



DIRECT DEMOCRATIC EURO-VISION NEWSLETTER

Vol. 17 (No.1)

March 2015



WORLDWIDE DIRECT DEMOCRACY NEWSLETTER **DIRECTKRAZY**

Rule by Parties - Heading for Precipice

by Jiri Polak

The Myth: Democracy means Rule by at least two Parties, mostly several, who are free to compete in elections. Government is formed by representatives of the strongest party or a coalition. This is the only possible form of democracy. No better democracy can exist. Occasional referenda can only deal with certain rather marginal problems and can only be held if politicians agree to it. The same principle applies to citizen deliberation. Final decisions can only be made by representatives of political parties, in government or on lower levels.

Reality: Political parties operate on the assumption that citizenry consists of a few categories – workers, peasants, town dwellers and the like – and that each party represents the interests of a certain category. E.g. The Social democratic Party represents the interests of the workers and other employees, right-wing parties represent the interests of entrepreneurs, share-holders, banks, and rich people in general, centrist parties represent the interests of the rural population etc.

There is amalgamation of the big parties and the State. The big parties decide on their own salaries and other emoluments, they are political pros without much contact with the grass roots. Some time ago a statistical report was published in Sweden showing that about one half of the Swedish members of Parliament had never had any ordinary job.

On the treatment of certain issues – membership in international organizations, defence, global ecological problems – ordinary citizens have no influence. And yet, these issues are assuming a greater importance than distribution of wealth inside countries – the basis and *raison d'être* of political parties. The primary interest of each citizen is to preserve a benign environment, to preserve peace, especially for the coming generations, and to maintain a sustainable development – all these issues that cannot be credibly promoted by political parties because these issues require **cooperation** of the whole citizenry, while political parties subsist on **conflicts**, to a great

REVOLUTION or TRANSFORMATION?



"Even in a small country, a spark can burst into flames."

Dr.Marek Hrubec, page 16

In November 2014, a symposium on the post-1989 development in Czechoslovakia was held in Prag, attended by some of the most prominent social scientists of both brother nations. Their contributions, in Czech and Slovak, have been published in the above book. Editors: **Dr.Marek Hrubec** for the texts in Czech and **Dr.Ladislav Hohoš** for the texts in Slovak.

extent artificially fomented and maintained. From having been, in former times, instruments of progress, political parties are increasingly becoming a threat to the survival of our civilization. Why?

To maximize their chances to be elected, the principal parties promise various improvements of the material standard of living of their voters. The fulfilment of these promises can, in most cases, only be achieved at the cost of a further devastation of nature in an increasing number of areas round the Globe. Experts warn that we are approaching a limit beyond which environmental damage and over-exploitation of natural

resources will be irreparable, threatening our very survival. At the same time, Experts, journalists and other participants of public debate say, as if by the way, that, to arrest this ominous development, what is lacking is "political will". It seems that all these debaters are reluctant to speak out: The lack of political will is the *greed, the power hunger, the cruelty, the escapism of the ruling oligarchies*. The party-based oligarchies respond rather to various short-term vested interests than to the legitimate interests of their voters. By continued party political rule we are courting disaster.

INTERNATIONAL

Czech Republic

The idea of Direct Democracy emerged in Czech Republic shortly after the collapse of communism in Europe. A group of activists established contacts with the German *Mehr Demokratie e.V.*, and successively even with other European DD organizations. This international contact network expanded even more thanks to the first international DD conference of 1998. Lately, a new insight emerged from the discussions: The now active DD organizations only try to introduce the right to I&R into existing party based systems. They can bring about some marginal improvements, but leave the systems themselves basically intact. This is not sufficient. It might even be counterproductive because it might give people the impression that, to establish true democracy, it is sufficient to establish the right to I&R.

In Czech Republic, a radically new thinking is emerging: The basis of the system is the Constitution. Until now, each constitution has been formulated and then imposed, whether using referendum or not, on the citizens. At best, the citizens have only been permitted to vote for or against ready-made complex systems presented by party politicians. Often not even that. This is not democracy. In a truly democratic system, **the citizens themselves must have the right to write their Constitution and then to approve it by referendum.**

This idea begins to be discussed by a growing number of people. The movement for Direct Democracy – DD or DDD – is being transformed into Movement for Citizens Constitution CC. Since 1998, DD pioneers tried to establish international organizations, WWDDM or CICDD. These organizations, or rather networks, have remained too weak to make a difference. The development in Czech Republic shows another, more promising way: To begin with, we should try to establish true democracy in one country. If successful, the experiment could influence, by demonstration effect, developments everywhere. The following strategy is discussed:

1. Phase one: Sum up the proposals and ideas presented so far and present them for discussions in the inner circle of activists.
2. Phase two: Sum up all existing proposals together with complements and present them for voting and comments by the general public.
3. Phase three: On the basis of these comprehensive materials write a draft of a new, Citizens Constitution.
4. Phase four: Present the draft for discussions by the general public.
5. Phase five: Demand a referendum; if the politicians refuse, start a non-violent campaign.
6. Phase six: Enforce a referendum.

7. Phase seven: If, in the referendum, the majority of citizens vote 'Yes', the sitting government will be transformed into an *expeditionary government* whose only task will be to put in place the structures and proceedings prescribed by the new Constitution.

So far, the Czech movement is in phase 2. Let's go on and change the rotten system! For this purpose, **Mgr. Miluše Kotišová** and **Mr. Jiří Matuszek** have created a website where activists can send their proposals and comments, preparing the synthetic proposal to be put forward for voting by the general public.

Mgr. Kotišová returned recently from Costa Rica where she had spent about 2 months, studying that country's political system. After several trips there, she is now an expert in this area. Some elements of this system might inspire DD activists in other countries.

In the previous issue of this newsletter, 5 Czech DD activists were presented. Here are four more:



Mr. **Zdenek Reimann**, DD supporter from the very beginning, prominent participant in discussions.



Mrs. **Eva Strížovská**, editor-in-chief of the periodical *Czech Dialogue*, addressing mostly Czechs living abroad.



Mr. **Václav Vorel**, founder and chairman of the organization *Common Deal* (Sounáležitost). Establishment of a Citizens' Constitution is their first priority.

22. January, Mrs. **Zuzana Masná**, an internet article (excerpts): "Can ordinary citizens participate in creating a Constitution? One of the participants of a conference held by the Centre of Contemporary Art DOX will be an important member of the Icelandic Parliament, *Birgitta Jónsdóttir* "There is a contradiction between the origin of the Czech Constitution and the proposal of the new Icelandic Constitution. In Czech Republic, the whole process progressed from above, in Iceland from below. In 2008, after the bankruptcy of the Icelandic banks, a new Constitution was written using *crowdsourcing* –

i.e. by means of a discussion with the public, both offline and online. So the birth of the Constitution of Iceland is a unique and inspiring example of a participation of the general public in the running of a state."



Mr. **Jiří Matuszek**, organizer of the *HZPD* (Movement for Direct Democracy)

Birgitta Jónsdóttir is an MP of the new Parliament of Iceland (Althing) for the Pirate Party." -.-

Legal Aspects: Recently, the following issue begins to be discussed: In the Constitution of Czechoslovakia, put in place shortly after the fall of communism in 1989, it was stipulated that every structural change of the system of the State, to be valid, had to be approved by referendum. In contempt of this rule, in 1992, the two leading politicians, without asking the citizens, split the State into Czech Republic and Slovak Republic. At the same time, according to polls, the majority of citizens were opposed to the split. It remains to be seen whether this political crime can be made use of in the campaign for a Citizens Constitution.

Germany

mdmagazin, Zeitschrift für direkte Demokratie, January 2015
Editorial by Mrs. **Claudine Nierth**

Contents

Europa: Der Streit um die Schiedsgerichte; Mit Schwung gegen TTIP und auf zu neuen Ufern

Jahrestagung: Zwischen Traum und Trauma

Bundesweite Volksentscheide: Demokratie ist wenn ma trotzdem bleibt

Europa: Eurorettung auf Kosten der Demokratie?

Im Apfelgarten Südtirols weht ein frischer Wind

Bundesländer: Ein Bürgerbegehren für jeden Tag des Jahres;
 Ländertelegramm
Wahlrecht: Quo vadis Sperrklausel?
Bundesweite Volksentscheide: Neu im Kuratorium
Rezension: Herausforderung Demokratie
Omnibus für direkte Demokratie: Kein Osten, kein Westen
Kurz notiert: Demokratie-Nachrichten aus Europa und der Welt
Leserbriefe: Antwort auf "Das Räderwerk der Angst" und "Schulden Bremsen per Volksentscheid"



Canada (and the World)

With great sorrow we have received an information about the decease of Eng. **George Sagi**, one of the pioneers of the global DD movement, the first chairman of WWDDM, a theorist and prominent philosophical physicist, participant of the first and the second *International DD Conferences*.

George, you will not be forgotten!



UK

6 december, **I&Rgb** wrote (excerpts): "The Scottish independence referendum during 2012 to 2014 attracted huge interest across the world, from Canada to Spain, from China to the USA. For the procedure, regulation, quality of public information, enthusiasm and civility of debate, came high praise from many commentators and countries. The referendum made a major contribution to the reputation of democracy in its literal meaning, rule by the people.

Two months after the September ballot, people are expressing interest in finding ways to carry forward this gain in quality of democracy. There are calls for further referenda and wider use of direct democracy:

Why not introduce direct democracy for a wider range of public decisions in Scotland (Ed: maybe the UK would follow the example!)

Hold another Scottish referendum on proposals for further devolution?

Right to call a referendum could be given to Scotland

.....
Nicola Sturgeon apparently calls for Scottish, Welsh and N.Irish people's veto on EU "in or out" referendum

.....
 22 december, **Iniref** wrote (excerpts): Campaign for direct democracy in Britain

Citizens' Initiative and Referendum I&R-GB

<http://www.iniref.org/> Link to site index

<http://www.iniref.org/carta.htm> Election campaign call

The civic Parish is the smallest political unit in England and (called community) in Wales. A vestige of direct, citizen-led democracy has existed since the 1970s BUT the rules are very poor and the people's decision is not legally binding – only advisory!

So, we campaigned for improvements: here is a summary and documentation of what we did

.....

USA

Prof. Ted Becker's epoch-making and already classical book **The Last Lost Empire** has been published in a second edition. Congratulations!



Switzerland

Europa-Magazin 2/2014

edito **Paul Ruppen**

Direkte Demokratie, Grundrechte und Völkerrecht

Volkssouveränität und Völkerrecht: Ein Widerspruch? Von

Philipp Zimmermann und Esther Meier

Direkte Demokratie und Grundrechte <http://www.humanrights.ch/>

Demokratie, Rechtsstaat und Menschenrechte von *Paul*

Ruppen

Formation professionnelle; EU-Militär-Einsätze im Innern

Buchbesprechungen

L'UE va-t-elle détruire le système dual de formation

professionnelle? De *Rudolf Strahm*

EU schafft Grundlagen zum Militär-Einsatz gegen die Bürger

Griechenland – soziales EU-Desaster www.german-foreign-policy.com

Kurzinfos

Greece

19 January. On behalf of the Greek Direct Democracy Movement, Mr. **Giorgios Kokkas** expressed deep regret caused by the decease of Mr. *George Sagi*. On the other hand, he is hopeful concerning the development of his country. He expects the winning party, *Syriza*, to support the ideas of Direct Democracy.

Extracts:

www.dimopolis.gr the official site of the Greek Direct Democracy Movement, part of WDDM, that participated officially in the Euro-Parliament elections of 2004, 2009, and 2014.

www.dimovoullo.gr the official site of the Greek Citizens

www.s120w.gr the official site of the political alliances site of the Greek Direct Democracy Movement and 3D Democracy (Digital-Deliberative-Direct)

www.heliaea.gr the official site of Legal Activism, made by Greek Direct Democracy Movement and its Legal Representative *George L. Kokkas*, Attorney-at-Law, founding member of WDDM



Italy/Europe

20 January, a letter by Mr. **Carlo Marinis**, "please find enclosed a new PDF copy of my updated draft of a Constitution for the European Union, based on direct democracy: "Europe Nation – Project Constitution" is the new title of it.

The web site "www.democraticidiretti.it" carries the new draft both in English and in Italian; this needs to be clicked blogger "carlo".

South Africa

13 January, a letter sent by Mr. **Jim Powell** to the *Impumelelo Social Innovations Center* (excerpt)

DIRECT DEMOCRACY is a government system that ensures accountability to you, the voter!

Control your politicians after the elections

Our current constitution and political system in South Africa is considered better than pre 1994 but worse than other constitutions throughout the world in its content and application.

- The system lacks in accountability
- The primary allegiance of politicians is to their political party and not to us, the voters!
- Regretfully, the 50% of the local government councillors with an identifiable constituency remains unaccountable to the electorate.

Our system is effectively a 5-year dictatorship

We, the voters, are

- The legitimate shareholders of South Africa, province and local government.
- The employers and paymasters of our politicians.

As such, we demand control over our politicians and regular accountability.

We are determined to have, like the Swiss, a direct democratic system where laws are passed with the electorate in final control, if they decide to exercise that right."

The World

19 January, Mr. **Miroslav Kolar** sent round a list containing the addresses of about 200 (!) DD groups and organisations. A valuable source of information! Thank you! The address of the site is

<http://democracy.mkolar.org/newURL.html>

New submission: LINK: <http://www.forelawsonboard.net/DemocrathonProcess.html> – Digital Direct Democracy – A Compassionate/Cooperative Global Society
Digital direct democracy on Earth – aligning itself with Universal forelaws of empathy and compassion, and with cosmic genealogy – is leading humanity to a compassionate/cooperative global society.

Robert E. Cobb, forelaws_on_board@forelawsonboard.net, USA, 2015/1/6

19 January, Mr. **Miroslav Kolar** wrote, "A few recent contributions to <http://whatismdemocracy.net/>:

Nov.4,2014: Rule by the people: I would like to say that democracy should protect the people, include citizens access to the opportunity; the government should respect human rights and rule of law." From phukhurech11@gmail.com
June 10,2014: (excerpt) "Democracy is different people having different ideas. Where persons are not able to express their own individual ideas, it is not democracy."

From: worldcitizenis@gmail.com

May 13,,2014, Pat Wells: "I have written at length addressing the questions of leadership and democracy in Rethinking Survival. Posted at rethinkingsurvival.com: Reinventing DEMOCRACY."



**Hotel Labe
Pardubice
Czech republic**

In this hotel, the first conference on Citizens' Constitution took place in early April 2015.
The movement for Citizens' constitution is the next stage of the Movement for Direct Democracy. In this field, the Czech movement shows the way.'

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION 300,- Czech Crowns

ACCOUNT NR.: JIRI POLAK, 002022-0168677293/0800

IBAN CZ74 0800 0020 2201 6867 7293

BIC - SWIFT: GIBACZPX

BANK ADDRESS: CESKA SPORITELNA, JUGOSLAVSKA 19, PRAHA 2, CZECH REPUBLIC



DIRECT DEMOCRATIC EURO-VISION NEWSLETTER

Vol. 17 (No.1)

March 2015

**WORLDWIDE DIRECT DEMOCRACY
NEWSLETTER**

Published by MDD - Movement for Direct Democracy

Responsible editor: Jiri Polak, Design: Bohuslav Binka, Picture: Katka Svehlova

MDD - MOVEMENT FOR DIRECT DEMOCRACY

JIRI POLAK, ASSARHUSAVÄGEN 64, S-24736, S. SANDBY, SWEDEN

PHONE: 046/58891, E-MAIL: JIRI.POLAK@SWIPNET.SE

