



DIRECT DEMOCRATIC EURO-VISION NEWSLETTER

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WORLDWIDE DIRECT DEMOCRACY NEWSLETTER **DIREKTAKRY**

Two Types of Strategy

by Jiri Polak

International

The First International Conference on Direct Democracy (Czech Republic 1998) boosted considerably the emerging global network dealing with this subject. Even some formal organizations were established, hoping to introduce elements of DD into the systems of developed countries. On the pages of this newsletter, hundreds, if not thousands, of contributions and names of DD activists and theorists have appeared. Some of the most prominent ones:

USA: Prof.Ph.D.Ted Becker, ex-Senator Mike Gravel, Donald Davison, Dane Waters, George Sagi (deceased), Curtis Parham, Don Kemner, Prof.M.N.Mautner, John Suhr, Evan Ravitz, Lee Gottlieb (deceased), TRIAKA, Prof.Majid Behrouzi, Mark Antell, Ned Crossby, Prof.Ph.D.M.Zelený, Jaroslav Langer

Canada: George S.Sagi, M.Kolar, Bruce Eggum, Ian Woods

Germany: Ronald Pabst, Roman Huber, Thomas Rupp, Dr.M.Effler, Prof.Peter C.Dienel (deceased), Franz Isemann, Prof.Mohsen Massarat.....

Czech Republic: Dr.Eng.Josef Šmajš, Dr.Milan Valach (deceased), Eng.Jaroslav Kočí (deceased), Vladimír Rott, Josef Hromádka (deceased), Petr Czasch, Václav Vorel, Zdenek Reimann, Jiří Matuszek, Red.Eva Střížovská, Mgr.Miluš Kotišová

Australia: Dr.Lyn Carson, Sven Mason, Doug Everingham.....

South Africa: Jim Powell.....

UK: Dr.Michael Macpherson, Bernard Clayson, Dr.Myron Stagman, Tony Adenay

Italy: Dr.Antonio Rossin, Federico Tonini, Leopoldo Salgui, Giuseppe Strano, Carlo Marinis, Danilo d'Antonio.....

Israel: George Metanomski, Aki Orr

The Czech Strategy



Web Site

NAPIŠME A ODHLASUJME SI VLASTNÍ

OBČANSKOU ÚSTAVU !

Ústava napsaná a odhlasovaná politiky a jejich
přísluhovači

NENÍ LEGITIMNÍ !

Ve skutečné demokracii musí mít občané právo napsat a odhlasovat si ústavu, která maximálně respektuje jejich práva a zajišťuje nejlepší možnou ŽIVOTNÍ KVALITU !

Ústava vnucená občanům shora umožňuje vládnoucím elitám občany soustavně okrádat, obohacovat se korupcí, vhnět občany do válek, kde jich statisíce jsou zabíjeni, včetně žen a dětí, atd.

JAK DLOUHO BUDEME TOHLE TRPĚT ?

Translation:

Let us write and adopt by voting our own **CITIZEN'S CONSTITUTION !**

A Constitution written and adopted by politicians and their flunkies

IS NOT LEGITIMATE!

In a real democracy, the citizens must have the right to formulate and adopt by voting a Constitution which respects, to the highest possible extent, their rights and assures the best possible

Switzerland: *Andreas Gross, Bruno Kaufmann* (Sweden),
Paul Ruppen.....
 Brazil: *Rebecca Abers*
 Andorra: *Josep Lluís Ortega*
 Holland: *Arjen Nijboer, Filia den Hollander*
 Belgium: *Heiko Dittmer*.....
 France: *Kevin Lone*.....
 Greece: *Dr.Giorgios Kokkas*
 Ukraine: *Maria Ivanova*
 Spain: *Domitila Barbola*.....
 Cyprus: *Chambis Kiatipis*
 Nepal: *Biswo Ulak*
 Sweden: *Dr.Mikael Nordfors, Direktdemokraterna*
 Denmark: *Prof.Marcus Schmidt*.....
 Libya: *Dr.Milad D.Alshebari*

AND MANY MORE

National and Local

In spite of all intense activities on the international and transnational level, the movement has hardly achieved any visible involvement of ordinary citizens and any palpable improvement of the existing systems. The only such improvement has been achieved in Germany – the change of constitutions of some federal states by the inclusion of the right to I&R – but this success has been due to the activities of a national organization – the *Mehr Demokratie e.v.* Experience shows that, for the time being, efforts to change the system from within are the only kind of activities able to bring lasting results. Obviously, gathering and spreading information about what's happening on the international and transnational front does not lose its value, but local activism seems to be, potentially, the only force able to change the political formula on a large scale. To my knowledge, at least in one country such activism takes place and grows: *Czech Republic*.

QUALITY OF LIFE!

A constitution foisted upon the citizens from above makes it possible for the ruling elites to systematically rob the citizens, to enrich themselves by corruption, to thrust the citizens into wars where hundreds of thousands are killed, including women and children, etc.

HOW LONG SHALL WE TOLERATE ALL THIS?

Basic Principles

- 1.To be valid, any Constitution has to be approved by referendum.
- 2.The legislative power (Parliament) and the executive power (Government) must be separated; The executive power has to consist of non-partisan experts.
- 3.The Head of State and all leading power holders in the public sphere have to be elected and subject to recall at any time.
- 4.The Constitution has to permanently prohibit death penalty.
- 5.Public debts, taxes and payment for public services have to be subject to approval by referendum, if so requested by citizen initiative.
- 6.Members of Parliament have to be elected on the basis of single mandate election districts.
- 7.All public budgets as well as money spending and handling of our common property have to be transparent to the last detail.
- 8.Political parties and movements have no special rights. They are not financed by the State.
- 9.The right to Initiative and Referendum has to be guaranteed on all levels.
- 10.Politicians must enjoy immunity only for the execution of their functions.
- 11.Public media belong to all citizens of the Republic. They must serve exclusively and impartially their interests.
- 12.Czech Republic pledges never to start a war unless attacked.
- 13.The fees and emoluments of elected representatives have to be decided upon in deliberative councils such as the Planning Cell, practised successfully since many years in Germany and elsewhere.
- 14.The State is not permitted to encroach without necessity on the liberty of citizens.



INTERNATIONAL

Czech Republic

Organizations, groups and individuals promoting Direct Democracy exist in most western countries, both in Europe and North America. The most powerful DD organization is the German *Mehr Demokratie e.V.* However, so far, all such movements only try to include the right to I&R, or some deliberative procedures into the existing political systems where power is held by political parties. The constitutions on which the respective systems are based have been adopted by the parties in power, not by the citizens. (With the exception of Switzerland.) In Czech Republic, there is a small group of activists who believe that the inclusion of I&R and citizen deliberation into existing systems is not sufficient for transforming these systems into true democracies. The Czech activist group want to change the very system by adopting a *Citizens' Constitution*. The principles on which such a Constitution should be based are presented above. Several complete proposals of Citizens' Constitutions have also been presented. Now, the Czech group try to agree on an official proposal. This must be the first step on the difficult, but unavoidable road.

As pointed out above, experience shows that, despite the involvement of many prominent personalities, the international and transnational strategy is too weak to achieve significant results. Only local issues can mobilize grassroots citizens, which is a precondition of success. It would be sufficient to establish true democracy in one country, to begin with. Others would soon follow. Czech Republic might become that country

Mgr. Miluša Kotišová prepares for publication a book containing analyses and assessments of the contemporary political reality. Her work is in harmony with our efforts and an important contribution to these efforts. Here is a preliminary information:



The New Democracy: Politics as a Public Cognitive Space September 23, 2015

The complexity of human society has grown so daunting that even science, the alleged ultimate stronghold of our understanding of the world – albeit fragmented into different and ever-increasing fields and disciplines – finds it nearly impossible to wrap up its findings and accumulated knowledge into a synthetic meaningful whole. The article (in fact a summary of a book in the making) is – an admittedly bold – attempt to tackle the awe-striking complexity by proposing a new *democratic order* which will make democracy, the world, power relations/dynamics, options available, opportunities thinkable, real risks at hand and potential hazards, in short both our individual and collective learning experiences a very transparent and meaningful venture.

Today it is evident that politics – meaning the existing political processes, structures and institutions – can no longer manage this complexity effectively. Even the current political sciences fail to deal with this question. They do not see complexity as one of the primary issues to be studied. The two fundamental questions examined by political theorists are the following: Is democracy a mechanism to arrive at a common good, or is it a mechanism to curb power dimensions of human endeavours? (Ian Shapiro, 2001)

The only exception getting near the complexity topic that I know is the American philosopher Richard T. Peterson's concern with the concept of democratic philosophy and the politics of

knowledge (1996). Interestingly, Peterson sees the division of labour (and specialized knowledge, respectively) as a potential medium of undemocratic power. He speaks of scarcity as the operative principle of the division of labor, *scarcity bears on the social formation of agency*. It is a great paradox then that today's political representation tries to "grow out of scarcity." In Peterson's view, the growth imperative is a *depoliticising feature of social understanding*.

I hold that politics must be rethought and reformed as a sophisticated open space to synthesize what we are able to learn about the universe and reality. Only then can we hope politics will reasonably resolve the existing formidable problems and paradoxes, without creating bigger ones in the process.

All throughout the evolution, we humans have always been forced by the growing complexity of our environment to invent new tools, technologies or ways to be able to cope with it. (From pictograms, through logograms to the alphabet or achronicity), our environment to invent new tools, technologies or ways to be able to cope with it. Think of real-life objects used as signs, dancing and music, the dawn of drawing/painting, spoken language, written language (from pictograms, through logograms to the alphabet or achronicity), logic, mathematics, and last but not least money (in any form). All of these, and more, have been employed to allow for *visibilizing the hitherto invisible*: signification, representation, reference and meaning. Without these civilization would not have been thinkable. But let's keep in mind that no higher abstract form of language is possible without the previous layer of thought and abstraction it is constructed upon. It feeds onto the latter continuously. The specific language of mathematics would not exist without the underlying language capacity. This holds true for money as well. When taking a closer look at the above, *we humans have thrived on reducing complexity*. In his book *Decoding Reality, the Universe as Quantum Information*, Serbian-born physicist Vlatko Vedral argues that "it is actually the *decrease of information that equates to a better understanding of it*" and "we equate a better understanding of our reality with a *compression of the amount of information that it contains*," or "it is *compression that defines reality*." What makes the modern challenge of complexity for us even more herculean is the certainty that "the amount of information in the Universe as a whole can only ever increase." According to Vedral, information (and not matter or energy) is the building block on which everything is constructed. Information is far more fundamental than matter or energy because it can be successfully applied to both macroscopic interactions, such as economic and social phenomena, and (...) information can also be used to explain the origin and behavior of microscopic interactions such as matter and energy. Vedral also points out that information is measured in a way that is not easy to convey without mathematics. (The same thing can be said about money, too.)

In my book I am trying to gather evidence that money as we know it was a collective attempt to "create a new language" that would enable a higher form of abstraction/simplification/visibilization in the context of higher order of complexity. To resolve a pressing need after a new living space had been shaped (higher complexity: higher pace of life, higher population density, longer distances to communicate ideas and travel, accumulated knowledge, an expanded set of human needs). *This attempt had gone awry, it is a dead end* (linguist and philosopher Genevieve Vaughan).

Today's money is not a reliable unit of account nor store of value. It keeps changing all the time. Imagine what the world would be like if, say, a unit of time behaved in the same way like our money – one hour was 65 minutes one day and 90 minutes another day. This is the reality of our monetary system. And it is not OK at all.

I hope to propose a new democratic order by applying a series of Occam's razors on a number of existing paradoxes to arrive at the deployment of a radically new "socio-political learning technology" - *"de-economized money"* seen purely as a *sophisticated sign and visual deliberation system*, a language if you like, not as an economic commodity. In the process, *false either-or dilemmas* will be unveiled and as a result of that we will realize clearly that we can uphold and enjoy free market (fierce but honest competition), freedom of thought, freedom of initiative, individualism and full citizenship without compromising our humanity, fundamental human values and, most importantly, without destroying our planet. In a nutshell, some of my assertions are as follows:

MONEY

- today, we know that money is a social construct; we know that the so called gold-standard was a fiction; money today is created ex nihilo based on a rather skewed, subjective and utterly unsatisfactory (arbitrary, elitist, monopolist, undemocratic) discretion
- in fact, there is no shortage of money (another fiction); on the contrary, there is a monetary overkill
- too much money and too little money in circulation is always bad, what we need is just enough/accurate amount of "money" (how?)
- money is definitely NOT a commodity or a simple unit of account, or store of value
- I hold that money is at once an emergent communication and information technology and a very specific symbolic language (evidence: the overlapping and fuzzy origins of body-language, drawing, (ac)counting, languages, logic, mathematics, writing systems/scripts, pictograms, alphabets, digits, banking-dept-money systems)

EMPLOYMENT

- there is no dichotomy of capital versus labour
- there is an infinite amount of work to be done in the world (unemployment makes no sense whatsoever, scarcity of work is a fiction)
- **AND it is possible** to have enough "money" to "pay" for the work needed to be done
- it is possible to effectively limit material-economic growth, stop perverted obsolescence production, produce less, etc., and still create new jobs

EDUCATION

- work and study/vocational training should not be treated differently, as separate stages/spheres of our lives, they should be integrated; in other words work and study are the same - it's work all the same, and it should be "paid".
- New money can be used, in fact, as a state-of-the-art learning consolidation system whereby the "price" communicates in a simple and straightforward manner a whole bunch of vital information (or rather knowledge) about the production process in the context of the environment and society as a whole

STATE

- direct democracy
- dichotomy of private versus state economies is false (a hierarchical concept)
- prices or price information are fully integrated into the "monetary" system as a statistical database of a sort
- the State, which is small, merely runs this sophisticated

money or synthetic knowledge system, **it does not collect any taxes (due to a radically different money creation system)**

- the body of legislation is embodied by the very rules and set benchmarks of the money-knowledge system and it is nearly organic in nature
- money is also a transparent and intelligible decision-making/voting/knowledge gathering mechanism that translates into more everyday power for citizens, breaking the long 4-5-6 year representative office tenures
- it is the shortage of initiative in a critical field that determines the wages

The New Money (a brief intro)

- Money is only issued by the State.
- The total amount of money available at any given moment is based on the following: number of citizens, total number of working hours, unwanted jobs (indicating a need for automation or innovation), quality standards of services or products, benchmarks etc. The price is indivisible from the money as such. It will be multidimensional and multifactorial, using not only digits, but also a distinctive combination of letters, colors, patterns, position, size, shapes to convey at a single glance a chunk of synthesized and comparative "knowledge" about a particular product, production process and its eco-friendliness, domestic and foreign markets, labor characteristics, etc. This concept will be mostly designed on the basis of the analysis of the existing paradoxes and dilemmas. (This feature can be introduced by individual companies, too.)
- This means the new socio-political-economic system is and must be completely transparent. No patents, no commercial secrets... An open-to-the-public scrutiny production line is an integral part of the national educational, scientific and political systems. (*In recent years, Tesla has made a bold move to disclose all of its patents to advance its research and development more rapidly.*)
- The competition in the market centers on quality, eco-friendliness, thriftiness.
- A successful company is fully entitled to become and stay a monopoly in its field as long as it upholds and advances the high standard of its products. However, if it does not meet the strict KPIs, the citizens and/or the State have at their disposal a number of ways to promote competition or to reinforce the quality standard.

Note: I try to envision a system which can also be introduced incrementally, step by step, including as a private, individual, entrepreneurial initiative which can be later adopted and endorsed by one or more political parties. (*As long as parties still exist. JP*)

UK

Information sent round by **INIREF** on 2 October:

"A young scholar of British constitution and public law has produced a salient, topical, potentially liberating, even explosive, academically tooled analysis which probes vital aspects of our constitution, its malfunction and inertia (1). He focuses on

DIRECT DEMOCRACY IN THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION and entitles his paper,

Referenda: Plebiscites or opinion polls

Some quotes from Dhruv Patel's analysis follow, his text typed bold.

Direct democracy provenly desirable for the UK!

Direct democracy has been proved to be constitutional, desirable and feasible for use in the United Kingdom. What form it should také is detailed (in D.Patel's paper).

Further

The argument that referenda are unconstitutional is now unsustainable.

Source of power, authority of parliament

In short, the arguments against entrusting important decisions to the voters are fallacious: the voters are sovereign – the decisions are theirs to take. Whilst decision-making may – and in many cases should – be delegated to a parliamentary body, that body must always remember the source of its authority and its responsibility to it.

Weakness of currently practised referendum

At law the referendum lacks binding force, it remains an opinion poll. Furthermore, the People have no right to be consulted when constitutional amendments are made. There is no legal requirement for referendums to be held. It has been shown that if the people are accorded their proper position in law – that of the sovereign – then the referendum would become a key pillar of the constitution. Simply put, embracing the referendum will result in a better form of democracy.

Myths and „spin“ about political power, sovereignty and limits to democracy debunked

The argument that direct democracy is inconsistent with parliamentary sovereignty has lost its validity. Under Blackstone's interpretation of the common law, the referendum is permissible. Under this analysis, both referendum and citizens initiatives should be considered constitutional. However there are no precedents for citizens initiatives in the UK and expression of popular opinion have been ignored more often than not.

A note about the origin of the Thesis

In 2004 Dhruv Patel, then a senior student of law at the Victoria University of Manchester, contacted I&Rgb, the Campaign for Direct Democracy. For his final law degree thesis he had elected to consider the role and importance of direct democracy and the instrument of referendum for the UK, for its constitution and the future of our public governance. In the Law School he could rely on the knowledge and support of the distinguished constitutional jurist Professor Rodney Brazier. We at I&Rgb readily agreed to cooperate by supplying sources and insights into the debates, publications and experiences of our Campaign. Dhruv Patel showed us this thesis in draft, asking for comments, and soon sent a final product in the form of an academic paper. He wrote that we could publish the paper as we saw fit – we duly placed the document on our Campaign web site and announced its appearance widely in Internet. Particularly since the 2014 Scottish independence ballot, matters of democracy, constitution and state form have received growing public and academic attention. Because of its objectivity and rare insights, Patel's paper is highly relevant here. So after revising format and correcting a few mainly typographical errors we re-launch Patel's paper, presenting it to a wide audience,

1. # School of Law, University of Manchester

SWEDEN

Dr. Bruno Kaufmann



Dr. Kaufmann is a Swiss living in Sweden, a prominent DD theorist and activist, both internationally and in Swedish communal politics – chairman of the Council of the town of Falun. A quotation:

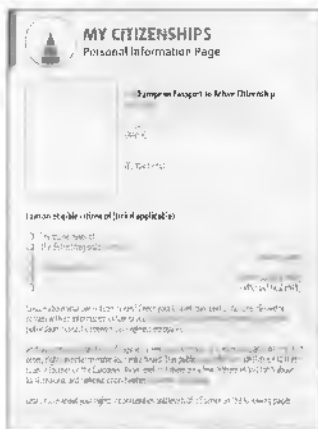
„Many, 80 percent, want to play a role but only 10 percent are active. Others are frustrated, angry and negative vis-a-vis the society; there is a risk that they will only be active when they want to demonstrate their dissatisfaction. So if we can induce four, five percent to become actively involved, much has been won.“

Dr. Kaufmann promotes the use of a Democracy passport as an instrument of such involvement:

Swedish:



European:



GERMANY

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Introduction by Dr. **Michael Efler**

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Parteien, nicht Politikverdrossenheit

Zuschriften zu „Das anspruchsvolle Zentrum der Demokratie“

**Merry Christmas
and further Success
in 2016 !**

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