to principles of ecological wisdom, social justice, participatory democracy, nonviolence, sustainability and respect for diversity. In drafting the Charter, we drew on principles and constitutions of Green parties around the globe which, though separately developed, are remarkably harmonious. It prompted spirited debate, furious rounds of negotiation, but ultimately was passed by acclamation.

Already translated into over a dozen languages, the Charter transmits Green ideals to new audiences, and short-cuts the need for new parties to start from scratch in developing a policy framework. It also provides the means for us to recognize each other as members of the same political family.

Global Greens 2001 established a mechanism for future action through the Global Greens Coordination. Each of the four federations or networks – Europe, Asia-Pacific, Africa and the Americas – is entitled to three representatives, and the purpose of the Coordination is to "foster and focus communications and actions…so that all Green political parties of the planet, on a continuing basis, will share knowledge of Green Party affairs and initiatives on issues of global concern". In addition, the conference set up the Global Greens Network, a discussion forum comprising two or three representatives from each Green party or movement.

Situated in Asia, the conference was especially important in bringing together Greens from across the Asia-Pacific region. Apart from Australia and New Zealand, Green parties here are a relatively new phenomenon, as is democracy in many countries. The first ever meeting of Asia Pacific Greens was in Brisbane in 2000. As a direct result of the Global Greens conference, independent Senator Mr Atsuo Nakamura became Japan's first Green national MP. Although not re-elected, the momentum towards building a Green party in Japan continues. In February 2005, Rainbow and Greens Japan hosted an international Greens meeting in the historic and symbolic city of Kyoto. With 27 groups from 23 countries as provisional members, we officially launched the Asia Pacific Greens Network, formed an Asia Pacific Young Greens Network and adopted "Simple rules" to govern membership and decision-making. Resolutions dealt with issues ranging from peace and security, to climate change, the challenge of diversity in the Asia-Pacific region, and Indigenous peoples' rights and cultures.

Since Global Greens 2001, connections and coordination amongst Greens around the world have strengthened. International conferences like WTO meetings, climate change conventions and the Johannesburg Earth Summit now routinely include a gathering of Greens, and often a Global Greens statement.

In November 2005, representatives from Italy, France, Luxemburg, Holland, USA, Bosnia Herzegovina, Mongolia, Senegal, Japan, Australia and Brazil will gather in Bogota for a Global Greens action in solidarity with Ingrid Betancourt, Clara Rojas and other hostages. Ingrid was a Greens presidential candidate when she and her campaign manager Clara Rojas were kidnapped by the FARC guerillas in February 2002. They, and many others, remain in captivity. This action honours a commitment from Global Greens 2001 to provide a 'Green Shield' as a mechanism for putting pressure on governments where people are imprisoned, deprived of their rights, or living under extreme threat. It is a practical expression of Green solidarity.

Our capacity to coordinate across jurisdictions is growing; for example, questions about the behaviour of the Australian government have been raised in the European parliament; visiting South Korean politicians have been lobbied in the Australian parliament about the plight the Saemganeum wetlands, threatened by a huge reclamation scheme, and expatriate Italian voters are being mobilized to vote Green in the coming

Italian elections. We are part of international days of action against the Iraq war and for action on climate change.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the Greens are a global political movement, the only one at the progressive end of the spectrum. To go further we must consolidate and strengthen our organization at the global level: build the capacity of parties, members and supporters everywhere, continue to expand into new countries and regions, and campaign against barriers to democratic representation of new voices like the Greens.

All of this requires resources. The support of Green-sympathetic foundations, notably the Swedish Green Forum and the Heinrich Boell Foundation, have been essential in developing the Global Greens, enabling delegates from low income countries to attend Greens meetings, supporting the Greens especially in Africa, Asia and the Pacific. Next we should establish a secretariat or information clearing house so Greens can cooperate effectively, regionally and globally. One option may be to ask Green parliamentarians in well-off countries to tithe 1 per cent of their income to the Global Greens, as most already do for their domestic parties.

Strengthening the capacity of the Greens includes everything from basic political education and sharing of experience to policy research and organizing shared campaigns. With over 25 years in parliaments around the world, we collectively have a rich bank of knowledge to draw upon, for example, on how parties function, policies, balance of power politics, dealing with conflict, and ensuring that women and minorities are strongly represented. Politics, like anything else can be learned. The key is to mobilize our experience and make it accessible in different languages, cultures and contexts.

Strengthening the Global Greens would mean getting to know each other, building trust, and learning how to work together. At Riga in May 2005, the European Greens adopted climate change as a common campaign; the Asia Pacific Greens similarly in February. It is but a short step to a global campaign which can share information, resources and know-how, and over time become a focused strategy with agreed goals. Work towards this is beginning.

We also need a concerted effort to remove barriers to political representation. This may be by introducing proportional representation (most English-speaking countries), eliminating outrageously high nomination fees for candidates (Japan and Korea), and getting rid of impossible hurdles for party registration (Russia).

There is unanimity within the Greens about the need for global political expression. How that will be structured and given a voice will emerge as we go along. Our second Global Greens conference in 2008 will be another important milestone. I expect it to be as exciting, ground-breaking and as successful as the first.[12]

Annex: The Global Greens Charter

Preamble

We, as citizens of the planet and members of the Global Greens,

United in our awareness that we depend on the Earth's vitality, diversity and beauty, and that it is our responsibility to pass them on, undiminished or even improved, to the next generation

Recognising that the dominant patterns of human production and consumption, based on the dogma of economic growth at any cost and the excessive and wasteful use of natural resources without considering Earth's carrying capacity, are causing extreme deterioration in the environment and a massive extinction of species

Acknowledging that injustice, racism, poverty, ignorance, corruption, crime and violence, armed conflict and the search for maximum short term profit are causing widespread human suffering.

Accepting that developed countries through their pursuit of economic and political goals have contributed to the degradation of the environment and of human dignity

Understanding that many of the world's peoples and nations have been impoverished by the long centuries of colonisation and exploitation, creating an ecological debt owed by the rich nations to those that have been impoverished

12 Blakers, M. ed (2001) The Global Greens: Inspiration, ideas and insights from the Rio+10 International Workshop and Global Greens 2001. Australian Greens and Green Institute, Canberra, Australia.

Committed to closing the gap between rich and poor and building a citizenship based on equal rights for all individuals in all spheres of social, economic, political and cultural life

Recognising that without equality between men and women, no real democracy can be achieved

Concerned for the dignity of humanity and the value of cultural heritage

Recognising the rights of indigenous people and their contribution to the common heritage, as well as the right of all minorities and oppressed peoples to their culture, religion, economic and cultural life

Convinced that cooperation rather than competition is a pre-requisite for ensuring the guarantee of such human rights as nutritious food, comfortable shelter, health, education, fair labour, free speech, clean air, potable water and an unspoilt natural environment

Recognising that the environment ignores borders between countries and

Building on the Declaration of the Global Gathering of Greens at Rio in 1992

Assert the need for fundamental changes in people's attitudes, values, and ways of producing and living

Declare that the new millennium provides a defining point to begin that transformation

Resolve to promote a comprehensive concept of sustainability which
 * protects and restores the integrity of the Earth's ecosystems, with special concern for biodiversity and the natural processes that sustain life
 * acknowledges the interrelatedness of all ecological, social and economic processes
  * balances individual interests with the common good
 * harmonises freedom with responsibility
 * welcomes diversity within unity
 * reconciles short term objectives with long term goals
 * ensures that future generations have the same right as the present generation to natural and cultural benefits

Affirm our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations

Commit ourselves as Green parties and political movements from around the world to implement these interrelated principles and to create a global partnership in support of their fulfilment

Principles

The policies of the Global Greens are founded upon the principles of

Ecological Wisdom

We acknowledge that human beings are part of the natural world and we respect the specific values of all forms of life, including non-human species.

We acknowledge the wisdom of the indigenous peoples of the world, as custodians of the land and its resources.

We acknowledge that human society depends on the ecological resources of the planet, and must ensure the integrity of ecosystems and preserve biodiversity and the resilience of life supporting systems.

This requires
 * that we learn to live within the ecological and resource limits of the planet
 * that we protect animal and plant life, and life itself that is sustained by the natural elements: earth, water, air and sun
 * where knowledge is limited, that we take the path of caution, in order to secure the continued abundance of the resources of the planet for present and future generations.

Social Justice

We assert that the key to social justice is the equitable distribution of social and natural resources, both locally and globally, to meet basic human needs unconditionally, and to ensure that all citizens have full opportunities for personal and social development.

We declare that there is no social justice without environmental justice, and no environmental justice without social justice.

This requires
 * a just organization of the world and a stable world economy which will close the widening gap between rich and poor, both within and between countries; balance the flow of resources from South to North; and lift the burden of debt on poor countries which prevents their development.
 * the eradication of poverty, as an ethical, social, economic, and ecological imperative
 * the elimination of illiteracy
 * a new vision of citizenship built on equal rights for all individuals regardless of gender, race, age, religion, class, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, disability, wealth or health

Participatory Democracy

We strive for a democracy in which all citizens have the right to express their views, and are able to directly participate in the environmental, economic, social and political decisions which affect their lives; so that power and responsibility are concentrated in local and regional communities, and devolved only where essential to higher tiers of governance.

This requires
 * individual empowerment through access to all the relevant information required for any decision, and access to education to enable all to participate
 * breaking down inequalities of wealth and power that inhibit participation
 * building grassroots institutions that enable decisions to be made directly at the appropriate level by those affected, based on systems which encourage civic vitality, voluntary action and community responsibility
 * strong support for giving young people a voice through educating, encouraging and assisting youth involvement in every aspect of

political life including their participation in all decision making bodies.
 * that all elected representatives are committed to the principles of transparency, truthfulness, and accountability in governance.
 * that all electoral systems are transparent and democratic, and that this is enforced by law
 * that in all electoral systems, each adult has an equal vote
 * that all electoral systems are based on proportional representation, and all elections are publicly funded with strict limits on, and full transparency of, corporate and private donations. that all citizens have the right to be a member of the political party of their choice within a multi-party system

Nonviolence

We declare our commitment to nonviolence and strive for a culture of peace and cooperation between states, inside societies and between individuals, as the basis of global security.
We believe that security should not rest mainly on military strength but on cooperation, sound economic and social development, environmental safety, and respect for human rights.

This requires
 * a comprehensive concept of global security, which gives priority to social, economic, ecological, psychological and cultural aspects of conflict, instead of a concept based primarily on military balances of power
 * a global security system capable of the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts
 * removing the causes of war by understanding and respecting other cultures, eradicating racism, promoting freedom and democracy, and ending global poverty
 * pursuing general and complete disarmament including international agreements to ensure a complete and definitive ban of nuclear, biological and chemical arms, anti-personnel mines and depleted uranium weapons

* strengthening the United Nations (UN) as the global organisation of conflict management and peacekeeping
* pursuing a rigorous code of conduct on arms exports to countries where human rights are being violated.

Sustainability

We recognise the limited scope for the material expansion of human society within the biosphere, and the need to maintain biodiversity through sustainable use of renewable resources and responsible use of non-renewable resources.

We believe that to achieve sustainability, and in order to provide for the needs of present and future generations within the finite resources of the earth, continuing growth in global consumption, population and material inequity must be halted and reversed.

We recognise that sustainability will not be possible as long as poverty persists.

This requires
* ensuring that the rich limit their consumption to allow the poor their fair share of the earth's resources
* redefining the concept of wealth, to focus on quality of life rather than capacity for over-consumption
* creating a world economy which aims to satisfy the needs of all, not the greed of a few; and enables those presently living to meet their own needs, without jeopardising the ability of future generations to meet theirs
* eliminating the causes of population growth by ensuring economic security, and providing access to basic education and health, for all; giving both men and women greater control over their fertility
* redefining the roles and responsibilities of trans-national corporations in order to support the principles of sustainable development
* implementing mechanisms to tax, as well as regulating, speculative financial flows
* ensuring that market prices of goods and services fully incorporate the environmental costs of their production and consumption

* achieving greater resource and energy efficiency and development and use of environmentally sustainable technologies
* encouraging local self-reliance to the greatest practical extent to create worthwhile, satisfying communities
* recognising the key role of youth culture and encouraging an ethic of sustainability within that culture.

Respect for Diversity

We honour cultural, linguistic, ethnic, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity within the context of individual responsibility toward all beings.

We defend the right of all persons, without discrimination, to an environment supportive of their dignity, bodily health, and spiritual well-being

We promote the building of respectful, positive and responsible relationships across lines of division in the spirit of a multi-cultural society.

This requires
* recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples to the basic means of their survival, both economic and cultural, including rights to land and to self determination; and acknowledgment of their contribution to the common heritage of national and global culture
* recognition of the rights of ethnic minorities to develop their culture, religion and language without discrimination, and to full legal, social and cultural participation in the democratic process
* recognition of and respect for sexual minorities
* equality between women and men in all spheres of social, economic, political and cultural life
* significant involvement of youth culture as a valuable contribution to our Green vision, and recognition that young people have distinct needs and modes of expression.

Editor's note: the Charter continues with ten points of political action: democracy, equity, climate change and energy, biodiversity, governing economic globalisation by sustainability principles, human rights, food and water, sustainable planning, peace and security and acting globally.

PART III: BACKGROUND PAPERS

THE FORMATION OF GLOBAL POLITICAL WILL

Tord Björk

One can look at the issue of globalisation and political parties either from a historical point of view, or by analysing their roles in the present political system. In this text, I have made an attempt to look at this from a diachronic perspective and a synchronic functional point of view. To avoid essentialising, one can look at all political formation while also specifying what defines parties in relation to other organised political will. Here, I claim that characteristic to be political parties, and their generalist agenda, in contrast to single-issue protests, NGOs or other forms of organising. I also see parties as a specific kind of organisation, a permanent membership organisations built on internal democratic processes and not a network with self-selected key personalities at the core. The latter, this kind of loose organisation can also claimed to be a party if it has a generalist agenda and is seeking official political posts. From a democratic point of view, a type of self-selecting network is of a differing kind, and is the reason why a distinction between these two forms is made. The main emphasis of my text is on permanent membership parties.

A problem when studying the globalisation of political parties is the risk of it simplifying by extrapolating domestic phenomena and projecting them onto the global arena. To avoid these domestic analogies, one might look at global conflicts and how political will is emerging to overcome those conflicts. The separation of the domestic and global realms emerged from the establishment of the Westphalia world order with the sovereign national state at its core.

At the beginning of the process of separating the national state into a sovereign power, the main conflict was between the body and the head - rather than between different territorial regimes. When Christianity was in crisis at the beginning of the 15th century it stated that not only the head - the pope, the emperor and the princes - but also the members - the people - had to be allowed to participate in summits of all Christianity to solve its problems. Consequently, two professors in Paris demanded a reform of the church, and a general council claimed that not just the Pope but the totally of the faithful represented the will of God. This conciliar theory gained support, and councils were arranged with participants from different fractions for and against reform. At the second council in Constance, the discussions went on for so long that the tents where different delegations stayed were turned into more permanent head quarters named 'nations'. Thus, probably for the first time, the term nation was used in a political sense.

The conflict between the members and the head was solved by beheading the body during the second year of the council, between 1414 and 1418. The criticism promoted by the invited Jan Hus and his mass movement of followers against the Pope, was also shared in large parts by the princes. It was clearly felt among the princes, the soon to be leaders of national states, that nobody other than them were allowed to put forward such criticism. The emperor had assured safety to Jan Hus when he was invited, but the princes claimed that they could kill Hus for giving voice to the same concerns they had voiced; as it was the emperor had assured Hus' safety, and not the princes. Hus, and Hieronymus of Prague were burned, and the nation state was born. In 1648 in Westphalia, the secret system of international diplomacy, that excluded any other than state representatives from the formation of political will across borders, was established.

In other words, hidden under a layer of territorial conflicts, lies a conflict between the privileged elite, and the majority of the people; furthermore, this majority of people continued to organise itself also across borders and in opposition to the privileged. In the 15th century, an employer in Helsingborg in Denmark - a town which today lies in Southern Sweden - could be banned by all the workers throughout Northern Europe

through the guilds. The spread of religious protest material, and organising occurred throughout Europe. In 1789, a universalistic world revolution started in Paris - soon followed by Haiti. The third estate, and soon people in the third world, overthrew the privileged from their commanding positions in society, and the world.

The third estate and the third world revolution

The emergence of a democratic state with citizens - not subjects to the king - presented itself as universalistic, but it soon became the opposite. When the Haitians started to believe that what was said in Paris about human rights for all also applied to them, France and England used as much force as they could in a war against the believers in universal human rights in Haiti. In spite of this military aggression, a ban on trade, and a ban by the pope, Haiti was able to gain freedom. The costs were an extreme debt burden, and a diplomatic refusal of recognition - to make the life of the new nation as hard as possible. Thus, a new global conflict evolved between states in Europe and North America fuelled by the white third estate and the rest of the world. In the third world, the slaves in Haiti took a lead and liberated themselves by 1804. In other words, from a global perspective, one can see liberated national states in the third world as a formation of political will with global relevance against Western national states and their companies.

Another form of social invention was the permanent membership organization. This took place in Ireland, during the 1830s, when Catholics started a mass movement with functionaries against British imperialist oppression. A model for forming political will was born. This model was later copied by political parties, starting with Social Democrats. The earlier elite parties, whether conservative, liberal, Jacobin leftists or some other, gradually were replaced by a permanent membership popular party built on internal democracy, at least as an ideal.

The global conflict between the imperialists and the colonialized continued in the 19th century. In the third world, all protests were successfully oppressed, by any means possible, by the Western powers. By the end of the 19th century, economic globalization had produced severe global starvation, killing between 30 - 50 million people. Simultaneously, the global grain market was established a capacity to export food out of starvation zones helped by colonial armies, and extracting financial resources out of starvation areas through forced selling of drugs and unjust trade agreements. This caused the emergence of anti-colonial parties (beginning with Indian National Congress 1885), violent terrorist groups, and millenniaristic mass movements.

In industrialized countries, the formation of international political will first took place, primarily among trade unions, at the 1st International in 1864, and later, primarily among social democratic parties, at the 2nd International in 1889. These parties promote social revolution, and are against militarism and war. The successful struggle for an eight hour working day (which started in New Zealand in 1840, then spread to Australia in 1856), inspired anarchist trade unions in the US to follow suit in Chicago 1886. This resulted in violent repression and in 1890; 1 May has since been declared Global Action Day for an eight hour working day - the most successful international action day. This date later came to be used to promote a wide range of issues. These events took place during a period when globalization intensified.

In industrial countries, during the period of 1880 – 1920, a political party system was built up along four cleavage structures; centre and periphery, state and church, agrarian and industrial communities, and capital and work. The system remains unfinished, but ends with general suffrage in many countries where those entering first as parties get a privileged position. They can adjust political rules in their own favour, influence the political agenda to avoid new political parties, and establish ties to stronger social groups with stable significance that have an electoral importance. After the system was established, hardly any new political parties emerge until 1970s. The period 1920 - 1970 became a unique period in the history of political will forming political parties, and especially political parties predominantly based on class cleavages. Before and after this period, organizing political will is more diverse thus making it necessary to include a wider range of methods, other than political parties, to understand the organization of politics today.

Mass participation in politics after the European defeat

In 1905, Japan successfully defeated Russia in war - the first time in a century years that a European power lost an important military conflict. This resulted in the emergence of mass participation in politics, first in Moscow and St Petersburg, which would inspire new political thinking on the formation of political will in the rest of Europe. In South Africa, Indians defeated the British Empire through the means of civil disobedience based on mass participation. In 1906, an Indian Sheth Haji Habib invited all participants at a protest meeting to not submit to the degrading new racist laws passed. He declared that he would disobey, and advised other to do the same. Non-violent collective civil disobedience was born as a powerful tool for popular movements. This method was later, successfully, taken to India by Gandhi who had organized the protest meeting in South Africa.

In the US, socialist working class organizations, together with the populist mass movement of farmers were replaced by professional advocacy combined with violent destruction of organizations. In Mexico, farmers organized a revolution in 1910, and formulated the Ayala plan for agrarian reform. In Ireland, the liberation struggle finally comes to an end. Previous, violent rebellion methods were now complemented by a whole range of new or further developed, sets of non-violent action built on mass participation like, boycotts, tax strikes, and permanent membership organization. The final liberation from British colonialism cannot be made without violent rebellion. A war breaks out externally against the British, but also internally when liberation is only achieved for parts of the country. But Ireland shows the rest of the world that colonialism can be defeated.

For international party alliance, the intensified globalization period ends with a betrayal of the goals of the 2nd International and support for each nations' war against the others. The reformist German social democratic party also against its own members in alliance with right wing groups to establish order, and disobedience towards party leadership. The peace movement has been drastically reduced, but together with most reformist parties they back the League of Nations as the solution to global conflicts. At a meeting in Zimmerwald in 1915, social Democrats, who opposed the war began to demand both social revolution and an end to the war.

A split between revolutionaries and reformists became open and internationally manifested in the 1st international party, the Comintern, established in 1919. This party is strongly, hierarchically organized, but there are indicators predicting that, in principle, a global party may not be impossible. Moscow tended to interfere in all sections of the party in the world, and dictated or make proposals on what they wished to see done. When Moscow told the Norwegian member party that they should not send Erling Falk as a delegate to the next Comintern meeting, the Norwegians did exactly what they were not supposed to do. Confronted by these stubborn Norwegians, Moscow totally backed down. It was not, at least for the first two years, impossible to have a democratic relationship within the party. The mechanical hierarchic organizational rules, which were adopted later, made things worse. In spite of this, the Comintern was useful during the challenges against regular Nazi troops in Spain 1936, the Japanese aggressions against China, as well as in supporting colonial liberation.

As a result of the formation of anti-colonial and socialist political will, five different models emerged. Two of the models, at the ends of the spectrum, are the specialist professional American NGO model that fragments different social and global interests, and the generalist professional Russian party model that acknowledges different social and global interests. The alternative is the South African - Indian lay popular movement model that combines generalist and single-issue qualities. In Europe, and partly Japan, two further models have been developed. First in Europe, a model has been developed that combines the professionally dominated parliamentary generalist party and single-issue lay popular movements. Second, we identify a model where there is a refusal of recognize different social interests and the party, army, and popular movements embody the same will.

Overcoming the East–West divide

The fascist regimes in revanchist nations were the greatest threat on a global scale after World War I until they were defeated in next World War. Soon after World War II and until 1989, the West-East conflict

overshadowed this subsequent period. This period sees the formation of a number of international parties among liberals, socialists, conservatives and Christian-democrats. None of these international parties bridge the gap between East and West as they are not allowed to organize members in the East. These parties also opposed bridging the gap between East and West, and thus opposed any global formation of political will across this divide. When political organizations like the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), in 1945, and the International Students Union (ISU) formed, most non-socialist organizations soon leave the organization. Soon after, the headquarters of the organizations, in London and Paris, are banned in the west.

Formations of global will became very difficult and complicated. The US president not only divides the world into the free Western world versus the communist oppressed world, but also into developed and underdeveloped nations. The World Youth Festivals organized by WFDY since 1947 were capable of bridging both gaps with tens of thousands of international participants and up to 8 million visitors. When the organizers tried to bridge the gap, and for the first time arrange a world youth festival in Western Europe, it caused a total ban from the press, and all non-communist parties in Austria, 1959. Next time in Finland, the opposite happened. A broader coalition of parties supported the festival, and soon the World Peace Committee could move to Helsinki; it was a true global organization,and was the first big organization to establish its headquarters in the West, thus breaking the ban - WFDY and ISU had to move to the East. Finland became the key country in bridging the gap between East and West; it produced the Helsinki process and treaty in 1975. The World War II would finally be settled, and human rights began to stand for something of international importance in all European countries, something the dissident movements in the communist countries would soon use. In Eastern Europe, the path was paved for changes, and the Berlin wall fell in 1989.

In 1975, third world countries hoped for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), and it gained wide support within the UN General Assembly. At the same time, neo-liberalisms evolved as an alternative. The proponents of neo-liberalism stated that markets have to be regulated according to policies promoted by the US and Great Britain. This would be carries out in opposition to the international political will aiming at promoting global justice and détente. In 1980, the American president rejected the idea of a NIEO. The debt crisis was immanent when the Mexican economy was on the verge of collapse. The UN is marginalized and turned to issues less central to power, while the Bretton Woods institutions - the IMF, the World Bank and free trade agreements - become more central.

Global political initiatives from the third world

Following the fall of the Soviet Union, other global conflicts have taken over, primarily the South - North conflicts. This has been challenged primarily by third world popular movement initiatives like Via Campesina, the Zapatistas and the international meetings against neo-liberalism in Chiapas, the renewal of World Youth Festivals, Peoples' Global Action, and the World Social Forum (WSF). Party formation of global will has been slow. It is primarily through the WSF process that the small Trotskyite 4th International, as well as, many centre and left parties have found each other. However, these groupings cannot take full responsibilities for the WSF, as they are excluded from formal participation at WSF events and organizing committees. Another global conflict is the environmental crisis. In response to this, a kind of a global green party has been established, although, the different environmental organizations each have important large international counterparts. Gender issues have only resulted in a few feminist parties at a national level, maybe most successfully in Iceland, while participation at the UN Women's conferences is very wide.

Thus, one can say that parties, in relation to global conflicts, show a mixed record. During the globalization period of the late 19th century, the social democratic parties played a central role, but the socialist 2nd International was dominated by parties from colonial countries that did not oppose imperialism although it has to be said that militarism was rejected. In the end, it failed completely. During the globalization process of today, third world popular movements have a more central role than political parties.

A synchronised situation

The synchronic situation is how parties will be placed in the present system of forming global political will. In many ways, it seems that political parties

have lost their social movements character and become organizations merely aiming at attaining political posts. The creation of an independent sphere of influence through the creation of newspapers and building alternative cooperatives and volunteer organizations is fast disappearing, at least in the industrialized countries. In the slums of the third world, also in many rich countries where there are underprivileged suburbs, there is no, or very little, presence of secular parties. Instead Pentecostal and Islamic movements have taken over.

It is hard to see how the globalization of parties would solve this problem. On the contrary, it might make these problems worse. Giving up aspirations of being a permanent membership organization with democratic qualities, and replacing it with network models has some problems. Establishing different forms of NGOs, such as think-tanks and development organizations, does not provide a solution to the crisis. These solutions continue the process where political parties lose their unique position as intermediary for their constituency, strongly connected to communities. Increasingly, it seems that other formations are taking over that role. NGOs become key factors in intermediation between the so-called civil society and governments.

Yet, the generalist approach of political parties is needed. In the shift from state to market sovereignty, there are some real problems in finding ways to democratically control and regulate society.

This shift is also expressed through the present dominance of specialist organizations, and experts in forming global political will. Generalists like parties and politicians, experience problems in turning membership organizations into global networks filled with experts on media relations, and communication with other experts. Reviving the capacity of parties to make alliances with popular movements, becoming present in the slums and at Social Forums, and jointly forming a global political will might be both a more realistic and positive way forward.

This is not possible without challenging the present Americanization of world politics through NGO single-issue politics and donor-driven agendas. There is no way back but maybe a way forward if generalists make alliances with like-minded people all over the world. Professional specialists and generalists are not the only way to organize global political will.

I. A SCHEME OF FORMING GLOBAL POLITICAL WILL

700 BC - 700 AC: Religions based on universalistic claims, are formed spreading widely and with a significant impact on the political structure of society.

1400 – 1648: Separation of state sovereignty in Christianity from other competing groups in society and especially people in common. This period ended with state monopoly over the forming of political will with a global impact coming from the interstate system established by the Peace Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The system was dynamically changed by the combination of the capitalistic, borderless logic and political territorial logic. First developed by the Italian city-states in between emperor and Pope, and then further strengthened by the relationship between the two Iberian kingdoms, and the Genovese banking network. In the next development cycle economics and politics were integrated into the same territorial organization through the Dutch gaining its maximum influence by establishing the interstate system built upon state sovereignty of the Westphalia peace. A modern state evolved in the Netherlands which had a capitalist class able to control financial networks, and the prince introduced a military exercise model that made Europeans capable of conquering the world, together with a Calvinistic popular movement claiming freedom.

II. EMERGING ELITE PARTIES

1700s: Political parties start to become common in modern European states as networks of influential members of Parliament or secret clubs, often subject to influence from foreign agents. The idea that different interests can co-exist in society and within its different estates was recognized, and the idea of politics as a body where internal differences are not allowed is rejected. The notion of making information on government open to public scrutiny – with the exception of foreign affairs- became popular, but the process is slow, often reversed, and the parties are mainly made up of competing elites.

When Great Britain and France compete with the Dutch a new model emerges to gain global control. Maritime imperialism is supplanted by English and French colonisers. It created a capitalistic slave economy and

economic nationalism where Great Britain got the upper hand due to its capability to focus solely on the sea having no land border to protect.

Together with political parties other new forms of organizing to oppose political interests emerged. These new forms built on the idea that public opinion can be influenced by organizing opposing ideas in society, and the impression that there are many supporting these ideas. Direct action and confrontation with authorities to get food, or refuse the collection of taxes no longer seems to be the only or even the dominant solution for political protest in the most advanced states. The new way of forming political will emerging is stimulated by trans-ocean relations. On the one hand, people all over the world, such as in China, Japan, Vietnam, Russia, South Africa, North Africa and Spanish America, starts rebellions. Slaves and Creoles created new states, and, on the other hand, a set of new political methods emerged.

1760: Slaves rebel on Jamaica. Also, a carnival demonstration that could easily turn into a riot developed for the first time in London as a tool for the democratization movement.

1764: The first boycott is organized in New England.

1766: Freedom of expression is included in the constitution of Sweden.

1768: The first modern conservationist programme started on the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean when theories to link deforestation to erosion and climate change lead to a practical tree planting projects. The initiators were also anti-slavery activists. Scientists on tropical islands all over the world start to establish societies and promote popular understanding of science and conservation.

1770s: The Quakers and others start a long-term campaign in Great Britain against slavery by organizing petitions and printing political posters illustrating the tight placement of black slaves on a slave ship.

1779: The Yorkshire Association is established; it is the first long-term organization with a political goal to end the colonial war in North America.

1780 – 1781: The Native American political rebellions in Peru and Bolivia go further than the previously limited protest against taxes or starvation.

1788: The first organized pamphlet campaign takes place in Paris and the first public mass meeting to demand justice is invented in Grenoble. A whole set of methods for expressing political will are established.

1776 – 1791: Revolutions within the English colony of North America, in France and in the French colony of Haiti. The Englishmen in America liberated themselves from nobility, and the king. However, they do include black slaves and organize the genocide of many native American communities for a century. As a response to a rebellion by small farmers in 1886, a system of checks and balances is set up to prevent the masses from having the possibilities of gaining democratic control of society. The revolution in France is, at the beginning, more universalistic and claims everyone in the world can become a citizen making nobility equal to everyone. When confronted with followers among the large, black, slave population in Haiti, the universalistic revolution turns racist and starts a war positioning Western states against the black citizens in the South. The three revolutions end on a global scale, in a continued and sharpened conflict between Western imperialism and oppressed people. In rich, Western countries, the third estate soon separated into bourgeoisie, and a fourth estate of working men started to gain influence in society.

1792: The idea of an unlimited number of members is formulated as the first rule in the London Corresponding Society. Thus a universalistic idea enters politics by challenging the rule that only belonging to specific groups, with different privileges, counts as a possible way to influence state power. The society is initiated by businessmen, shop-owners and mechanics to promote parliamentary reform to give electoral rights to the broad masses.

1804: Haiti is finally liberated and becomes the only non-European nation in more than a hundred years, capable of defeating the West and in gaining independence.

1815: The Congress of Vienna restored order again to prevent any social change. Great Britain becomes the key state in this power balance due to its globally strategic position. Their programme of combining territorial imperialism with global expansion and free trade interests the bourgeoisie in many countries resulting in London becoming the global centre of capital in the hands of private banks, and a hegemonic state for a century.

III. EMERGING MASS MOVEMENTS AND PARTIES

1819: The first demonstration displaying the discipline of marching together to show the strength of the democracy movement is organized in England.

1823: The first permanent membership organization is created, the Catholic Association. It was established against British imperialist oppression of Catholics in Ireland as a single-issue mass organization with functionaries. This becomes the most important tool for forming political will over the next 150 years. The Catholics are followed by many other permanent membership organizations, especially trade unions, and later political parties.

1830: Barricades are invented as a toll for political rebellion in Paris.

1850s: Trade unions spread into Europe, North and South America, Australia and China. In Australia the successful struggle for the 8-hour-working day begins. During the same decade, international NGOs, like the Young Men's Christian Association, YMCA, are established.

1864: The 1st International - International Working Men's Association is established primarily by trade unions. It organized international strikes in support, and begins the questioning of social inequality promoting solidarity with oppressed nations. Although dominated by trade unions intellectuals, organizations with broader aims participate. This made the 1st International function as a generalist institution. The YMCA, and an atheistic organization apply for membership, but are not allowed because only secular organizations become members.

1885: The Indian National Congress is founded, the first generalist anti-imperialist organization in the third world.

1887: A conflict arises within the British trade union movement regarding the strategy for the 8-hour working day. On one side of the conflict was the trade unionist, capable of disciplined local campaigning to negotiate with their employers in favour of the 8-hour work week. On the other side, there were those who wanted a national campaign to influence parliament to make the same decision. The conflict finally ended when those proposing national campaigning formed the Labour party, and in 1909 won the struggle through a parliamentary decision giving everybody the right to an 8-hour work day.

1889: The setting up of the 2nd International with socialist parties and popular movements, included members from the third world. The organization is against war, but unclear on the issues of colonialism and racism. Social democratic parties become the first mass parties, and, as such, the first generalist permanent membership organizations.

1890: The international 1 May celebrations were held to promote the 8-hour working day, and the commemoration the violent oppression against anarchist workers 8-hour working day protest in Chicago originally inspired by Australian trade unions. This first international action day soon became a day claiming a wide range of demands and made it a generalist political event, except in the US.

IV. NGOS, PARTIES AND POPULAR MOVEMENTS

1898: A single-issue campaign to provoke war is successfully organized by a New York newspaper owner using questionable information to claim Spanish attacks against a US naval ship in a Cuban harbour, and grossly exaggerated facts about the Spanish oppression of the Cubans. Spain is defeated by the US, and Cuba becomes dominated by its Northern neighbour. US imperialism is established based on close cooperation between civil society and government by economical, military and political means. During this same period, generalist permanent membership organizations are under attack in the US. Socialist and populist mass parties are replaced by a system of advocacy and lobbying specialists separate from the mass movements, and the Socialists are violently repressed. A system of specialist NGOs dominated by professionals and electoral rally campaigns sometimes supplanted by repressed single-issue civil disobedience movements are established instead of generalist permanent membership organizations in the form of class-based political parties, or multi-issue popular movements.

1899: The first Peace conference takes place in The Hague. Governments negotiate on disarmament, arbitration of international conflicts, and conduct of land warfare. Peace movements were also present at the conference.

1905: Japan defeats Russia, mass manifestations in Russians cities inspiring mass participation and radicalization of politics in Europe, India,

and elsewhere. Tsarist repression makes open political work hard. The organization of professional generalists under democratic centralist principles to promote unity and solidarity becomes a model for the revolutionary party seeking state power. Popular movements are excepted as single-issue focused under the leadership of generalist parties of whom, the most ideologically advanced are supposed to be able to dominate.

1906: Civil disobedience built on mass participation in non-violence is invented by Muslim and Hindu Indians in South Africa in the struggle against colonial oppression and British imperialism. This model is spread to India, and the rest of the world, developing into a global model of forming political will through single-issue mass campaigns interacting with multi-issue popular movements, and generalist political parties.

1910: Revolution by Mexican farmers. The Ayala land reform plan was formulated.

1914-1918: World War I. The 2nd International and the peace movement fail to stop the war. Social Democrats split into anti-militarist, together with revolutionaries and reformists supporting war credits and their own government. Russian revolution established a planned economy under one-party rule in the Soviet Union following a civil war, and imperialist intervention from most Western colonial states. Pacifists split into anti-militarists, radical pacifists and reformist NGOs supporting lobbying governmental negotiations. The Soviet Union appeals for world revolution liberating all oppressed nations, and proclaimed the rights of nations as more important than the right of property. At the same time, the secret diplomacy between the former Russian Tsarist regime and other Western states are made public showing how the established powers planned to split up countries according to their own imperialist plans after World War II. The Soviet Union initiative to liberate nations from colonial dominance causes an American reformist response proclaiming national development, and redistribution of wealth without changing the social system or threatening the rights to private property. Reactionary and conservative states like Great Britain, France, Italy and Germany prevent both reform and revolution.

1919 – 1943: Comintern is established, the first international party. After two years of a more open democratic procedure, it ends with strict global hierarchic rule according to the Moscow thesis. Anti-colonial struggle, supporting Soviet Union foreign policy, and later anti-fascism, became important to the organization.

1922: Fascist parties are established in Europe based on denying the idea of political parties and popular movements representing different interests and instead reverse political thinking back to the age of politics as a body. Dictatorships maintaining capitalism are soon established in Italy and Portugal based on fascism, Eastern Europe based on anti Judea-communist ideology and later in Germany based on Nazism. Fascism comes to power both in Italy and Germany with the help of money from corporations, and all other non-socialist parties, with the exception of today's Christian-democratic parties.

V. THE REACTIONARY MODEL AGAINST THE REST

1931 – 1945: World War II starts when Japan, building on similar ideas as fascism in Europe, attacks China in 1931, and ends when Japan surrenders in 1945 after an US atomic bomb attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

1932: The salt march in India starts a mass civil disobedience campaign, and sends 100 000 Indians to prison until the British empire surrenders and shows the world that colonial powers can no longer suppress their subjects wishing to become free.

1934: Fascist Italy invades Ethiopia gassing children, women and men with the internationally banned mustard gas. The modern equipment of the Italian army defeats the Ethiopians armed with swords and rifles. The last independent African state of importance is crushed and colonialized.

1936: Democratically elected Spanish republicans are confronted by a fascist rebellion supported by regular German Nazi and Italian fascist troops. Comintern supports the republic against the fascist attack and sends weapons. Fierce internal conflicts arise between the non-socialists, anarchist, socialist, and communist supporters of the democratic republic. Other democratic capitalistic governments are not willing to help the democratically elected Spanish government. International volunteers going to Spain to fight fascism are criminalized by liberal, conservative, and social democratic governments. In China, the Japanese attacks continue to met a

similar disinterest in stopping the aggression from democratic capitalistic governments.

Comintern remains the foremost international force in the struggle against militaristic fascism, while the Chinese Kuomintang government sometimes sees the communists as their main enemy, and only reluctantly joins forces with the communists against Japan. In 1936, Germany and Japan establish the Anti-Comintern Pact, a year later they were joined by Italy.

1939: Fascism defeats democracy in Spain and Germany starts World War II helped for a while by a Soviet-German non-aggression treaty.

1942: Japan defeats the US in the Philippines, the British at Singapore, and the Dutch colonial army in Indonesia. The following year, Japan declares Vietnam, Burma and Indonesia independent. After this, the Dutch are never effectively capable of re-conquering their colony, and anti-colonialism gains importance.

1943: At Stalingrad, the global fascist expansion is finally defeated by the Soviet Union. Comintern is dissolved the same year to please Western allies.

1944 – 45: The Allies defeat Nazi-Germany and Japan. At a meeting in Yalta, Europe is divided in interest-zones to be respected after the war. The United Nations is established in San Francisco; it is built on the idea of promoting equal relationships between state, decolonialisation and the right to a decent living for everyone. Conservative and reactionary states like Great Britain, France and Germany lose influence, whereas, the Soviet Union and the US gain influence. Colonial nations in the third world contributed many soldiers to the allied armies on the presumption that they would either become citizens, or gains independence.

VI. THE INSTITUTIONALISING OF COMPETITION OF COMMUNIST AND CAPITALIST INCLUSIVE WELFARE MODELS

1945: On the day of peace in Europe, Algerians were massacred in Setif when France met demonstrators with bombs, killing more then ten thousand persons. In London, the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY), was established with nationalist, liberal, social democratic, communist and other anti-fascist movements from all over the world.

Europeans try to regain control of colonies and other countries in the third world by violently oppressing liberation demands, with some few exceptions.

1947: The Cold War between communist planned economy states and liberal capitalist states starts dividing the world in to an East - West state-centred gap with both sides promising a welfare state for all. Liberal International is established for political parties. Most liberals leave WFDY. The 1st World Youth festival takes place in Prague started by WFDY and International Students Union (ISU). More than 10 000 international participants attend a world youth festivals, held every second year, become a centre for formation of global political will on issues of anti-colonialism and peace. The festivals are under strong communist influence while, simultaneously, undermining the established political culture in both communist and capitalist countries.

1948: America rejects its ideals when the UN was established. Rather than bringing welfare to everybody through international cooperation, the agreed agenda concentrates on controlling global financial and military means. A doctrine of Cold War against communism is proclaimed, as well as, a doctrine separating the world into the developed and under developed, later developing nations declare a single path to modernity for all nations to follow. The Soviet Union strengthens its control on states under its territorial control. Dictatorships are strengthened in Eastern Europe, and a split among socialist states and movements occurs. The competition between the two, American and Soviet, systems promotes decolonialization and the inclusion of people through better distribution welfare of within industrialized nations, promoting discipline through Cold War competition and solidarity within institutions.

1951: The Socialist International starts bringing Social Democratic parties together. ISU is forced to move its headquarters from Paris to Prague by France, similarly to WFDY being forced by Great Britain to move from London to Budapest.

1955: The Bandung Conference established, non-aligned, (mainly) third world countries as an important power in world politics.

1959: The Vienna World Youth Festival provokes close cooperation between CIA, social democrats, conservatives, liberals and the press in building a stance against the event. The first Conservative-Christian

international student organisational effort takes place to influence the participants of the festival.

1961: Today's European Democrat Students is initiated by organizations that started to cooperate against the Vienna festival.

1962: The Helsinki World Youth Festival continues to provoke CIA and conservatives, but it also becomes part of a centre-left party alliance on foreign policy supported by young radical popular movements. This alliance allows Finland to break the ban on having headquarters of global organizations who include communists in the West when the World Peace Committee is established in Helsinki in 1967-8. It also makes the country able to build other important political bridges between East and West.

1970s: New political parties starts to emerge in industrialized countries after a long period with a stable system lasting half a century; many focusing on different local issues. Soon environment stimulates new Green parties, in many countries, and in a few countries, like Iceland, successful feminist parties. Later right-wing nationalist and xenophobic parties gain influence in national parliaments in Europe and also in other parts of the world like India.

1972: The UN Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm becomes the first time when popular movements convenes at a Summit with demonstrations, counter conferences, and third world participation, interaction between the official and popular meetings also take place. This model later becomes a standard for Summits, whether organised by UN or others. The Stockholm conference was also the first time Communist China entered modern UN diplomacy. The encounter between different forces ends in a stalemate and the rejection of the environmental movement built on popular participation becomes integrated into the official system.

1975: Détente reaches a climax with two separate agreements. At the global level, the UN General Assembly endorses a New International Economic Order that will give more justice to North-South relations. At Helsinki, the European East-West conflict reaches a solution in the acceptance of the present border finally establishing a peace after World War II, and more important than many believed at that time, the inclusion of human rights in all European countries as an international treaty. This opened up the possibility for politicizing issues of human rights in European communist countries.

1977: The first international single-issue action network is established, International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN), soon it was followed by others on, rain forest, health, pesticides etc. Simultaneously, protests start in many countries against the IMF and the World Bank demands on third world countries.

1980: In Cancun, America declares that it will never accept any New International Economic Order as demanded by the third world and many other countries. Neoliberalism begins to replace state sovereignty with market sovereignty (backed by governments and their violence monopoly). Global multilateral power is shifted from the UN towards the IMF, the World Bank, and trade agreements.

1981: The CIA re-evaluates its strategy as too successful. It has the capacity of orchestrating destruction of governments unfavourable to US interests, but 30 years later this could provoke a counter reaction in civil society like in Iran where a mass movement sees America as an enemy to power. The solution is to divert resources from CIA to democracy promotion in civil society. Whenever a situation becomes uncertain for an authoritarian or dictatorial regime, the US can interfere with funds and experts to help organisations that are willing to promote a system of neoliberal economy with competing elite parties, and NGOs. At the same time, the US can interfere economically, politically and militarily, officially or secretly, to promote their preferred changes.

1983: The International Democratic Union starts with conservative parties as members. In Malaysia, the Third World Network, TWN, starts as a generalist action network closely linked to single-issue movements and other political actors, especially all over the Third World.

1985: In the innermost of the Amazonian rain forest, global political will is amalgamated when rubber tappers, land workers trade union, the Brazilian Workers Party, Indians, and other forest people start to build alliances and get support from the environmental movement globally. This alliance contributes to the first victory against a World Bank funded project, the only governor victory of the Workers Party in the Brazil elections 1989 (in the state of Acre), and the general strengthening of popular native and other movements on the presumed marginal of society. This unique combination brings together an alliance across nations in Latin America and the world, across ethnic groups and across the divide between political parties and popular movements pioneering new relationships and political

possibilities. But this uniqueness is suppressed by Northern NGOs and academics excluding the crucial trade union and political party dimension and overestimating the role of Northern environmental NGOs.

VII. INSTITUTIONALISING A GLOBAL STATE AND NGO EXCLUSION GOVERNANCE SYSTEM

1987: A model of Global Governance is promoted by the report "Our Common Future", and the first UN Conference to integrate, at a global level a single-issue movement into the hegemony of Western development strategy takes place. This is a New York conference on disarmament and development. Neoliberalism, as the main strategy, is replaced by neoliberalism plus civil society as the solution to global problems. Political parties, and especially the new ones, become less and less dependent on their members and more dependent on state or other external funding. Both the political decision to give more power to the market and the decision to make many important political decisions in closed negotiating rooms creates democratic problems, and results in a crisis for the parties.

1989: The fall of the Berlin Wall. The East-West conflict fades away as a main conflict in world politics. In Asia, the popular movement, Starts Peoples Plan for the 21str century (PP21) emerges. These meetings on general issues soon spread to Central America and other parts of the world.

1992: UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro becomes the great launching event for global governance and its legitimizing ideology of sustainable development. A total of 118 heads of states, transnational corporations, NGOs and popular movements unite their efforts under the hegemony of accepting free trade as the solution to the environmental and social crisis. Compared to 20 years earlier where popular movements united their efforts and confronted the official meeting, this time the movements were fragmented into NGO sectors unable to accumulate common strength. Thus the accumulation of the strength of the global majority is excluded, along with all persons and groups lacking a strong identity or lucrative cause fitting into the professional models. A global NGO system is established. Outside of this professionalised global civil society, La Via Campesina is established as a global popular farmers movement with leadership in the south and similar interests among its member organizations in all parts of the world. In the Americas Indians, mostly farmers, separate themselves from left dominated actions commemorating 500 years of resistance against European conquest. They organize long marches and direct action to confront the official celebrations.

1994: The Zapatistas, mostly Mexican indigenous farmers, in Chiapas start an armed rebellion against the North American Free Trade Agreement on the day it took effect. This rebellion is capable of avoiding escalating military conflict by mobilising solidarity throughout Mexico, and the rest of the world.

1996: The first International meeting against neoliberals is held in the Laconda Jungle with 4 000 participants. The professional civil society NGO consensus to not confront the present world order is challenged, and a global political opposition is formed.

1997: The World Youth Festivals are restarted by the third world. First in Havana, and later in Alger and Caracas with more than 10 000 international participants each time.

1998: In Geneva, Peoples' Global Action Against WTO and "Free" Trade is established to confront the ruling global institutions and rejected NGOs while promoting non-violent civil disobedience. The initiative soon broadens its agenda becoming generalist. It is dominated by mass movements from the South and farmers from all over the world. The clear 'No' helps Southern NGOs in convincing most advocacy NGOs to reject the Multilateral Agreement on Investments (MAI), and to oppose further extension of WTO. Radicalization and broader cooperation takes place in the North, with the South as a driving force.

1999: The radicalization and broadening of popular movement cooperation is demonstrated at the WTO meeting at Seattle 1999.

2001: The World Social Forum is initiated in Porto Alegre, another third world initiative for popular movement and NGO discussion. It becomes a success attracting some 100 000 international and domestic participants after only two years as an open generalist forum addressing most issues, but not making common decisions on action. In spite of the formal exclusion of political parties, parties have a key position in mobilizing resources to make the event possible. The formal exclusion of the liberation movements carrying weapons is a controversial issue. The same year the Global Greens are proclaimed as an international party. The

US starts its war on terrorism rejecting the Westphalian order and UN principles.

Political parties become less and less democratic. The old parties see their membership shrink, and their democratic influence is reduced when the leadership needs free room for national and international negotiations. In some new parties, democracy is ruled out as a way to organize politics and instead franchises and other forms of selecting from above are established. Intellectual life is increasingly more separate and organized outside the party in self-selected think-tanks, or closely related PR-companies, or NGO campaigns.

ISLAM AND TRANSNATIONAL POLITICAL MOVEMENTS

Marko Ulvila

When discussing international social and political movements, the picture is inadequate without the inclusion of the cultural sphere of Islam. Given its rich history, the size of the worldwide Muslim population, and the political significance of countries with a Muslim majority, there is plenty of ground to cover. The political tensions of the day call for a deeper understanding of this sphere.

At this juncture it is very challenging to write about political movements and Islam given the religious aspects of the inflamed tensions and violent conflicts. The Western imaginary and language is filled with concepts, such as, fundamentalism and Islamism with increasingly derogative connotations. This makes it somewhat difficult to reflect on the fact that many, if not most, movements and organisations of political Islam have arisen from resistance to the domination of the modern North (West or East), from the colonial period to present. In this sense, the 'Islamists' movements share a few important features with the anti-globalisation, or alter-globalisation movements. Their main difference is, some draw inspiration and resources from the world of religion, and the others from

secular ideas. If we study past decades, both leftist and religious movements show the capability of great extremes; the Cambodia of Khmer Rouge and Afghanistan of Taliban serve as sad examples.

The purpose of this compilation is to introduce some of the key elements, thinkers and movements that have bearing on political Islam today[13]. Present day movements and organisations do not fit into the scope of this text.

The early period

Islam is a religion existing for over fourteen centuries in many different countries. Diverse political movements, in many different contexts, have used the banner of Islam to bring legitimacy to its causes. Not surprisingly, practically every aspect of Islam and politics is subject to disagreement and contention.

Some claim that the origins of Islam as a political movement are found in the life and times of Islam's prophet, Muhammad. In 622 CE, in recognition of his claim to prophet hood, Muhammad was invited to rule the city of Medina. Thus, Muhammad and his followers moved to Medina where Muhammad drafted the Medina Charter. This document made Muhammad the ruler, and recognized him as the Prophet of Allah. During his rule, Muhammad institutionalised the laws of the Qur'an, considered by Muslims to be divine revelation. Medina became a state based on Islamic law; this is still a basic demand of many Islamic movements. Muhammad acquired a widespread following and army, and his rule expanded to the city of Mecca, and then spread throughout the Arabian peninsula through a combination of diplomacy and military conquest.

However, the applicability of Muhammad's rule in Medina as a model for a modern state is questioned by Muslim liberals. They claim that the laws of the Qur'an were issued forth to meet the needs of Muhammad's community and are not necessarily applicable outside that community. Regarding jihad, liberals point to the work of historians, such as Montgomery Watt, who show that Muhammad's military conquest had its origins in the pre-Islamic *bedouin,* Arab practice of *ghazw* (usually

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13 The article is based on entries in Wikipedia on islamism, political aspects of Islam and Tablighi Jamaat, accessed in February, 2006.

translated as "tribal raiding"), involving armed attacks for conquest, plunder or the capture of slaves.

After Muhammad's death, his community needed to appoint a new leader, this gave rise to the title Caliph, meaning "successor". Thus, the subsequent Islamic empires were known as Caliphates. Alongside the growth of the Umayyad Empire, a major political development within Islam emerged in this period which gave way to the sectarian split between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims; this has its roots in a dispute over the succession of the Caliphate. The Shi'ites favoured a succession model based on the inheritance of Muhammad's authority through his family. However, Sunni sect emerged as predominant sect in most of the Muslim world; thus, most modern Islamic political movements (with the exception of Iran) are founded on Sunni thought.

Muhammad's closest companions, the four "rightly guided" Caliphs who succeeded him, continued the expansion of the state to encompass: Jerusalem, Ctesiphon, and Damascus, and sending armies as far as the Sindh. The empire stretched from Al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) to Persia under the reign of the Ummayad dynasty. The conquering Arab armies imported the system of *sharia* laws and courts to their new military camps and cities, they built mosques for Friday *jam'at* (community prayers), and Madrasahs to educate local Muslim youth. The result of these institutions was the development of a class of *ulema* (classical scholars) who served as *qadis* (sharia-court judges), imams of mosques, and madrasah teachers. These classical scholars and jurists all owed their livelihood to the expansionary empire. Not surprisingly, these *ulema* gave legal and religious sanction to militarist interpretations of jihad. The political terminology of the Islamic state was the product of this period.

Important movements of the modern era

Wahhabism

An influential strain of thought for political Islam came from the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia. The Wahhabists emerged in the 18th century led by, Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1792) who believed that it was necessary to live according to the strict dictates of Islam, which is interpreted as meaning to live in the same manner as the prophet Muhammad and his followers during the seventh century in Medina. Al-Wahhab formed an alliance with the Saudi chieftain who made Wahhabism the official religion in the First Saudi State, Muhammad bin Saud. Al Wahhab gave religious legitimacy to Ibn Saud's career of conquests. Al Wahhab and his followers opposed many innovations developed after this time, including the minaret, marked graves, and, later, television and radios. The Wahhabis also considered Muslims who violated their strict interpretation to be heretics. When King Abdul Aziz al-Saud founded Saudi Arabia, in 1927, he again brought the Wahhabists into power. With Saud's rise to prominence spread Wahhabism, especially following the 1973 oil embargo and the resulting glut of oil wealth for Saudi Arabia. The Wahhabists were proselytizers and made use of their wealth to spread their interpretation of Islam.

The Deobandi Movement

In India, the Deobandi movement developed as a reaction to British actions against Muslims, and the influence of Sayed Ahmad Khan (1817-1898) advocating for the reform and modernisation of Islam. Named after the town where it originated, Deoband, the movement was built around Islamic schools (principally Darul Uloom) that taught an interpretation of Islam which discourages the use of many forms of technology and entertainment believing that only "revealed" or God-inspired knowledge (rather than human knowledge) should be followed.

Although the Deobandi philosophy is puritanical and wishes to remove non-Muslim (i.e., Hindu or Western) influence from Muslim societies, it is not especially violent or proselytising; it confines its activity mostly to the establishment of madrassas, or Muslim religious schools.

Tablighi Jamaat

Tablighi Jamaat is a movement founded by Muhammad Ilyas (1885-1944), in the Mewat province of India. Tabligh, meaning "to deliver (the message)" in Arabic, and Tablighi Jamaat claims to revive their primary

duty as Muslims. Their aim is to bring spiritual awakening to the world Muslims. The movement started in 1925, and has emerged as the single largest Islamic movement in the world; it is active in almost every country.

The Tablighi movement asks Muslims at-large to spend their time, and money, taking spiritual journeys to seek religious knowledge and promote their faith. During these scheduled journeys, members of each travelling group (called jama'ats) learn the basic tenets of Islam from each other. The annual Tablighi congregation in Bangladesh, the Biswa Ijtema, attracts over 3 million devotees from around the world.

Most writers and critics of the Tablighi Jamaat, as well as the movement authorities themselves, tend to see the Tablighi Jamaat as completely apolitical. However, individuals associated with the movement have played major political roles in various contexts. Furthermore, the movement's activities have their own share of broader political implications. The political vision of the Tablighi Jamaat is dictated by the need for the movement to survive and expand in different situations. Despite its apparent rigidity, in practice the movement displays a remarkable flexibility allowing it to flourish in different contexts; its political roles in each context is determined by the overall imperative for expansion while remaining free from state repression.

Jamaat-e-Islami

Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979) was an important figure in India and after independence from Britain, in Pakistan. Strongly influenced by Deobandi ideology, he advocated for the creation of an Islamic state governed by sharia, Islamic law as interpreted by Shura councils. Maududi founded the Jamaat-e-Islami in 1941, and remained at the helm until 1972. His extremely influential book, "Towards Understanding Islam" (Risalat Diniyat in Arabic), placed Islam in a modern context, and enabled conservative *ulema* and liberal modernizers, such as al-Faruqi in "Islamization of Knowledge", to carry forward some of Maududi's key principles. Chief among these principles was the basic compatibility of Islam with an ethical scientific view.

The Muslim Brotherhood

Maududi's ideas were strongly influential on Sayyed Qutb (1906 – 1966) in Egypt. Qutb was one of the key philosophers in the Muslim Brotherhood movement after the death of its founder Hasan al-Banna (1906 – 1949). The Brotherhood was established in Ismailiyah, Egypt, in 1928, and was banned (but still exists) following confrontations with the Egyptian president Gamal Abdul Nasser, who subsequently jailed Qutb, and thousands of others. The Muslim Brotherhood advocated a return to sharia because of what they perceived as the inability of Western values to secure harmony and prosperity for Muslims. Since only divine guidance could lead humans to peace, justice, and prosperity, it follows that Muslims should eschew man-made systems of governance and live according to the divinely-inspired sharia ("The Qur'an is our constitution"). The Brotherhood also advocated jihad against the European colonial powers, particularly the British, French, and their allies who ruled, virtually all of, the Muslim world during al-Banna's (and much of Qutb's) life.

Islamic Jihad movements

While Qutb's ideas became increasingly radical during his imprisonment prior to his execution in 1966, the leadership of the Brotherhood, led by Hasan al-Hudaybi, remained moderate and interested in political negotiation and activism. However, fringe, or splinter movements did develop to pursue a more radical direction, perhaps inspired by the final writings of Qutb in the mid-1960s ("Milestones"). By the 1970s, the Brotherhood renounced violence as a means to achieve their goals. The path of violence and military struggle was again used by such movements as the Egyptian Islamic Jihad organisation, responsible for the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1981. Unlike earlier anti-colonial movements, Egyptian Islamic Jihad focused its efforts on "apostate" leaders of Muslim states, leaders who held secular leanings, or introduced or promoted Western/foreign ideas and practices into Islamic societies.

Developments in the past decades

Muslim political movements have gone through major political and philosophical developments in the early part of the twentieth century. It was not until the 1980s that movements identifying mainly with Islam became active in the international arena and rose to great prominence in the 1990s.

The reasons for the rise of political Islam during this period are still disputed. The ideologies that have dominated the Middle East since decolonization, such as, Ba'athism, Arab Socialism, and Arab Nationalism have, by 1980, failed to attain the economic and political goals expected of them. By the late 1980s, the distinct Shi'ite version of political Islam lost vigour during the Iran-Iraq War. During the conflict against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan, many radical Muslims came together to fight what they saw as an atheist invading force, and were heavily funded by the United States. In Pakistan, military dictators, gaining power through coups (especially Zia-ul-Haq), exploited religious sentiments to consolidate their power bringing Islamic political parties into prominence and nearly destroyed the traditional secularism stemming from the secular stance of the Muslim League and its leader, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan.

In his book, *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam*, Gilles Kepel argues that the central importance of political Islam in the 1990s was a by-product of the Gulf War of 1990. Prior to it, organized political Islam had mostly been associated with Saudi Arabia, a nation founded on Wahhabism, and an ally of Islamist groups in Egypt and Afghanistan. Saudi Arabia, as a close ally of the West, and, having a strong interest in regional stability, played an important restraining role on religious groups.

The Shi'ite clerics in Iran had long argued that Saudi Arabia was an apostate state, a puppet of the West that espoused a corrupted Islam. During the 1980s these accusations had little effect, largely because of their Shi'ite origin; however, after the Gulf War, Saddam Hussein embraced this rhetoric, arguing that Saudi Arabia had betrayed its duty to protect the holiest sites of Islam.

After the Gulf war, Saudi Arabia launched a two pronged strategy to restore security and leadership in Islamic circles. Those Islamic groups who refused to return to the Saudi umbrella were persecuted. At the same time Saudi oil money began to flow freely to the groups who continued to work with the kingdom. Madrassas around the world saw a great increase in their funding. Covertly, Saudi money began to fund more violent groups in areas, such as, Bosnia and the former Soviet Union. Saudi Arabia's western allies looked the other way, seeing the survival of their vital ally as more important than the problem of increasing amounts money and resources flowing into radical groups.

An alternative direction has been taken by many Muslims in Turkey where the movement of political Islam split into reformist, and traditionalist wings, in 2001. The reformists formed the moderate Justice and Development Party (Ak Party) who gained an overall majority in the Turkish parliament in 2002, and seek to balance Islamic values with the requirements of a secular and democratic political system.

Islam and modern political theory

The development of modern political Islam is based on centuries of theology and political science. It is also a reaction to the influence of other ideologies of the modern world. Modern developments in political Islam began in the colonial period and were overtly anti-imperialist. It also opposed local elites who wanted independence and supported adoption of western liberal ideals. Writers like the Egyptian, Sayyid Qutb, and the Pakistani, Sayyid Abul Ala Maududi saw western style individualism as contrary to centuries of tradition, and as inevitably leading to a debauched and licentious society.

In the years after independence, the most important ideological currents in the Muslim world were: socialism and communism. This influenced political Islam in two ways. A large portion of religious thought and writing during this era directly addressed counteracting Marxism. For instance, Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr's main works are detailed critiques of Marxism, and pay little attention to capitalism and liberalism. Another option was to try to integrate socialism and Islam. This was most notably done by Ali Shariati. On several occasions, devote Muslim and leftist groups found common cause, such as during the early stages of the Iranian Revolution, and several organizations, such as the Islamic Socialist Front in Syria, were both Marxist and Islamic. While most thinkers of political Islam

reject Marxism, the influence of socialist ideologies during this formative period means that works of political Islam continue to be infused with Marxist language and concepts. For instance, Qutb's view of an elite vanguard to lead an Islamic revolution is borrowed directly from Lenin's the Vanguard of the Proletariat.

ANNEX: SHOULD WE HAVE A GLOBAL PARTY?

Marko Ulvila

Below is an e-mail that initiated some of the discussions leading to the NIGD project on political parties and global democratisation.

Re: Should we have a global party?
From: Marko Ulvila <marko.ulvila@kaapeli.fi>
To: Katarina Sehm Patomäki <katarina@nigd.org>,
etela.lampo@jippii.fi, outi.hakkarainen@helsinki.fi,
thomas.wallgren@helsinki.fi, ritupriya@vsnl.com, vijaypratap@vsnl.net,
teivo@nigd.org, l.rikkila@idea.int, heikki.patomaki@helsinki.fi,
jaana.airaksinen@luukku.com
Cc: jpasanen@cc.joensuu.fi
Date: 2004-04-23 08:40

Dear comrades,

recently I have overheard more often conversations about establishing a global political party. Somehow the idea has fascinated me, and gradually I have started developing a scenario of how one could be built. My point of departure is linked to much of the other efforts I am involved in, i.e. building a broad alliance of people and groups who share some minimal values and commitments with the aim of countering the neo-liberal hegemony and producing a democratic alternative.

Yesterday I shared briefly my rough ideas around this with Katarina and Ville-Veikko and they encouraged me to go ahead and write them down.

The scenario I have in mind would be an international red-green alliance with the following features:

- the membership would be of individuals who are members of existing political parties
- the initial charter would be derived from the UN agreements + WSF charter
- there would be national quotas for members on a demographic basis and a 50 % quota would be for women
- the first five to ten years would be spent on programmatic work
- the party would be supported by advisers and facilitators
- the party would not contest in elections but would support its members

The objective of the exercise would be in the first instance to enrich our imagination and experience on cross-cultural democratic political association on a global scale. Specific political objectives would be part of the game, but should not dominate it in the beginning. A radical edge of the project would come from the deep commitment to comprehensive democracy and inclusion of all civilisations / nations.

In the beginning, the basic work would be done by national facilitators, who would mobilise the members and maintain communication. In any country, no party should constitute more than a fraction (say 1/3) of the total number of members in the party.

The overall maximum number of members should be set in the beginning (for first phase) so that no country would become overrepresented. For instance, if 70.000 were to be the figure, then the membership for each country would be 1 for each 100.000 (a lakh) citizens. Thus, in India the party would have up to 10.600 members and in Finland up to 50.

The international dimension of the party would rely on the meetings around World Social Forum. A council / politbureau / central committee of the party would be set up. The number or chairpersons / vice chairpersons / spokespersons could be quite high in order to avoid nasty fights for visibility.

The colour red would obviously refer to left, and green to both environmentalism and Islam. It would be important to get personalities from democratic Islamic parties (such as NU in Indonesia) to co-initiate the process. In this constellation, one could get people from all major civilisations (communists of China and India, Pluralist Arabs and the usual suspects from European cultures).

What do you think? What other proposals for a global party are there around? Any proposals for continuing the discussion?

Yours, Marko

PS: To remind ourselves of the demographic dimension of democracy, please find attached the Top 20 of the envisioned 70.000 membership base (though single-party China could fill only a fraction of the quota). All very small countries should get a 3 member quota.

China	13.042
India	10.655
United States	2.940
Indonesia	2.199
Brazil	1.785
Pakistan	1.536
Bangladesh	1.467
Russian Federation	1.432
Japan	1.277
Nigeria	1.240
Mexico	1.035
Germany	825
Vietnam	814
Philippines	800
Egypt	719
Turkey	713
Ethiopia	707
Iran	689
Thailand	628
France	601

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTORS

Tord Björk

Tord Björk is a long term member of the board of the Environmental Federation/Friends of the Earth Sweden and a co-founder of the Popular Movement's Study Group. He has initiated and led numerous civic campaigns and processes on issues of the environment, development and democracy.

Margaret Blakers

Margaret Blakers is from the Green Institute, Australia. She was the coordinator of the Global Greens Conference in 2001 that took place in Cambera, Australia.

Vagish K. Jha

Vagish K. Jha is member of the Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam initiative in India. He is a free lance journalist and cultural animator based in New Delhi.

Miika Kopperoinen

Miika Kopperoinen is student of history at the University of Oulu, Finland. He is the vice Chairman of the youth association of the the Coalition Party of Finland. The party is a member of the International Democratic Union.

Hanna Laako

Hanna Laako, member of the NIGD and PhD-Candidate at the University of Helsinki, Graduate School for North and Latin American Studies/Researcher of the Finnish Cultural Foundation. She is currently based in Mexico.

John Percy

John Percy has been an activist for some 40 years and a central leader of Australian Democratic Socialist Party since its inception.

Katarina Sehm Patomäki

Katarina Sehm Patomäki's prime fields of interest are globalisation and democratisation. Katarina has been NIGD's founding member, previous chair (1999) and present executive secretary. Prior to her involvement with NIGD, Katarina Sehm-Patomäki worked for various international organisations (Council of Europe, OSCE, UN) in different capacities. At present, she is doing research on debt arbitration mechanisms, the focus of her PhD thesis at the University of Helsinki, Finland.

Marko Ulvila

Marko Ulvila is a free lance researcher and democracy activist based in Tampere, Finland. He holds an MA in sociology from the University of Tampere. Currently he is the member secretary of Democracy Forum Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam – Finland and chairperson of NIGD.