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Aki ORR

Dedicated to Chris and Jeanne Pallis and all members of the "Solidarity" group in Britain, to Cornelius Castoriadis and all members of the "Socialism Ou Barbarie" group in France, to Henri Simon and all members of the ICO group, to Eli Lobel, Mustafa Khayati, Lafif - El-Akhdar, Jabra Nikola, Arna Mer-Khamis, Debrah Weil, Sally Bellfrage, Abbie Hoffman, and to all who act to create a society of political equality.

And last, but not least, to my grandson Max and his generation, born in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, who have no idea what the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was all about, but might want sometime in the future to read a short booklet about it.

## Introduction

1.	Truth is not Reality	4
2.	Priorities	11
3.	Society creates individuality	17
4.	Focus on process	22
5.	Means and Ends	30
6.	Technology revolutions make Marx	31
7.	WW1 and Lenin's Revolution	39
8.	Rise and fall of Socialism	67
9.	The May 1968 strike in France	100
10.	Women's Liberation	128
11.	Privatization or Nationalisation?	134
12.	The Non-Party state	147
13.	Politics without Politicians?	155
14.	D.I.Y. DD	175

## Introduction

This book puts together the jigsaw of international politics in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.  
The complete picture reveals an underlying logic. It points to future revolutions.

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Most people born after 1980 do not know that in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century there rose - and fell - states introducing economic equality by a state-owned, planned, economy, that ran all factories, lands and Banks, and gave every citizen a secure job, income, state-paid housing, free healthcare, free education, and a pension. Such states existed in Russia, Ukraine, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria, and other countries. In all of them only one political party existed - and ruled - without elections. Most of them collapsed around 1991.

Today such states still exist in China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea.

The one-party states with a state-owned, planned, economy were called "Socialism".

Why did they rise and why did they fall? The book explores this issue.

\* \* \*

Socialist states were based on economic equality and political inequality.

A few - unelected - politicians decided everything. Most citizens could not decide even who will decide for them. Future revolutions will strive to create states based on political equality. Political equality means that every citizen has the right to propose, discuss, and vote on every policy. Political equality determines all other equalities.

Those striving to create political equality must learn from the mistakes of those who created economic equality. Future mistakes can be avoided by studying past ones.

The book explores past mistakes suggesting how to avoid them.

\* \* \*

The first five chapters clarify general ideas related to the rise and fall of Socialism.

The next six chapters describe 20<sup>th</sup> Century international politics.

The last three chapters outline the Non-Party State suggesting ways to achieve it.

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Aki ORR, 2007

## 1. Truth is not Reality

Anyone who has seen a detective film knows it is easy to decide whether the assertion "K is dead" is true, but not so easy to decide whether the assertion "K was murdered" is true, and quite difficult to decide whether the assertion "L murdered K" is true.

The first assertion can be verified by just looking at K. To assert the second requires some detective work. The third is usually decided in court after hearing witnesses, lawyers, and consulting the law. What is easy when dealing with a single fact becomes difficult when we deal with sequences of related facts.

Deciding "what is the truth?" in politics and in history is even more difficult.

At the time of writing this book (2006) the US Army still occupies Iraq so let us start by using as an example three TV teams coming to Iraq to film documentaries about the situation there. Suppose they come from three different countries. A CNN team from the USA, an Al-Jazeera team from Qatar, and a team from French state TV.

Let us assume all teams do an honest job, do not stage scenes and do not film untypical scenes that misrepresent the situation. Even so they will produce three very different descriptions of the situation in Iraq. CNN will produce a pro-US film. Al-Jazeera - a pro Iraqi film and French TV - a film critical of both US and the Iraqis.

Which film shows "THE Truth" about Iraq, and which films distort it?

As cameras do not lie and no scene was staged we must conclude that all films show true scenes. Does this mean all three films show "THE Truth"?

As they are all different we wonder - Can there be three different Truths?

If the answer is "NO" then which one is the "Objective Truth" that does not depend on people's bias and why so?

If the answer is "YES" then which of these Truths should we prefer?

British playwright Harold Pinter, said, on receiving the Nobel Prize for literature in 2005: *"There never is any such thing as one truth to be found in dramatic art. There are many. These truths challenge each other, recoil from each other, reflect each other, ignore each other, tease each other, are blind to each other."*

This is also the case in Politics and History. But there is logic in this madness.

Could it be that no film is showing "Objective Truth" yet none is lying?

It could indeed. No film is lying yet none is "Objective" as they are all made by "Subjects", by people. Whatever is made by people depends on those who made it. Descriptions of historical or political events are always "Subjective". This does not mean they are divorced from reality and depend on one person's bias. Most people believed for thousands of years, that "The sun circles the Earth" was a truth that did not depend on any person's bias and was therefore "Objective Truth". Today most people know this was never a truth, but not many realize it was never "Objective". It was mass-subjective. It was a view held not by one "subject" but by many "subjects".

In courts we are asked to tell "the truth" - "All the truth, and nothing but the truth". "All the truth" is a description of total reality. Of Reality in its entirety. To give a complete - unedited - description of reality one must document every detail of it including every atom and cell in every living organism. Why? Because they are all part of reality and any description omitting them is not ALL the truth. But most atoms are not relevant to the particular issue. Yes, but this means that someone must decide what is relevant and what is not. When someone edits out 'irrelevant' parts, the description depends also on the editing - not on facts alone. Who edits?

Describing all details of historical reality is impossible. No one can document everything. Some details, like deliberations of decision-makers cannot be represented visually. Even if one could describe every detail, it would take many lifetimes to film - or view - all details. So every description of Reality is - unavoidably - edited by someone. Hence no documentation of historical reality is "Historical Reality".

It is an edited description of historical reality.

Every documentary film Director decides what - and how - will be filmed, what will not be filmed, and what will be cut in the cutting room. No documentary film is lying as it shows actual scenes but each is edited according to the priorities of its Director. If no essential fact is omitted it means that even if all documentaries are true none is a description of total reality, since they are all edited. Their difference is in the editing.

It is impossible to produce a complete, unedited, description of anything.

All documentation is edited and every film-maker must decide which parts of reality are "relevant" and should be shown and which are irrelevant and can be omitted.

"Relevance" is determined by an editor, not by reality itself. Editors decide according to their priorities. Deciding what is irrelevant, and how to join the relevant bits into a coherent whole picture determines the nature of the description produced. A TV documentary may be true, but it is not reality. "Truth" differs from "Reality" and "Historical Truth" differs from "Historical Reality". "Historical Truth" is an edited description of historical reality and depends on its describer.

Historical Reality is the totality of what happened, not an edited description of this totality. Reality does not depend on any Editor. "Truth" - does.

To reduce misunderstanding let me emphasize that there exists a historical reality that does not depend on its describers and can therefore be called "objective". The Universe is a reality that existed long before Life, let alone Consciousness, emerged. It exists even if no one describes it. Yet "historical truth" is not "historical reality" but a description of this reality and every description depends on a describer and therefore is never "Objective". We can describe only what we are aware of, and every description is edited by its describer. Therefore no description - however honest - is "Objective Truth". Every description is by some "Subject" and is a particular interpretation of reality. There is an "Objective Reality" which does not depend on people, but there is no "Objective Truth" because Truth always depends on its describer. Truth is always subjective. This does not mean that it depends on one person. Millions believed Earth is the centre of the Universe and the Sun moves around it. They were sure this is "Objective Truth" but it was a "subjective truth" accepted by millions of "subjects". Every description depends on a describer and is therefore subjective. This does not mean it is unreliable, or that "anything goes" and every description is valid. It means that "historical truth" is never final and its reliability must be tested repeatedly and can always be improved.

There are always different versions of "Subjective Truth" even when editors have the same priorities. This does not mean all versions have the same validity.

We can test the validity of every version by submitting it to three tests:

1. **Unification.** Does this version merge all known facts into a unified, coherent, whole, like a solution of a jigsaw puzzle, or does it leave some known facts outside the unified picture, being unable to connect them with the whole?

A version that creates a coherent, unified, whole picture, with no facts left outside it is preferable to one that fails to connect all facts to the whole picture.

The more facts a description fails to connect to the whole picture the less valid it is.

**2. Prediction.** Reality is permanently developing. A good documentation of reality should not only describe it but enable us to predict future developments. A description whose predictions are confirmed is preferable to one whose predictions are refuted. However, even a version whose predictions were confirmed must never be accepted as final as there can always be further developments refuting its predictions.

An interpretation that does not enable us to make any predictions is untrustworthy.

This is the case with many versions that are descriptive but not predictive.

**3. Consequences.** Interpreting reality is an active rather than a passive act. In two senses: First – Mental exertion is required to decide relevance of many facts. Second - acceptance of any interpretation (including the belief "*there is no truth*") shapes responses to reality. The responses enable us to evaluate the truth that produced them.. For example. The Nazis accepted as truth that human history is a constant struggle between races. This racist theory of history motivated them to set up death camps to exterminate races they considered inferior. This consequence is a direct result of the racist version of history. Every version of human history must be judged also by the consequences of the acts it motivates its believers to commit.

There is no "Objective truth" as all truth is subjective, but this does not mean all subjective truths have the same validity, or that they are all untrustworthy. Those that pass the Unification-Prediction-Consequence tests can be accepted as valid. Even though this validity must be tested repeatedly and can always be improved.

All this does not apply to simple facts but to sequences of related facts, to historical and social processes. It applies to TV documentaries and also to every description of historical reality - including all social and scientific theories, and also - to our thinking. Our brain edits the data it receives from our sense organs to protect it from drowning in a tsunami of data. Edited data becomes "information" and is shaped into "concepts". Meanings of concepts must be tested repeatedly, and improved.

So much for descriptions of reality but what about reality itself? Does it consist only of objects and events or also of intangibles, like theories, dreams, Mathematics?

Whatever the answer one thing is certain - reality constantly expands in two senses.

1. Our awareness of reality expands. Australia and America were not part of reality for the ancient Greeks/Egyptians/Chinese/Babylonians. They were unaware these continents exist. What we are unaware of cannot be part of our reality.

2. Human beings create new realities like States, cars, canals, telephones, TV.

After creation they become parts of reality. Before the Suez and Panama Canals were created they could not be part of reality. Mobile phones did not exist before 1970 so they were not part of reality. Today they are. The United States did not exist in 1775, so it could not be part of reality then. Today it exists and is part of reality.

This destroys the validity of "Absolute truth". In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century most people believed that "Absolute Truth" exists even if we can never reach it. "Absolute" means complete, final, and eternal. A complete and final description of reality cannot change. Whatever is constantly expanding can never be final, complete, or eternal, and no description of it - not even in our wildest imagination - can be final, eternal, or complete. "Absolute Truth" - being complete, eternal, and final - is a fiction.

Religions - and some Scientific theories - claim to be Absolute Truth. Catholics, Muslims, and Orthodox Jews, still believe their religion is Absolute Truth, hence their belief in the infallibility of the Pope, the Ayatollah, the Rabbi, or some Saviour. Believers of any faith are sure their particular Holy Book is Absolute Truth. This belief is false - and harmful. The following bit of history illustrates this.

The largest library in antiquity was in Alexandria, the city the Macedonian warrior Alexander built in Egypt. Many works of the great Greek thinkers, and early Christian theologians, handwritten on leather or papyrus, existed only in this library. In 640 C.E. the Moslems conquered Alexandria. Upon learning of "a great library containing all the knowledge of the world" the conquering general asked Caliph Omar for instructions. The Caliph - convinced the Koran is the Absolute Truth, is quoted as saying of the library's books: *"they either contradict the Koran, so they are heresy, or they agree with it, so they are superfluous."* and ordered all books to be burnt. So all books in the Alexandria Library were burnt as tinder for the bathhouses of the city.

It took six months to burn all the documents.

Belief in "Absolute Truth" is shared by all religious believers. Many atheists who no longer believe in God still believe in "Objective Truth". In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century most people, including scientists, believed that scientific theories verified by experiments are the "Objective Truth". This is a residue of religious belief.

Can an ever expanding reality be described by a final and eternal, description?

As both reality - and our knowledge of it - constantly expands, so do its descriptions. There can never be a final - Absolute - description of what constantly expands by new creations - and destructions. Creation does not produce a repetition of what already exists. It creates new qualities, new patterns, different from all existing ones.

Every description of reality must take account of new creations and destructions

Does all this mean that our knowledge of reality is unreliable? Not at all.

It means that our knowledge is relative, not Absolute, and transient - never final.

The validity of our knowledge and theories must be tested repeatedly.

If we use our knowledge to build a rocket to land people on the moon, and the people land on the moon, we prove the validity of our knowledge of the moon, of space, and of rockets, of Physics and Physiology. Our Knowledge is often valid but never final.

If we predict a storm - and it occurs as predicted - we can trust the knowledge on which the prediction was based, even though it is not final and can always be disproved by predicting another storm - which fails to occur.

Repeated testing enables us to improve truth.

This does not mean we are moving ever closer to some Objective Truth.

Different descriptions of reality are not moving ever closer to "Objective Truth". They often flow from totally different approaches to reality. When pro-Nazi and anti-Nazi photographers took photos of Hitler they produced two portraits. By using different lighting, different angles, and different lenses, they created different images. None is "closer to reality" than the other and none is "a lie". They are different interpretations of the same reality. They are not related like rungs on a ladder but like branches on a tree.

Religions claim to possess "Absolute Truth". By "Absolute" they mean complete, final, and eternal. Human creativity invalidates this idea by constantly developing in unpredictable ways. "Absolute Truth" does not exist but "Absolute Lies" do. They

describe occurrences that did not occur, but are invented by people trying to gain something by producing false descriptions of reality.

Edited descriptions of reality do not necessarily mislead but false ones always do.

The discussion of "Absolute" and of "Objective" truth above is an example of what is known as "Philosophy". In English speaking societies "Philosophy" usually means "general idea". Thus people describing details of a complex plan often summarize it by saying "My philosophy is". This is not what "Philo-Sophia" ("Love of Wisdom" in Greek) meant in Greece where it was invented. In Academic circles "Philosophy" is the study of what thinkers like Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hume, Kant, or Hegel thought and said. There are different meanings of the term "Philosophy".

In this book it means *"critique of human thinking"*. A constant critique of our concepts, assumptions, and theories. A never ending investigation analyzing flaws in the meanings of our basic concepts, basic assumptions, and theories. The purpose of this critique is to liberate us from enslavement to our mental creations by constantly sharpening our awareness.

The discussion of the relation between "Truth" and "Reality" reveals flaws in the concepts of "Objective Truth" and "Absolute Truth" but it does not reject the concept of "Truth" or of "Reality". It replaces "Absolute Truth" by "Relative Truth" and "Objective Truth" by "Subjective Truth". It makes us aware that "Truth" is an edited description of reality depending on our priorities and changes when reality - or its editor's priorities - change. Thinking shapes doing. Flawed thinking shapes flawed doing. In Politics flawed thinking shapes flawed doing that often kills millions.

In later chapters we shall see how belief in "Objective Truth" led thinkers like Hegel and Marx, and leaders like Lenin and Trotsky, to make mistakes that ruined many of their projects. Belief in Objective Truth led many Communists and Nazis - and many religious believers - to believe that the Head of their belief possesses the "Objective Truth" and is therefore infallible. Belief in infallibility of leaders caused major disasters in history. It caused death and disillusionment.

Constant critique of our thinking reduces its flaws but never eliminates all of them.

A joke sums it all up:

*Moses (in the Bible): "the Law is everything". Marx: "the economy is everything".*

*Freud: "sex is everything". Einstein: "everything is relative."*

## 2. **Priorities**

The Nazis began to rule Germany in 1933 and immediately legislated new laws. Many - but not all - were anti-Jewish. Jews were forbidden to teach Germans. All Jewish teachers in all German schools were fired. Jewish children had to sit on special "Jew benches" in German schools. In 1934 the Nazi Minister of Education, Bernhard Rust asked the famous German mathematician David Hilbert: *"How is mathematics in Göttingen now that it has been freed of the Jewish influence?"*

Hilbert replied: *"Mathematics in Göttingen? There is really none any more".*

But the Nazis persecuted not only Jews. First they victimized German Communists, homosexuals, and the mentally ill. Communists and homosexuals were sent to concentration camps, but the mentally ill were killed. Order T-4 signed by Hitler in 1939, caused the extermination of 100,000 mental patients in Germany. Most of them were Germans. The argument for this killing was called "Euthanasia" ("Mercy killing"). It argued that since such people are incurable keeping them alive is a constant burden on the state and on their families. Their housing, upkeep, medication, and treatment, cost a lot yet they contribute nothing towards it. Killing them will relieve their families and the state of a burden. Many mental patients were killed by gas - long before this method was used to kill Jews, Gypsies, and Slavs.

Around 1941 the Nazis began to use gas to kill millions of Jews, Poles, and Russians, in special camps built for this purpose. Auschwitz-Birkenau in Poland was the largest. The Nazis destroyed most of it before the Red Army arrived. The remains were turned into a memorial to those killed there. Visitors from all over the world visit Auschwitz every year. Many Jews come to honour their relatives who died there. They draw conflicting lessons from what they see. The lessons can be grouped by their priorities:

1. Ego-centric. 2. Ethno-centric. 3. Theo-centric. 4. Anthro-po-centric.

Below are examples of utterances by people adhering to each of the four priorities

1) The ego-centric person says:

My relatives did not put their own interests above all else. I did. Therefore I survived but they perished. One must always give top priority to one's own interests.

2) The Ethno-centric person says:

Jews died here because they had no State to protect them. No country permitted immigration of masses of Jewish refugees from the Nazis. Therefore a Jewish State must be top priority for Jews. Only it can protect them from a new Holocaust. The interests of the Jewish Nation - not personal interests - must be top priority for Jews.

3) The Theo-centric person says:

The Holocaust - like all else in the world - is due to God's will. God punished the Jews because they worshipped the Zionist State instead of worshipping Him.

The Holocaust is God's punishment for the sin of Zionism, the sin of worshipping a State - and a Nation - instead of worshipping God. State and nation are false Gods. Only when all Jews repent, abandon all false gods, and return to worship God alone, will God relent, forgive, send His Saviour to ingather all exiled Jews, re-build the Temple in Jerusalem and re-establish the Kingdom of God.

Worship of God alone - not of Self, Nation or State - must be top priority for Jews.

4) The Anthro-po-centric person says:

The Nazi killing of Jews, Gypsies, and Slavs was motivated by racism. The Nazis believed these groups are inferior races, while Arians are the Superior Race.

Racism motivated the Nazis to enslave, and exterminate, millions of people.

To prevent recurrence of slavery and mass-murder one must abolish racism.

Only when people's priority is the welfare of all human beings, of Humanity as a whole, not of a particular group in it, will racism disappear.

Only concern for all human beings can prevent a new Holocaust.

Every person has every moment, a priority, even though most people are unaware of it. This priority enables us to choose, to decide. Without it we cannot decide anything. We can change our priority, but at any moment we have one. When we draw a lesson from facts we do so according to our priority. Facts alone do not contain any lesson, nor do they determine the lessons drawn from them. Different people draw different lessons from the same facts because they have different priorities. Priorities enable us to prefer. Without them no preference is possible. Priorities determine preference. Different priorities determine different preferences. To “prefer” is to choose one

options from a number of options. We cannot prefer two options. Hence each priority excludes all other priorities. A chilling example of this fact is the following true story:

Immediately after winning power in 1933 the Nazis built the Dachau concentration camp for their main enemies - the German Communists. Communist leaders and many rank-and-file communists were imprisoned there. In later years many other prisoners, including Jews, were sent there. The US Army liberated Dachau on 29.4.1945. On the last roll-call before liberation (28.4.1945) the Nazi commander of Dachau called forward two prisoners: a young German communist and an old Jew, and said to the communist: *I'll give you a gun to kill this Jew. If you do it I'll let you go, and tomorrow you'll be a free man. If you refuse I'll kill you. What do you choose?* The communist chose not to kill the Jew and the commander shot him dead in front of all prisoners. Some recounted this later.

Why did the communist refuse to kill the Jew?

The priority of genuine communists (not those who joined this Party for the benefits of Power) was Anthropocentrism. They dedicated their lives to serve the welfare of Humanity, not their own, nor that of their nation. Killing an innocent person contradicted this priority. The anthropocentric priority clashed with the egocentric urge to survive - and overruled it. The communist stuck to anthropocentrism knowing he will pay with his life. Had he killed the Jew his conscience would have troubled him to such a degree that he might have committed suicide or sunk into depression. Staying alive is not always top priority.

The priority of Capitalism is Egocentrism but the priority of nationalism is Ethnocentrism. They exclude each other as Private Interest and National Interest do. Egocentrism motivates people to pursue private interests even if this damages the interests of their society. Egocentrism excludes Ethnocentrism (the interests of one's nation, tribe, or class) as "My life matters to me most" overrules "to die for King and Country". This applies also to religious suicide bombers - of all religions.

The Islamic suicide bombers who destroyed the World Trade Centre towers in New-York on 9.11.2001 knew they will die but their Theocentrism overruled Egocentrism, and also Ethnocentrism and Anthropocentrism. They died happy by their priorities.

The assassins of leaders like Gandhi (1948), Sa'adat (1981), and Rabin (1995) were not ordinary criminals seeking personal gain, or revenge, but people whose priority was Theo-centrism. They believed they serve God by killing sinners, even if this act causes their own death. Their act demonstrates that Theocentrism excludes and overrules Ego- Anthro- and Ethno- centrism. Each priority excludes all others.

The different lessons drawn from the Holocaust raise the following question:

Which priority should one prefer? To answer this question one must have a rule to determine preference among priorities. This requires a priority. Therefore choosing a priority also depends on a priority. Suppose we decide which lesson to prefer by evaluating its consequences. This will not save us from dependence on a priority because evaluating the consequences also depends on our priority. Slaughtering animals for food is considered a crime by vegetarians but not by meat-eaters. Positive or negative value is bestowed on slaughter according to peoples' priorities. Slaughter itself does not contain an inherent value. Every evaluation is based on a priority. No fact contains an inherent value. Value is bestowed on facts by people according to their priorities.

Many believe that sheer physical survival has a positive value independent of any priority. This is false for three reasons: first - whose survival are we talking about? of oneself or of one's family? Of one's species? of one's nation? of humanity? Each choice implies a different priority. Second - all those who committed suicide, or volunteered to die "For King and Country", or prefer "Death before dishonour" subordinate their physical survival to some other priority. For them sheer physical survival is not an "Objective priority". Third - many religious believers are convinced that after their death they will continue to exist in Heaven much better than they did on earth. For them death is merely a door to life in Heaven.

The quest for physical survival motivates many creatures in nature (though even in nature animals often sacrifice their survival for survival of their offspring) but when creatures live in a group they often subordinate their survival to new priority - the survival of their group. People today no longer act like animals. Their animal drives are restrained by society. Society was created by primates who are products of biology, but once society emerged the behaviour of its members is no longer

subordinated to biological drives. People today are biological hardware produced by nature and social software produced by society. Software dominates hardware.

A metaphor from physics can clarify this point. Ice, water, and steam are different forms of existence of the same molecule (consisting of two atoms of hydrogen combined with one atom of oxygen). Suppose we heat ice till it melts and turns into water. Although the water emerged from the ice, the molecules in water are not subordinated to the same rules as when they were in ice. Ice can be cut with an ice pick but not water. Whirlpools and turbulences can form in water but not in ice. If we heat the water till it becomes steam we meet again the same change of rules. Molecules of steam behave differently from water molecules. In steam they can be compressed but not in water. Steam obeys the rules of gasses but water obeys the rules of fluids. The fact that steam and water consist of the same molecules does not imply that their molecules behave in the same way when they are in water as when they are in steam. This applies also to the difference between primates living in a group and primates living in isolation. In society and in Nature hominoids have the same biology, but their behaviour, and responses, are utterly different.

Many try to explain Society as a means designed by nature to ensure survival of a species, but most species survived without forming any society. Moreover, societies invented wars which do not exist in nature and are harmful to survival.

This indicates that society is not essential for physical survival and may even harm it.

Society is not an instrument of biology designed to ensure the survival of a species.

Many ignore this fact and try to explain human behaviour by biological drives. Such drives exist but they are harnessed by society. Behaviour of people in society is not motivated by biological drives. Human behaviour in society is determined by priorities created by society, not by nature.

Biological explanations of social behaviour are false - and harmful.

All attempts to explain social behaviour by biological drives are flawed.

Biology does not determine sociology, or morality.

"Survival of the fittest" may be a rule in Nature, but it is not a rule of society.

If society accepts this rule then woe to the unfit. The Nazis believed history is ruled by "Survival of the fittest race". They killed races and people they considered "unfit". Germany was defeated in WW2. Does this mean the Germans are "unfit" - as Hitler said before he committed suicide?

Can those who believe in "Survival of the fittest" define "Fitness"?

Was Einstein - who was Jewish - less fit than Hitler?

Was Jesse Owens - who was black - less fit than Goebels?

Was Husserl - who was Jewish - less fit than his Nazi pupil Heidegger?

Are Blacks less fit than Whites?

Are females less fit than males?

Are Homosexuals less fit than Heterosexuals?

According to what priority?

### 3. Society creates individuality

Ernst Hemingway's best selling novel *"For whom the bells toll"* (1940) owes its title to an essay written by John Donne in 1623 where he wrote:

*"No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were: any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee"*

Despite reading Hemingway's novel most people in societies with privately-owned economies are convinced every individual is an isolated island. They draw this conclusion from their experience of daily life in their societies not realizing that in different societies, with different economies, life is very different. To Donne's assertion that each individual is a "piece" of a continent one can add, that every such piece is shaped like its continent. Each individual has a uniqueness of his own, but basic features of individuals are miniaturized versions of their societies.

To clarify this idea let us consider the first English novel - "Robinson Crusoe" written by Daniel Defoe in 1719. It is based on the real life of Alexander Selkirk who sailed from England in 1704 and lived five years on an uninhabited, isolated, island. Defoe describes how Crusoe built himself "A Castle", tamed animals, and grew vegetables. When a savage appeared on the island Crusoe used him as a slave. It is a story of survival in the wild. Finally a ship arrived and took Crusoe back to England.

How did he survive on his island? He had with him a musket, gunpowder, carpenter's tools, a knife, a Bible, and his clothing. He used them and the knowledge he acquired in England. Though the story is about one individual it includes a whole society. When Crusoe arrives on the island English society arrives with him. His tools, his thinking, his attitudes and his responses represent English society.

Suppose a modern shipwreck survivor arrives today on a remote island with a laptop computer. This PC's hard disk contains programs written by many programmers. What this PC does, and the way it does it, represents its programmers. The programs

running the PC were not invented by its owner but they shape the PC's actions. Crusoe's memory is like the programs on the hard disk in a computer. He did not create them. His society did. His society - not he himself - programmed him. His behaviour was shaped by his society. Using Donne's metaphor we can say: Crusoe is a miniaturized continent, not an island

A physical metaphor to illustrate this idea is the Hologram. This is a glass "negative" of a photo made by Laser light. The photo itself cannot be seen in ordinary light but on illuminating the glass by laser the photo appears - in front of the glass - as a three-dimensional image. Every detail of the photographed object, as seen from every angle, can be seen. More surprising, if the glass breaks, each splinter reproduces - when illuminated by the same laser light - the image of the *entire* object.

The smaller the splinter the more blurred the image, but it is an image of the *entire* object. Each splinter of the Hologram contains the image of the *entire* object.

Using this as a metaphor to describe individuality seems preposterous but when we think about it a bit it makes sense. A newborn baby learns by imitating its parents. They "program" it consciously - and unconsciously. It imitates them, thus learning to walk, talk, eat, defecate, and behave. But parents' behaviour - and language - are creations of their society. Language is the substance of thought but we did not invent it. Our society, in its entire past, did. Our thinking is a product of our society and we learn it by imitating our parents. Parental behaviour (walking, talking, eating, controlled defecating) is not "natural", it is imposed on nature by society. Chinese parents do not behave like British parents. Eskimo parents do not behave like Zulu parents. Each society creates its own language and behaviour. Each "programs" its newborn. Individuals are miniaturized versions of the society in which they grew up.

A newborn baby reared in total isolation from all other humans - as happened by accident to babies snatched by animals and reared by them - behaves like the animal that reared it. Two well known cases are the Bengali sisters Amala and Kamala discovered in 1921 in Bengal and reported in the book "Wolf children of Midnapore" (see the Internet) and the boy in Morocco reared by gazelles, discovered in the 1950s and reported in the Penguin book "Gazelle boy". Even without reading these books it is clear that most human behaviour, including such basic functions as walking and

talking, depends on the presence of adults whom the newborn imitates. But these adults themselves became individuals only because they grew up in a society.

Most people think in words. Thinking depends on language. Language need not be vocal. Helen Keller, who became blind and deaf in infancy recalls in her memoirs what her life was like before she could "speak" - and think. It was a constant battle against a hostile environment that she could not understand. A permanent, frustrating, battle. Only when she understood that finger pressures pressed into her palm were symbols describing the outside world did she begin to "talk" - and think. Eventually she even dictated her own books, expressing her individuality.

Individuality is an awareness of oneself as unique checked by comparison to others. It depends on the presence of others, on ability to compare oneself to others, and to recognize oneself as similar - but different. Whoever grows up isolated from all individuals cannot develop individuality. Individuality depends on society, on the presence of others who have already acquired it. It is not acquired through the genetic code and is not produced by Nature. It is produced by a society and learned anew by each newborn from the individuals rearing it. It is social software.

A newborn reared in isolation from other individuals will not become "an individual". This happened to Kaspar Hauser who was found in 1828 in Germany. (For details see the Internet). Such a creature does not know how to use its legs, how to walk, talk or think. Until it meets other individuals it will exist without being aware of its own existence. Only after meeting other people did Kaspar achieve these abilities.

Individuality is created by society and includes features of the society that created it. Each society creates individuals in its own image. Individuals ensure the perpetuation of the society that created them. Many oppose this idea seeing individuality as opposed to society. Some, like Margaret Thatcher, Britain's Prime Minister in the 1980s even reject the idea that society exists. Thatcher declared:

*"There is no such thing as society. There are only individuals and families"*

But where do individuals come from? Are people born as "individuals"?

A simple, repeatable, experiment can refute this view. Take a newborn baby and rear it in total isolation from human beings. It will not become an individual. It will not

know how to walk, talk or think. It will not even know it exists. It is immoral to do such an experiment, but when it happened by accident the answer was clear: a newborn baby reared in total isolation does not become an individual. It grows up like any animal; it becomes a biological creature, not an “individual”.

Individuality is acquired - consciously and unconsciously - from other individuals. It is produced by society and each society is reproduced by its individuals. It shapes them and they shape it. Both change constantly. Changes in society bring about changes in patterns of individuality, but in all societies today only a few leaders are authorized to shape society and most individuals are barred from doing so.

Nothing stimulates individuals more than involvement in shaping their society. Different individuals wish to shape their society in different - even conflicting - ways, but the task stimulates all. This is no wonder since by shaping society they shape themselves. Self-shaping is more stimulating than any drug. It merges our awareness with that which is aware. Instead of being shaped by others the self shapes itself.

Although society and individuality shape each other and depend on each other they are not identical and there is often conflict between them. The welfare of any group may depend on sacrifices by its members. In most societies this is achieved by subordinating the individual to society. This curbs creativity. The conflict can be resolved by participation of all individuals in policy making. This stimulates their creativity. It creates conflict of opinion and new - unexpected - concepts. In ancient Athens, where all free men had the right to decide policy they invented novelties like Theatre, Tragedy, Comedy, Logical thinking, Philosophy, as part of their participation in shaping their society. In nearby Sparta citizens had no right to participate in policy making and invented nothing new.

Most societies forbid citizens' participation in shaping their society. People prevented from participating in shaping their society become indifferent to their society. Indifference breeds boredom. To overcome boredom people seek distractions. All distractions eventually become boring. More distractions must constantly be invented. All societies today constantly invent new distractions for most of their citizens. A small minority monopolized the right to decide what society should do. Most citizens

are barred from participating in this activity. This creates frustrated individuals suffering boredom, seeking distractions. It happens in all industrial societies today.

In pre-industrial societies most people suffered material misery. In industrial societies most people suffer mental misery - boredom, indifference, frustration, depression, and loneliness.

Much mental misery can be overcome by enabling all citizens to participate in policy making. Different views on what is best for all will cause conflict, but this is a creative conflict. It stimulates mental creativity and alleviates mental misery, frustration, loneliness and depression.

Citizens' participation in policy making today can be done by mobile phones, sms, the Internet on Wimax, and TV. This will inspire and stimulate people as by shaping their society they shape themselves.

#### 4. Focus on process

Four major political events in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century took most people by surprise.

1. The outbreak of WW1 in August 1914.
2. The general Strike in France in May 1968,
3. Khomeini's religious revolution in Iran in 1979.
4. The collapse of the USSR (defined on p.59) in 1991

All these events were totally unexpected - even by those who participated in them.

WW1 broke out at a time of unprecedented economic expansion. It occurred at the height of the industrial revolution. New projects, like building the Panama Canal, captured people's imagination. Many diseases were eliminated. Science and technology flourished. Standards of living rose and people expected them to keep rising forever when an accidental occurrence - the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince - plunged Europe into the worst war the world has ever known.

WW1 hit people everywhere like a bolt out of the blue. They expected continuous economic expansion, not war. Many said *"Until that war I understood the world. Since that war I don't understand the world and cannot resurrect my understanding"*.

When WW1 broke out in August 1914 everybody expected it to be over by Christmas 1914. It lasted till November 1918. Even today many do not understand its causes.

As for France in May 1968. No one in France, or elsewhere, On May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1968 imagined that within two weeks France will be paralyzed by a General Strike of nine million workers striking for 20 days. This was not a failure to predict a date but a failure to understand a social process. France was in a period of economic expansion having extricated itself from its last colonial war in Algeria (1954-1962). A Strike or revolution during a period of economic expansion was unimaginable. However, after WW2 frustrations of people in industrial societies differed from what they before WW2. Before WW2 economic misery was the main cause for peoples' frustration. After WW2 political frustration began to rival economic misery. People no longer accepted their hardships as something they cannot change. Many factors, especially the spectacular explosions of the Atom bombs convinced many that humanity can

change many things that were considered in the past as constraints of nature or of history. . This included government policies. Political frustration is caused by policies people oppose, but lack means to change.

Similar things can be said about the fall of the Shah monarchy in Iran in 1979.

Here the frustration was mainly cultural. It was caused by the forcible repression of traditional Islamic culture by the Shah, and by flooding Iran with modern Western culture. Many Iranians felt their cultural identity eroding. Many turned to religion to defend their traditional values. Political experts and analysts ignored cultural frustration. No expert on Iran imagined that an 80-year old obscure religious leader will overthrow the Shah's regime and create a religious State in Iran in 1979.

As in France, so in Iran, the slow process of accumulation of frustration in people was not driven by material misery. It was driven by political or cultural misery.

A process is a sequence of tiny - linked - changes. Often the changes are so small that most people fail to notice them. In France and in Iran the process of accumulating frustration went on for a long time but all political experts ignored it.

This repeated itself in the collapse of the USSR (see p.60) in 1991. The USSR was a superpower. Its military might was second only to the United States. It had the world's largest land army. In 1957 it sent the first space satellite - "Sputnik" - into orbit around earth, before the United States could do so. In 1961 it sent the first astronaut -Yuri Gagarin - into space long before the US. Yet to everybody's surprise this Superpower collapsed like a pack of cards - without civil war - in December 1991, giving rise to a new State that restored private ownership in this state-run, planned, economy. Citizens of Leningrad - the second largest city in the USSR, voted to restore their city's original, pre-revolutionary, name: Saint-Petersburg. This expressed their resentment of Lenin and his regime - in which they were born and educated. Many US experts and Intelligence officers studied every detail of the USSR for years but not one of them predicted its collapse. All experts, journalists, Marxists, and Communists everywhere were utterly surprised by it. Only the Russian dissident Andrei Amalrik - predicted it, (in his booklet: *"Will the Soviet Union survive till 1984?"* published in 1969) but no one paid him any attention.

The fact that four major political events surprised everybody reveals a basic flaw in people's understanding of politics. As this flaw blinded all experts everywhere it cannot be attributed to personal - or local - causes, to individual psychology, or to lack of knowledge. Such factors cannot affect all experts everywhere. Such misunderstanding is caused not by lack of information but by faulty evaluation of information. The facts were known but their significance was misunderstood. Material misery alone was considered as a motivation in politics. Cultural and political miseries were ignored. According to traditional thinking if the economy prospered no upheavals were expected. Most people ignored the process of accumulation of frustration. They still do. They notice events but not the processes causing them. Current education - at all levels - focuses on events not on processes.

Political misery, produced by policies people oppose but are denied legal means to change, breeds political frustration in many individuals. In all societies today accumulation of political frustration is widespread. It is driven by disgust caused by all politicians and political parties. Occasionally it erupts in spectacular events unexpected by all those who ignore the accumulation of political frustration. People see events but not the processes that cause them. No wonder they are surprised when the accumulated frustration erupts in an upheaval they did not expect.

The first thinker to focus attention on processes was the Greek philosopher Heraclites who lived some 2500 year ago. Called "The Riddler" or "The Obscure" (because many considered his ideas "Obscure") he is the first thinker emphasizing the importance of underlying processes. His most famous saying was "Panta Rey" ("All flows" in Greek). This may seem odd as most our surroundings look fixed. Our house does not flow, nor does the book we hold. However, if we use science to analyze appearances we come up with the following observations: Our house, together with the entire earth, moves around the sun at the speed of 30 kilometres per second. So by the time you read this sentence your house moved more than 30 kilometres in space. The sun itself rotates round the centre of our galaxy at a speed of 217 km per second. So we certainly flow through space. This hardly affects us as we sit on earth like passengers in a plane. When all our surroundings move at the same speed we notice no movement. Yet we move.

But there is more to Heraclites' idea. Matter consists of atoms. In each atom electrons race around the nucleus at high speed. The nucleus itself rotates. At the atomic level all is in frantic, permanent, motion. Neutrons disintegrate; atoms are bombarded non-stop by millions of particles racing from outer space. On colliding with stable atoms they cause their disintegration. Molecules mutate by disintegrating. This change may be too slow - or too fast - for us to notice, but it happens all the time. In every leaf of a plant a process occurs every second: a photon of sunlight hits a water molecule and absorbing a carbon dioxide molecule converts them into sugar and oxygen. These two enable us to live. This flow is invisible but it occurs. Heraclites may be obscure but he did not talk nonsense. Though he was unaware of the facts just mentioned, his point is valid. He said: "*One cannot dip twice in the same river*". Why not? Because between two dips we - and the river - changed. We lost cells and grew new ones. The water in the river changed, its banks eroded slightly, etc. The changes may be small but they exist - and accumulate. When we dip in the river the second time we are already slightly different and so is the river. All we see as fixed is in a state of change.

The emphasis on process (i.e. a sequence of small - linked - changes) rather than on events was neglected for some 2300 years. It was revived in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by the German philosopher Hegel (1770-1831) He was a Professor of Philosophy and wrote many books but what concerns us here are his views on the process of evolution of *ideas*. He described the evolution of ideas as a permanent process of confrontation between opposing ideas. It is a process driven from within, not from outside. It starts with an idea which dominates our thinking as we accept it uncritically. Gradually drawbacks of dominant ideas emerge and criticism starts. Criticism confronts the dominant idea. Confrontation with criticism modifies the dominant idea. It is either replaced by a new idea or modified by the criticism. Later the new idea is confronted by new criticism and the process repeats itself. This conflict never ends and forms the process of evolution of ideas - the history of ideas.

Hegel called this type of process - "Dialectics", and its stages: 1) "Thesis". 2) "Anti-thesis" 3) "Syn-thesis". The original Thesis is confronted by an anti-Thesis and the confrontation produces a syn-thesis. Hegel was convinced this is the Objective Truth about the way ideas develop. He saw the history of ideas as a permanent process of

dialectical change, of confrontation. It is a creative process. It creates new ideas that are an improvement on the old ones. Conflict of ideas creates innovation.

Today we know that change can occur also in other - non dialectical - processes, but Hegel's emphasis on dialectical processes is still very useful.

Karl Marx (see next chapter) admired - but criticized - Hegel. He applied Hegel's idea of dialectical change (i.e. change caused by inner conflict) to society. He argued that the history of society is the history of conflicts between classes within each society. The classes themselves originate from the technology the society uses. Technology in antiquity was based on muscle power hence the confrontation was between slaves and slave owners. In the Feudal era - when shipping and trade developed, the confrontation was between land-owning Nobility and City merchants. In the industrial era - between owners of industry and workers in industry. These conflicts end in revolutions that replace the ruling class and enable a new class to run society in a way better adapted to the new technology. A revolution is a landmark in the evolution of society. It increases political and economic freedom of most people in society. Revolution - like birth - may cause bloodshed and pain but gives birth to a new, improved, society. Birth, despite all blood and pain, is a creative, not a destructive, process. Obviously, those replaced by revolution see it as a collapse of law and order, a conspiracy of criminals steeped in lawlessness and violence.

Rulers reject the idea of a permanent process of political evolution. They see their own rule as final, and believe politics cannot evolve further. They see revolutions as criminal conspiracies causing chaos. All Kings were convinced Republics are a lawless disorder, a "Rule of the Rabble". Actually a republic is not a disorder but a new order where representatives elected by citizens decide policies. This replaced the old order where an unelected King and Nobility decide policies. Throughout history, those who benefit from a particular political order refuse to see their rule as a mere phase in a permanent process of evolution of politics. They believe their order is the final - and best - of all possible orders. They consider attempts to replace their order as conspiracies to destroy all "Law and Order". Rulers cannot see that what they defend is a particular "Law and Order" favouring them. Every ruling class believes its demise will plunge society into chaos. This was the case with Roman Emperors, European Kings, and also with Socialist bureaucrats. Rulers cannot accept that society

can function without them. They cannot accept the idea of a new political order, run without them, where most citizens have more freedom. In Europe the Church legitimized Monarchy. Every coronation highlight was the moment the Head of the Church placed the crown on the head of the new King symbolizing that God chose this person to rule. This meant that whoever challenges the King - challenges God. In industrial societies the educational system performs the same task - it justifies the existing order and legitimizes it historically and logically. Today this implies that whoever rejects the authority of a few elected representatives to decide all policies on behalf of millions of citizens is behaving illogically, irrationally, and a-historically. Educational systems must legitimize existing political systems because they depend on them. Education is an essential component in every political system. It produces justifications for the existing political system and teaches the skills required for its maintenance and continuation.

Seeing everything - including politics - as a permanent process of evolution, implies that nothing is final. No regime, no Law, no Order, is the Final One. But every ruler wants to remain ruler. Rulers want their rule to be the final way to rule society. Seeing everything - including all political systems - as a phase in a permanent process of evolution, challenges the finality of every type of rule. No wonder all rulers - and educational systems - do not teach the young to focus their attention on processes.

Victor Frankl, a psychoanalyst imprisoned in WW2 in Nazi concentration camps, noticed that camp prisoners who viewed WW2 as a process, retained hope of a Nazi defeat. This kept them optimistic and helped them survive. Those overwhelmed by their imprisonment and unable to see beyond it, saw no process, despaired, and succumbed. Hope gives strength to survive. Hope depends on being able to see beyond events, into the processes causing them. Some events terminate a process, or occur by accident, but most events are phases in an ongoing process of change.

Most people today do not see reality as a process, therefore the events surprise them.

Processes have a quality that baffles many people. Namely, they can give rise to new domains that obey new rules, utterly different from the rules that produced them.

For example, processes in molecules and atoms (which obey rules of physics and chemistry) formed living cells which have a goal-seeking behaviour that cannot be

explained by physics or chemistry. Cell behaviour aims to achieve a goal, namely - to perpetuate a cell's existence, to survive. No atom or molecule does this. Living cells originated from atoms and molecules, and consist of atoms and molecules, but their behaviour cannot be fully explained by the rules governing atoms and molecules.

Many find this odd, though no one expects a building to behave like its bricks.

Likewise, processes in cells produced organisms, whose behaviour cannot be fully explained by rules governing cell behaviour. Organisms follow new rules of behaviour. This applies to human society - and to consciousness. Though processes in nerve cells produced consciousness no knowledge of nerve cells can explain consciousness. Consciousness is qualitatively different from nerve cell activity.

Observing the Grand Evolutionary Process - from Big Bang to Consciousness - proceeding from diffused energy to elementary particles, to atoms, to molecules, from molecules to living cells, from cells to organisms, from organisms to society, from society to language, from language to consciousness - we notice how tiny quantitative changes at one level cause - at certain stages - jumps into new levels where new rules hold that cannot be explained by the rules of the previous level. Small changes in quantity can produce a big jump into a new quality. Reality is divided into separate layers each obeying different rules. A monistic view of Reality assumes all reality obeys the same rules. This view has lost its validity. All entities belonging to a given layer obey the rules of that layer, but not the rules of other layers. Reality is divided into separate layers obeying separate rules.

Politics and Geology have something in common - both consist of slow, invisible, processes erupting unexpectedly in spectacular events. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions in geology draw people's attention as do wars and revolutions in politics. People notice earthquakes and volcanic eruptions but not slow, invisible, processes causing them. Likewise wars and revolutions draw attention, but not the processes causing them. Those who study processes are not surprised by the events they cause.

Predicting an earthquake requires an understanding of the process that causes it. There can be many theories about the process. When a particular theory predicts an earthquake correctly it gains advantage over other theories. But it may fail to predict a

new earthquake. So a new theory is required. This applies to Politics too. Most people see - and respond - to political events, not to political processes. They see wars and revolutions but not the processes that cause them. It is not easy to see an underlying process in politics. In August 1914 most people were surprised when WW1 broke out. They were surprised again when the Russian Revolution broke out in 1917. Few saw the processes building up these events. Lenin and Trotsky were among the few who saw the process and predicted the events.

In 1905 a revolution in Russia was put down by the Tsar. People seeing only events concluded that this put an end to revolutions in Russia. Lenin and Trotsky disagreed. They learnt from Marx the process whereby privately-owned economies produce wars and revolutions. Seeing the process gave them an advantage over those who did not see it. Like experienced surfers they knew - from watching the swell - that big waves are coming. They expected the privately-owned economies of Britain and Germany to clash and produce war - and revolution. When massive desertions of Russian soldiers in WW1 forced the Tsar to abdicate in 1917 Lenin and Trotsky were prepared for the revolutionary wave which surprised most people. They surfed the revolutionary wave to create the type of revolution they wanted. They did not create the wave - they were prepared for it - and surfed it, steering Russia in the direction they favoured.

The three revolutions in Russia - in 1905, in February 1917, and in October 1917 - were like three eruptions of the same volcano whose lava was accumulating below the surface for years. However, unlike in geology, human intervention in social processes can accelerate - or defuse - a revolution. In Russia in 1917 many argued that Lenin's zeal to make a revolution for creating a state-run economy with 140 million illiterate peasants is bound to collapse and cause a setback to socialist revolutions everywhere. Revolutions are a result of frustration accumulating slowly in most citizens. This accumulation is an invisible process and it is difficult to predict when it will overflow. Usually it accumulates slowly showing few visible signs. This misleads most observers. When frustration reaches an explosive level it erupts unexpectedly due to some minor, accidental, factor. This baffles those who assume the eruption was caused by the accidental factor. They fail to realize the eruption was caused by frustration accumulating invisibly for a long time until it reached an explosive level. To understand events one must understand the process building them up, not what triggered them off. The trigger is an accident, the process is the substance.

To anticipate and understand events one must study the processes that produce them.

## 5. Means and Ends

The Cliché "*The end justifies the means*" is often invoked to justify the use of negative means to achieve a positive end. An example is given on pages 61-65.

It turns out that even when use of negative means achieved its short-term end, it ruined its long term end. The collapse of the USSR (p.59) was, caused by use of negative means. These means were considered negative even by many who used them (p.72). This use was justified by the cliché mentioned above. Actually, ends and means are linked. If the nature of the means contradicts the nature of their end they will, eventually, ruin their end. Means mould ends.

No positive end was ever served by the use of negative means. Negative means ruin a positive end. Means influence those who use them. They change them. When supporters of a positive end use negative means their integrity cracks. Not partially but totally. The first use of negative means changes their user for ever. Once their integrity is cracked they became cynical, depressed, indifferent, and remain so to the end of their life. Many lived to see their grand aim crack and crumble.

Another trap awaiting all users of means is the turning of means into ends.

The classic example is money. Invented originally as a means to facilitate economic exchange it became the purpose of all economic exchanges. The Catholic Church is another example. Created for spreading the message of Jesus that religion must serve people, not God, the Church became more important than its message.

Loyalty to the Church replaced loyalty to Humanity. Loyalty to the Pope replaced loyalty to Jesus. The means turned into ends perverting Jesus' original message.

The same happened to all Communist Parties. They were created as a means to carry out a revolution for setting up a society of economic equality. Gradually loyalty to the Party overruled loyalty to the revolution and to a society of economic equality. Finally, loyalty to the leader of the Party overruled loyalty to the Party. Means became ends and ruined their original end. This is a permanent danger.

Means must never be allowed to become ends. If they do - they ruin their end.

## 6. Technology revolutions make Marx

About 12,000 years ago some primates began to bury seeds in the ground to grow plants they liked to eat. No other animal ever did this - before or after.

It was - unknowingly - a revolutionary act.

"Revolution" - in any domain - is a change of foundations in that domain.

Growing crops changed the foundations of nomadic life. Wandering to gather food became unnecessary. Living permanently near the fields to cultivate and guard them became necessary. This terminated nomadic life. Crop growers began to domesticate animals, so they no longer had to hunt for meat. They began to build houses. Groups of houses became villages. Big villages became towns. Towns on rivers or crossroads became trade centres, and grew into cities. Thus began citification - and civilization.

For thousands of years most people everywhere spent most their lives cultivating plants and animals but in the 19<sup>th</sup> century a new technology revolution started. Steam driven machines were invented to perform tasks hitherto done by muscles, wind, or water. This became known as the "*Industrial Revolution*". The country leading this revolution was Britain. Although the Scotsman James Watt patented an improved version of the steam engine already in 1769 the use of steam power rocketed after 1830 with the invention of railways in Britain. Before the railway most people spent their entire lives near their birthplace. Horse-drawn carts carried few people and goods. Railways carried many people - and goods - over large distances in a short time. This boosted trade, travel, and production. It created a great demand for all kinds of steam-driven machines. Factories were built to construct boilers, steam engines, mechanical looms, locomotives, rails, pumps, iron ships, iron bridges, tunnels, steam cranes and lifts, and machines to build all these.

People left work in fields and came to work in factories. This changed their mentality, their attitudes and expectations. On land, before machines, one worked alone, but in a factory with machines many work together. Work with machines requires cooperation of many people in the work process. Peasants worked alone. They depended on nature. Machines manipulate nature. Work with machines depends on people - not on nature. In agricultural societies work (and life) was determined by the seasons. The

same cycle of work repeats itself year after year for millennia. But industrial societies constantly invent new machines and products. They replace the circular nature of life by a directional - linear - one.

The industrial revolution reduced people's dependence on Nature. From now on what happened to people depended more on people, less on Nature. But this liberation brought new problems - and new responsibilities. Pollution is just one of them. Accumulated experience and knowledge - hitherto revered - lost its value. New machines create new crafts and skills making the old ones obsolete. Young people adapt faster to new technologies so older generations become redundant in production. Technological change produced a new domain of study - Sociology, the study of societies, their features, their change, and their particular problems.

The most influential writer on effects of technological change on society was Karl Marx. Born in Germany in 1818 he moved to London in 1848 and lived there till his death in 1883. He studied Philosophy in Germany and wrote on history, society and politics in Germany, France, and Belgium. His closest friend was Fredrick Engels, who owned a textile factory in Manchester. At Marx's graveside Engels eulogized him by saying: *"Just as Darwin discovered the law of the evolution of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of the evolution of human history"*

Marx wrote many books on various topics. His major work is called "Capital". It analyzes the privately-owned economy. He invented concepts like *"Surplus value"* and *"rate of exploitation"*. In 1848 he published *"The Communist Manifesto"*, of which the American economist John Kenneth Galbraith (1908-2006) said: *"It is, incomparably, the most successful propaganda tract of all time... What before had been wordy and laboured was now succinct and arresting - a series of hammer blows"*. ("The essential Galbraith" Mariner Books, Boston 2001. p.182)

Galbraith then quotes the beginning - and the end - of the *Communist Manifesto*:

*"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open, fight. A fight that each time ended in either a revolutionary constitution of society at large, or in common ruin of the contending classes. ..."*

*... The government of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie....*

*...The Bourgeoisie, by rapid improvement of all instruments of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communications, draws all, even the most barbarian nations, into civilization. The cheap prices of its commodities are the heavy artillery with which it batters down all Chinese Walls... It has created enormous cities, has greatly increased the urban population as compared with the rural, and has thus rescued a considerable part of the population from the idiocy of rural life...during its rule of scarce one hundred years, it has created more massive, and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together....*

The manifesto ends with the words:

*"...The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The workers have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.*

*Workers of all countries, unite! "*

In 1864 Marx founded the first international organization of workers. Addressing the 2000 workers, trade-unionists, and intellectuals, from all over Europe, he said:

*"No improvement of machinery, no application of science to production, no contrivance of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of new markets, no free trade, nor all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrial masses. Therefore to conquer political power has become the great duty of the working classes"* A statement valid today as it was 143 years ago

Marx proposed to set up a state-run, planned, economy operating according to the principle: *"From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs"*

This meant that the State, its role and structure, had to be changed. All property owning classes opposed this so taking over the state by force became inevitable.

Marx's ideas inspired millions to become active in efforts to change the foundations of their states. Creating states that apply the principle - *"From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs"* was a universal ideal, not a local one. State-run, planned, economies were called "Social-ism" because their aim was to care for

society as a whole, not for a small minority of private owners. Their purpose was to provide full employment, free housing, healthcare and education, and decent pensions, to all citizens, thus liberating all from economic slavery. Marx argued that an economy owned by private owners striving to maximize their private profits must produce economic chaos and crisis since each private owner cares only for his own profits ignoring the consequences of his activity on society as a whole. The zeal to maximize private profits and power forces private owners to minimize expenses by cutting wages and jobs, and to destroy competitors so as to dominate the market. This creates economic chaos and crisis. It creates unemployment and floods markets with goods people cannot afford to buy. Privately-owned economies solve such crises by creating wars which boost the economy by arms production and employ the unemployed as soldiers. After war such economies rebuild the damage caused by war. USA's - and Germany's - economies before, during, and after WW2 confirm this view

To overcome such absurd waste of lives and resources Marx proposed that all big factories, lands, and Banks be run by the State, in a planned manner.

This idea was accepted by many, but all property-owning classes opposed it.

Before **WW2** Marx's analysis of privately-owned economies was confirmed repeatedly. All privately-owned economies produced wealth for a small minority and constant crises of unemployment - "solved" by wars - for the majority. One such crisis was "solved" by WW1. The worst one was initiated by the collapse of the US Stock market in 1929. This was the worst world-wide economic crisis of privately-owned economies. In 1933 - the low point of the crisis - 25% of Americans seeking work could not find a job. In Germany at that time 33% of the workforce could not find work either. Too many firms were bankrupt. Roosevelt's "New Deal" helped revive hope but not the economy. Only arms production for **WW2** lowered USA's - and Germany's - unemployment below 10%, and revived their economies.

Rivalry between British and the German privately-owned economies was the main cause of WW1. Germany, the world's second industrial power, wanted to acquire colonies overseas to serve as a cheap source of raw materials and as a protected market for its industrial goods. Britain - the world's leading industrial and colonial power - opposed this. The competition between these two ruling classes - not the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince - made WW1 inevitable. It ended in a

German defeat but weakened Britain causing it to lose its role as the world's leading power to the USA which became the world's richest country by selling goods to Europe during WW1, joining it 32 months after it started, 18 before it ended.

Another outcome of **WW1** was Lenin's revolution in Russia (October 1917). This war and revolution confirmed Marx's prediction that privately-owned economies must lead to crises, wars and revolutions. This convinced many that only a State-run, planned, economy can free humanity from economic chaos, and wars.

Marx saw the replacing of privately-owned economies by state-owned, economies as an inevitable phase in the evolution of humanity. State-owned economies would replace privately-owned economies like the city merchants' economy replaced the feudal landlords' economy three centuries earlier. Marx did not see that intervention by the state in privately-owned economies can control the economy and lower the chance of wars and revolutions. The first to propose such state intervention was the British economist J. M. Keynes. He proposed - in 1936 - that to prevent a crisis of privately-owned economy the government will intervene in the economy by funding projects and "socializing" some private investment. This will create jobs and incomes, boost the economy, improve business, and save the privately-owned economy from being replaced by a state-owned economy.

US President Franklin Roosevelt's "New Deal" policy (1933-1937) started state-paid projects to provide work for unemployed. The writer H.G. Wells commented: "*The New Deal is plainly an attempt to achieve a working socialism and avert a social collapse in America, it is extraordinarily parallel to the successive 'policies' and 'Plans' of the Russian experiment. Americans shirk the word 'socialism', but what else can one call it?*" This was an exaggeration. The "New Deal" did not turn the US private economy into a state-run, planned, economy let alone one based on economic equality. It created jobs, incomes, thus saving the privately-owned economy.

The "New Deal" did not abolish the 1930s "depression" but it reduced the suffering of many unemployed by providing jobs in government-funded projects thus reviving not the economy but the hope that the economy will recover. Paying unemployment benefits kept many unemployed from starvation - and from revolution. Many privately-owned economies accepted Keynes's ideas and used various schemes to

control competition and interest rates, and pay social security. Moreover, after rebuilding Europe from the destruction caused by WW2, privately-owned economies invented consumerism - mass-consumption of goods as an end in itself. New, artificial, needs are constantly created by a vast advertising industry to keep the economy going. In 1940 few heard of TV but by the 1970s B/W TV sets could be picked up in garbage dumps as everyone wanted Colour TV. The same happened to clothing, cars, computers, entertainment, food and medicines. Privately owned economy nowadays constantly creates new needs luring the public to satisfy them. We live in the era of Invented Needs. We suddenly "need" things we never needed a decade ago. Invented needs are satisfied by using goods with built-in obsolescence. This wasteful practice prolongs the life of a chaotic economy created by private owners to maximize their profits and power even if this damages people's health, as well as that of future generations, and the environment. The case of the electric car EV1 (see the Internet) produced by General-Motors in 1996 but scrapped due to pressure of the Oil Companies is a case in point.

Marx's prediction that a privately-owned economy must cause economic chaos and crisis is confirmed daily but his belief that this inevitably must lead to a collapse of the entire economy and hence to war and revolution, is outdated. This scenario is possible but not inevitable. Today government intervention in the economy can prevent it. Governments can create employment and production by starting public - or space - projects.

Marx recommended state-run, planned, economies, based on economic equality, working according to a plan designed to benefit all in society. When such systems were set up they provided full employment and free housing, healthcare, education, and pensions to all. But they had flaws. Before they existed it was difficult to foresee the flaws but the Russian Anarchist Bakunin warned of some already in 1872 writing: *"In the People's State of Marx there will be, we are told, no privileged class at all. All will be equal, not only from the judicial and political point of view but from the economic point of view. At least, that is what is promised. . . There will therefore be no longer any privileged class, but there will be a government and, note this well, an extremely complex government, which will not content itself with governing and administering the masses politically, as all governments do today, but which will also*

*administer them economically, concentrating in its own hands the production and the just division of wealth, the cultivation of land, the establishment and development of factories, the organization and direction of commerce, finally the application of capital to production by the only banker, the State. All this will demand an immense knowledge and many "heads overflowing with brains" in this government. It will be the reign of the scientific experts, the most aristocratic, despotic, arrogant and contemptuous of all regimes. There will be a new class, a new hierarchy of real and pretended scientists and scholars, and society will be divided into a minority ruling in the name of knowledge, and an immense, ignorant, majority. And then, woe betide the mass of the ignorant ones. Such a regime will not fail to arouse very considerable discontent in this mass and in order to keep it in check the enlightened and liberating government of Marx will have need of a not less considerable armed force. For the government must be strong says Engels, to maintain order among these millions of illiterates whose brutal uprising would be capable of destroying and overthrowing everything, even a government directed by heads overflowing with brains."*

{ <http://www.cs.utah.edu/galt/marxnfreet.html>}

Bakunin's prediction became reality in all state-owned economies. A tiny group of political and economic decision-makers, known as "Nomenklatura", emerged in all of them. It enjoyed privileges denied to most citizens - special shops, better flats and salaries, trips abroad (denied to most citizens) cars, better medical and educational facilities. Society became divided into two groups: 1) A tiny minority making all policy decisions and 2) 99.9% of the population, obeying decisions they cannot influence. Most of these societies collapsed between 1989 and 1991. In all of them only one political party existed. It ran the state and the economy. All opposition, even within the ruling party, was banned. Party leaders ran the party, the state, the economy - and society. They decided what and how to produce, and how to distribute products. They even decided what books, plays, films, and music the 99.9% are allowed to see or hear. However, as no one "owned" the means of production and all decision-makers received salaries and like all workers could be dismissed from their jobs and could not pass their roles on to their offspring, they did not qualify as a "class" and Marxist theory was unable to provide an analysis of such societies. So there was no perspective of revolution in such societies. In such states most citizens lack authority even to elect State officials and cannot determine the aims of the

economy. Moreover, in such states workers cannot improve or correct management errors at work. They are dominated by managers nominated by the ruling party. Workers were denied authority to criticize incompetence of managers, let alone correct it. This started a process of accumulating frustration in most citizens, ending by the collapse of most one-party states without civil war. The few one-party states avoiding this collapse (China, Cuba, Vietnam, and North-Korea) will, eventually, suffer the same fate since people everywhere today resent regimes where a few politicians decide everything. In one-party states a few politicians decide everything for everybody. No wonder their citizens refused to defend them when they were dissolved. In states run by a few politicians the state-run economy becomes an instrument of repression. Those opposing decision-makers are blacklisted in all departments of that state.

Marx's observation that new technologies influence mentalities, authority relations and politics, remains valid. Introducing machines in material production abolished material scarcity. Machines changed society and mentality. The "Industrial Revolution" produced struggles to create societies that are not divided into owners and employees but produced societies divided into order-givers and order-takers.

Electronic communication makes all information available to all. This undermines the separation of society into order-givers and order-takers. The "Communications Revolution" will produce struggles to create societies that are not divided into orders givers and orders takers. In such societies the order takers will be the order givers.

The nature of a state-owned economy depends on the nature of the state that owns it. In a state run by all citizens and all employees running their sites of employment a state-owned economy can create mass affluence and more freedom than any other regime.

## 7. **WW1 and Lenin's revolution**

Anyone travelling through Britain or France will notice in the central square of every small town a monument commemorating the sons of this community killed in WW1 and WW2. Their names are listed. The WW1 list is much longer than that of WW2. Some 20 million soldiers died in WW1, this makes an average of 13,000 dead during every day of that war (from August 1914 to November 1918).

Britain and France lost many more soldiers in WW1 than in WW2

In the battle of the Somme, in July 1916, the British alone had 57,470 casualties in the first day, of which 19,240 died. The battle lasted 5 months and ended in a stalemate.

No side won. The final count of British casualties in this battle amounted to 400,000.

This exceeds the total number of British casualties in WW2.

In the battle of Chemin-Des-Dammes in April 1917 despite starting with British and French artillery shelling German trenches non-stop a whole week, British casualties in the first day amounted to 60,000. One third died. The battle ended in a stalemate.

In the battle of Verdun in 1916 half a million French soldiers - and half a million German - died. All these battles ended without any side winning a victory

Generals of both sides ordering thousands of soldiers to advance in open fields towards enemy trenches equipped with machine-gun were responsible for the slaughter. Most soldiers were killed long before they reached enemy trenches.

Most history books, TV programs, and films, state that WW1, the worst war in history till 1914, was caused by the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince in Sarajevo. This event triggered off the war, but it was not what caused it. Outbreak of war is like a heart attack. Any exertion can initiate it but without clogged up arteries no exertion will cause a heart attack. The slow 'clogging up of the arteries' that caused WW1 was the rivalry between British and German ruling classes. Britain, the world's leading industrial power, built the world's largest Navy with steam-driven, steel body, battleships. This enabled it (before airplanes were invented) "To rule the waves", to dominate world trade - and colonize a quarter of the world. Germany, the world's second largest industrial power, followed fast and began to build its own Navy to win

its own colonies. This challenged Britain's supremacy. Most books and films attribute WW1 to the assassination of the Austrian Crown Prince by Serbian nationalists. Assassinations serve as pretext for wars, but don't cause them. If rulers want war they will use any pretext to start it. If they don't want war they will not start it because of an assassination.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain was the world's leading industrial Power. At that time - before airplanes were invented - big battleships ruled the oceans - and world trade. Britain had the largest, and most modern, navy, and ruled the seas and an Empire consisting of one quarter of the globe but *"Germany was a rapidly growing industrial nation and her politicians began to talk the same way. If prosperity came from colonies and a Navy why shouldn't Germany have them too? What about Germany's place in the sun? The Kaiser had grandiose ideas of his own importance in the world and as the head of a Great Power. Germany had defeated France in the 1870 war and the German military caste had immense power and prestige. In Germany there has been a good deal of sympathy with the Boers (defeated by the British in the 1899-1902 Boer war in South-Africa .A.O.) The Kaiser was proud of his navy. A bigger navy was popular with the shipbuilders and arms manufacturers and more ships for the German navy meant more profits for Krupps and the arms manufacturers. ("Winston Churchill in War and Peace" by Emrys Hughes, Unity publishing, Glasgow 1950. p. 57)*

The man who pushed Germany's naval arms race was Admiral Alfred von Tirpiz.  
*". . . Tirpiz was bent on creating a Dreadnought battle fleet in the shortest time. With three battleships and one battle cruiser to be laid down each year from 1908 to 1911, and four Dreadnought battleships already started - two in July, two in August, that year (1907.A.O.) he would have thirteen Dreadnought battleships by 1913 - or earlier if construction was pushed through fast. As the British programmers provided for only twelve Dreadnoughts by late 1912, the threat was clear. What also became clear was that whereas Tirpiz's 1900 Navy Law had provided for a total of thirty-eight battleships and twenty large armoured cruisers, the Novelle translated this into fifty-eight Dreadnought, for the new battle cruisers were regarded as capital ships. . . . 'The dominant idea' the "Daily Mail" wrote (in 25.11.1907) 'is to build a fleet which shall fulfil the hopes and desires of the Pan-Germans and be mightier than the*

*mightiest Navy in the world'. The Paris paper "Aurore" commented: "The announcement of the formidable increase of the fleet undertaken by the German Bundesrat is a curious commentary on the visit just paid by the Kaiser to his uncle King Edward VII . . . the expose of the new naval programme of the Empire shows that the strength of the German Navy will be doubled between 1907 and 1914. There can be no doubt that this formidable fleet, the construction of which is being pursued with a tenacity that one cannot help admiring, is directed mainly against England."* ('The Times' 22.11.1907) ("The Great Naval race" [Anglo-German Naval Rivalry between 1900-1914] by Peter Radfield, Birlinn, Edinburgh 2005 p. 173)

And what was Britain's response?

*"With Germany increasing her naval shipbuilding the (British) Admiralty was able to point out to this as justification for more big ships. The Admirals wanted more Dreadnoughts so did the naval vested interests, the naval shipbuilders and the big armament firms. The tension between the two countries was reflected in the DAILY MAIL campaign on "The German Menace". In the cabinet McKenna pleaded for a big naval building campaign and more Dreadnoughts. Supporting him was the Liberal imperialist group. At the Foreign Office Sir Edward Grey was negotiating treaties and understandings with France and Tsarist Russia. Europe was being divided into two armed camps."* ("Winston Churchill in War and Peace" by Emrys Hughes, Unity publishing, Glasgow 1950. p. 57)

Grey signed military treaties with Russia and France in 1907. Their purpose was to threaten Germany with war on two fronts - in its East against Russia, and in its West against France - forcing it to split its army into two, if it wages war against Britain. This did not deter Germany from building a huge navy. It accelerated the process leading to war. WW1 occurred because Germany tried to become a major Imperial power and Britain opposed this. It ended in a German defeat but weakened Britain causing it to lose its role as the world's leading power to the United States, which became the world's richest country by selling food and arms to Europe during the war and joining it only 18 months before its end.

An unexpected outcome of WW1 was Lenin's revolution in Russia (October 1917).

Marx's theories became popular after WW1 because the war and revolution confirmed his prediction that privately-owned economies must create crises, wars, revolutions.

When WW1 began in August 1914 everyone expected it to end by Christmas 1914 and most people - on all sides - supported it. In 1914 all soldiers in Britain were volunteers. Conscription in Britain began only when volunteering stopped in 1916. In 1914 very few people, among them Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, the philosopher Bertrand Russell, and Albert Einstein, opposed the war from the start. Most people denounced them as traitors. People reasoned that those who do not support their own nation support the enemy. This was not the case. Einstein and Russell were pacifists and opposed all wars. Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg argued the war was between ruling classes not between Nations. They declared that workers of all countries will only loose by supporting their ruling classes. This was considered treason by all ruling classes and leaders, and at first - also by ordinary people. However, by 1916, after millions died and no victory was in sight, most people (especially soldiers) were fed up with the war. Volunteering to the army stopped. Conscription had to be introduced. Most people everywhere began to crave Peace, but rulers everywhere craved victory.

Most soldiers were former peasants. On joining the army work on their farms dropped sharply. Food shortages started and people in cities began to suffer hunger.

In Russia people started to demonstrate demanding Bread and Peace. The Russian Emperor, the Tsar, insisted on continuing the war. In 1916 many Russian soldiers began to desert the army. They left the trenches and walked home - on foot - hundreds of miles. Lenin said: *"The soldiers have voted (against the war) with their feet"*

States depend on obedience of most citizens to the law, and of soldiers - to their officers. When many soldiers disobey their officers their State collapses. Without an obedient army rulers cannot enforce their decisions. Mass disobedience started in the Russian Army in 1916. In March 1917 the Tsar had to abdicate and Prince Lvov replaced him but refused to end the war. In July Prince Lvov was replaced by the Socialist Kerensky. He too refused to end the war, but most Russians craved peace.

Lenin, the leader of a small revolutionary party (known as "Bolsheviks", later as "Communist Party") called for years to create a state-run, planned, economy based on economic equality in Russia. Lenin opposed WW1 from the very start. He called on workers to turn their rifles against their rulers, not against fellow workers of other nations. In March 1917, after abdication of the Tsar, Lenin returned from exile in

Switzerland. He saw that most civilians and soldiers desire Peace but the government refuses to make peace. He declared that his Party will take Russia out of the war.

In the weeks preceding the Tsar's abdication, in February 1917, many workers often left the factories and went into the streets to demonstrate demanding: 1) The right to unionize (which the Tsar's regime forbade) and 2) An end to the war. When workers demonstrate factories stop working. Repetitive demonstrations - and massive desertions of soldiers from the front - forced the Tsar to abdicate. The administrative staffs of many factories, town councils, Army units and barracks - managers, engineers, mechanics, foremen, (and many Army officers and Generals) feared reprisals by their former subordinates and since the police was in disarray they fled. In many factories workers become masters. They formed committees to keep the factories going. Workers, peasants, citizens, soldiers, had to work without administrative staff to guide them. They elected committees which gradually re-established a normal system of work. The committees had to find the necessary raw materials, and to take upon themselves unexpected and unaccustomed duties. Similar developments took place in towns and local councils all over the country.

In this way a system of workers, soldiers, and peasant, committees developed, carrying out all administrative tasks. They did not decide Foreign policy but they decided the operations of daily life in towns, villages, factories, and in the army. This created a "Dual Power" situation. Foreign policy was decided by the Government, but daily life was decided by the committees. Every political party had to decide whether it wants the Government to take over the tasks of administrating daily life in addition to deciding foreign policy, or whether it wants the committees to take over the task of deciding foreign policy in addition to administrating daily life.

Lenin declared his policy: *"All Power to the soldiers and workers committees"* proposing a new kind of a state run by the committees elected by soldiers, workers, peasants and soldiers. Many liked this idea so they supported Lenin. Russia's population was around 150 million, of which 140 million were illiterate peasants. Most of the land was owned by the Nobility. The peasant-soldiers deserting the army and returning home killed the nobility and took over its lands. They asked Lenin what he intends to do with the lands. He expressed his views in a leaflet a few days before the October revolution:

*".. Comrades! Look around you, see what is happening in the countryside, see what is happening in the army, and you will realize that the peasants and the soldiers cannot tolerate it any longer. An uprising of the peasants from whom the land has hitherto been withheld by fraud is flooding like a broad river the whole of Russia. The peasants cannot tolerate their situation any longer. Kerensky sends troops to suppress the peasants and to defend the landowners. Kerensky has again come to an agreement with Kornilov's generals and officers who stand for the landowners.*

*Neither the workers in the cities nor the soldiers at the front can tolerate this military suppression of the just struggle of the peasants for the land.*

*And what is going on in the army at the front? Dubasov, a non-Party officer, has declared before all of Russia: "The soldiers will not fight any longer." The soldiers are exhausted, they are barefooted and starving, they do not want to fight for the interests of the capitalists, they do not want to "be patient" when they are treated only to beautiful words about peace, while for months there has been a delay (as Kerensky is delaying it) in the peace proposal, the proposal for a just peace without annexations, to be offered to all the nations.*

*Comrades! Know that Kerensky is again negotiating with the Kornilov's generals and officers to lead troops against the Committees of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies, to prevent the Committees from obtaining power! Kerensky "will under no circumstances submit" to the Committees, the paper Dyelo Naroda openly admits.*

*Go, then, to the barracks, go to the Cossack units, go to the working people and explain the truth to them.*

*If power is in the hands of the Committees, then not later than October 25 (if the Congress of Committees opens on October 20) a just peace will be offered to all the fighting nations. There will be a workers' and peasants' government in Russia; it will immediately, without losing a single day, offer a just peace to all the fighting nations. Then the people will learn who wants the unjust war. Then in the Constituent Assembly the people will decide. If power is in the hands of the Committees, the landowners' estates will immediately be declared the inalienable property of the whole people.*

*This is what Kerensky and his government fight against, relying on the village exploiters, capitalists and landowners!*

*This is for whom and for whose interests you are asked to "be patient".*

*Are you willing to "be patient" in order that Kerensky may use armed force to suppress the peasants who have risen for land?*

*Are you willing to "be patient" in order that the war may be dragged out longer, in order that the offer of peace and the annulling of the former tsar's secret treaties with the Russian and Anglo-French capitalists may be postponed?*

*Comrades, remember that Kerensky deceived the people once when he promised to convene the Constituent Assembly! On July 8 he solemnly promised to convene it not later than September 17, and he has deceived the people. Comrades! Whoever believes in the Kerensky government is a traitor to his brothers, the peasants and soldiers! No, not for one more day are the people willing to suffer postponement. Not for a single day longer can we suffer the peasants to be suppressed by armed force, thousands upon thousands to perish in the war, when a just peace pact and must be offered at once.*

*Down with the government of Kerensky, who is conniving with the Kornilov's landowning generals to suppress the peasants, to shoot them, to drag out the war!*

*All power to the committees of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies!*

(October 12, 1917. See the Lenin archive on the Internet)

Leaflet like this won Lenin the support of most peasants, soldiers, and workers. The soldiers supported his Peace policy, the peasants supported his land policy, the city dwellers wanted bread, the workers wanted to run the factories. Lenin's Party supported all these demands even before the war. Therefore when Lenin ordered his men to arrest Kerensky's Cabinet in the Tsar's Winter Palace they met little resistance.

Ten Years later, film Director Sergei Eisenstein filmed his version of the storming of the Tsar's Winter Palace when he asked the Palace caretaker if the staged version

resembles the real event. The Caretaker replied: *"Last time fewer things were broken"*. Kerensky's refusal to end the war alienated most soldiers so few were willing to defend him and his Cabinet when Lenin's men came to arrest them. Little was broken.

Lenin kept his promise. Immediately after setting up a government consisting of members of his Party he declared that Russia is no longer at war, and sent Trotsky (who joined Lenin's Party) to negotiate Peace with the Germans. Even within Lenin's Party there was opposition to Peace with Germany. Trotsky used the Peace negotiations (broadcast by radio to Germany) to incite German soldiers to start their own revolution. Lenin agreed to give Germany a quarter of Russia's territory for Peace. Lenin's Peace made a tremendous impression on soldiers and civilians everywhere. WW1 went on but most soldiers hated it. They envied Russia. There were mutinies in the French and British armies. In 1918 Trotsky's prediction was confirmed - German sailors disobeyed orders to sail into battle. This forced the German Kaiser to abdicate. The German Army surrendered and the war ended. People everywhere yearned for peace. Lenin was the first to achieve it. Moreover, he declared he will abolish economic inequality, create a State-run, planned, economy and a State run by citizens' committees, not by Kings, Presidents, or Politicians. This impressed people everywhere. Domination of Russian society by property owning classes was over and it seemed as if indeed *"the meek shall inherit the Earth"*.

Rulers everywhere began to worry. They hoped Lenin's regime will collapse soon being unable to overcome the enormous difficulties facing it. When this did not happen the British, French, and US governments sent troops to overthrow Lenin's regime (1918). US troops invaded Murmansk, British and French troops invaded the Caucasus, and the Japanese invaded the East. All failed to defeat Lenin's regime.

One of the most vicious enemies of Lenin's revolution was Winston Churchill who lost his job as Lord of the Admiralty after the defeat of his adventurous invasion of Turkey in Gallipoli in 1916. At a luncheon in the Aldwych Club in London on January 11, 1919 he said: *"Of all tyrannies in history the Bolshevist tyranny is the worst. The most destructive, the most degrading. It is sheer humbug to pretend that it is not far worse than German militarism. The miseries of the Russian people under the Bolsheviks far surpass anything they suffered even under the Tsar. The atrocities*

*of Lenin and Trotsky are incomparably more hideous, on a larger scale and more numerous, than any for which the Kaiser is responsible. The Germans at any rate have stuck to their allies. They misled them, they exploited them, but they did not desert or betray them. It may have honour among thieves, but that is better than dishonour among murderers."*

("Winston Churchill in war and peace" Emrys Hughes, Unity, London 1950. p. 88)

The last accusation refers to Lenin's peace with Germany which Churchill saw as a betrayal of Russia's pact with Britain signed by the Tsar. Was Lenin supposed to honour the Tsar's agreements? Churchill predicted Lenin's regime will collapse soon. A few years later Churchill supported Mussolini's dictatorship in Italy, which reveals his denunciation of Lenin's tyranny as hypocrisy. Coming from a landowner's family Churchill was incensed by Lenin's nationalization of all lands, not by his dictatorship. When all foreign invasions of Russia failed, Britain and France sent money and weapons to former Tsarist Generals to organize a Russian counter-revolutionary "White" army. A British Government White Paper estimated the total financial support given by Britain to the Russian counter-revolutionary forces at 100 Million British Pounds. According to Churchill this could arm 250,000 men.

Sir Bruce Lockhart, a special agent sent by the British government to Russia to study the situation, wrote: *"The revolution took place because the patience of the Russian people broke down under a system of unparalleled inefficiency and corruption. No other nation would have stood the privations which Russia stood for anything like the same length of time. As instances of the inefficiency, I give the disgraceful mishandling of food-supplies, the complete break-down of transport, and the senseless mobilisation of millions of unwanted and unemployable troops. As an example of the corruption, I quote the shameless profiteering of nearly every one engaged in the giving and taking of war contracts. Obviously, the Emperor himself, as a supreme autocrat, must bear the responsibility for a system which failed mainly because of the men (Stürmer, Protopopoff, and Rasputin) whom he appointed to control it. If he had acted differently, if he had been a different man . . . What it is important to realize is that from the first the revolution was a revolution of the people. From the first moment neither the Duma nor the intelligentsia had any control of the situation. Secondly, the revolution was a revolution for land, bread and peace - -but, above all,*

*for peace. There was only one way to save Russia from going Bolshevik. That was to allow her to make peace. It was because he would not make peace that Kerensky went under. It was solely because he promised to stop the war that Lenin came to the top. It will be objected that Kerensky ought to have shot both Lenin and Trotsky . . .even if Kerensky had shot Lenin and Trotsky, some other anti-war leader would have taken their place and would have won through on his anti-war programme. "*

("Memoirs of a British agent" by Sir Bruce Lockhart. Book 3 Ch..4, see the Internet)

Supporters of the Tsar, called "Whites", started a war against the "Red" Army led by Trotsky. It lasted from 1919 to 1921 ending in defeat of the "Whites". Next Britain France and the US tried to destroy the new State by imposing economic boycott. They refused to recognize it, and forbade all trade with it. This created great difficulties but also a great challenge - to build a new economy without outside help. Lenin's first task was to industrialize Russia, to build electricity generating plants and heavy industry (to provide tools for light industry) in this vast agricultural country. This required money which foreign Bankers refused to lend. Where could the new regime raise money to industrialize an agricultural economy ruined by three years of WW1 and three years of revolution and civil war?

During the civil war Lenin introduced laws forcing peasants to sell their produce to the State at fixed prices. The State then sold it in the cities for fixed prices. This provided most people with basic food for reasonable prices. The peasants supported Lenin fearing that if the "Whites" win the nobility will repossess their farms. In 1921, when the civil war ended, Lenin introduced the "*New Economic Policy*" proposed by his disciple Bukharin. It allowed peasants to sell part of their produce in the cities at their own prices, and to employ hired labour. Bukharin told the peasants: "Get rich". The idea was to raise money for industrialization by taxing the enriched peasants. The NEP worked. Peasants began to prosper, industrialization progressed, and in 1924 most people in the USSR were very enthusiastic about the new regime.

Lenin's revolution made a tremendous impression everywhere. The desired Peace, and the setting up of a state using the profits of the state-run, planned, economy to provide full employment, free housing, free healthcare, free education, and pensions, to all citizens, impressed most people. Why should the economy benefit a few and not

all citizens? Lenin's success inspired people everywhere to set up local Communist Parties to follow Russia's example. This was not Lenin's initiative; he was too busy rebuilding Russia. He rejected any idea of exporting revolution. He firmly believed that every society must make its own revolution. He saw the Russian revolution as a prelude to a global process replacing all privately-owned economies by State-run, planned, economies. He had no intention - or means - to conquer countries by military force. He was sure every privately-owned economy is heading for an economic crisis that will end in war - and revolution. Hence people everywhere, especially those suffering unemployment and poverty, will see the advantages of a State-run, planned, economy based on economic equality, and strive to replace their privately-owned economy enriching a few by a state-run, planned, economy caring for all. This change could not be introduced by elections as those who own the privately-owned economy would oppose it by force, so revolution was unavoidable.

When new revolutionary parties were created in many countries Lenin set up (in 1919) an organization called "*The Communist International*" ("Comintern") to coordinate their activities. He wrote 21 conditions for membership and invited those who qualified to meetings for coordinating their policies. The Comintern was the most powerful revolutionary organization in history. It aimed openly to establish state-run, planned, economies in all countries, not by war but by local revolutions.

All states with privately-owned economies saw Lenin's regime, and the Comintern, as a major threat. They knew the Russia will not attack them, but its state-run, economy, using its profits to provide full employment and free housing, healthcare, education to all citizens convinced many people everywhere to support the idea of a state-run economy in their own country. The idea that by a state-run economy profits will benefit the entire society rather than enrich a few was attractive to most people.

Privately-owned economies refuse to use profits for benefiting all citizens and feared the existence of a rival state-run, planned economy which does so. Its sheer existence implied that sharing the benefits of the economy equally among all citizens is possible. This challenged every privately-owned economy. This was why Germany, Italy, Britain, France, and the USA were determined to destroy the Russian State-run, planned, economy. The USA, Britain, and France, presented this as a struggle against

Dictatorship, but they tolerated dictators like Hitler and Mussolini during the 1930s, and like Salazar's in Portugal and Franco in Spain until 1976.

This undermines the customary view that the international politics of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century were struggles of "Freedom against Dictatorships".

Most international politics of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century were efforts by States with privately-owned economies to destroy all state-owned economies.

When Lenin died in January 1924 millions in Russia and abroad mourned his death. His regime was at the peak of its popularity but cracks appeared in it already in 1921. Actually it was flawed from the start. Its flaws grew over the years eventually causing the regime's collapse in 1991. What were these flaws?

The first - and most serious - flaw was Lenin's insistence that his Party alone will arrest Kerensky's cabinet and take over power. Before the revolution Lenin supported the policy of: "*All power to the Committees*" (of delegates elected by soldiers, workers, and peasant). This proposed that the country will be run by local and general Committees rather than by Parliament and Political Parties. The most important Committee was the one in St. Petersburg. Its members were elected by the garrison of the city, by its local workers, and the citizens. All revolutionary parties, Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, Social-Revolutionaries, and the Anarchists, were represented in this Committee which had more authority than Kerensky's government as most soldiers obeyed its orders. On October 24 (by new Calendar - November 6, by the old) Lenin exhorted the leaders of his Party to arrest Kerensky's government immediately, before October 25. He wrote to the leadership of his party:

*"Comrades,*

*I am writing these lines on the evening of the 24th. The situation is critical in the extreme. In fact it is now absolutely clear that to delay the uprising would be fatal.*

*With all my might I urge comrades to realize that everything now hangs by a thread; that we are confronted by problems which are not to be solved by conferences or congresses (even congresses of Committees), but exclusively by peoples, by the masses, by the struggle of the armed people.*

*...We must not wait. We must at all costs, this very evening, this very night, arrest the government, having first disarmed the officer cadets (defeating them, if they resist), and so on. We must not wait! We may lose everything!*

*The value of the immediate seizure of power will be the defence of the people (not of the Congress, but of the people, the army and the peasants in the first place) from the Kornilovite government, which has driven out Verkhovsky and has hatched a second Kornilov plot.*

*Who must take power? That is not important at present let the Revolutionary Military Committee (of the Bolsheviks. A.O.) do it, or "some other institution" (of the Bolsheviks. A.O.) which will declare that it will relinquish power only to the true representatives of the interests of the people (i.e. Lenin's party. A.O.) the interests of the army (the immediate proposal of peace), the interests of the peasants (the land to be taken immediately and private property abolished), the interests of the starving.*

*All districts, all regiments, all forces must be mobilized at once and must immediately send their delegations to the Revolutionary Military Committee and to the Central Committee of the Bolsheviks with the insistent demand that under no circumstances should power be left in the hands of Kerensky and Co. until the 25th; not under any circumstances; the matter must be decided without fail this very evening, or this very night.*

*History will not forgive revolutionaries for procrastinating when they could be victorious today (and they certainly will be victorious today), while they risk losing much tomorrow, in fact, they risk losing everything.*

*If we seize power today, we seize it not in opposition to the Committees but on their behalf.*

*The seizure of power is the business of the uprising; its political purpose will become clear after the seizure.*

*It would be a disaster, or a sheer formality, to await the wavering vote of October 25. The people have the right and are in duty bound to decide such questions not by a vote, but by force; in critical moments of revolution, the people have the right and are in duty bound to give directions to their representatives, even their best representatives, and not to wait for them.*

*This is proved by the history of all revolutions; and it would be an infinite crime on the part of the revolutionaries were they to let the chance slip, knowing that the salvation of the revolution, the offer of peace, the salvation of Petrograd, salvation from famine, the transfer of the land to the peasants depend upon them. The government is tottering. It must be given the death blow at all costs. To delay action is fatal.* (see the Lenin Archive on the Internet)

Why did Lenin insist to arrest Kerensky's government *before* October 25?

He knew that the All-Russia Congress of Committees was arranged to meet on October 25. This Congress was the supreme authority of all the Committees in Russia. It numbered 670 delegates, of which 390 (a majority) were Bolsheviks and 179 were Left Social-Revolutionaries who in the main supported the Bolsheviks.

Lenin knew that this Congress will approve a Bolshevik proposal to arrest Kerensky's government, but he also knew that if the arrest is made by order of the Congress it would imply that this Congress - not the Bolshevik Party - is the supreme political authority in Russia. It was this he wanted to eliminate by arresting Kerensky's government *before* the Congress of Committees does it. He knew the Congress will approve Kerensky's arrest. But by presenting the Congress with the accomplished fact of Kerensky's arrest he reduced its status from a decision-maker to that of an approver of decisions made by others. Approval of decisions is inferior to making decisions. What concerned Lenin was the prime issue of politics - *WHO DECIDES?* not the content of the political decisions but the authority to make them. He knew the Congress would decide as he did since the Bolsheviks had a majority in it. But if the Congress decides it becomes the supreme political authority in the country. As long as the Bolsheviks had a majority all is fine, but what if they lose their majority?

Lenin's 1917 coup-d'Etat was against the authority of the Committees, not against Kerensky. It set the pattern for all future relations between Lenin's party and the Committees, namely - the Party decides and the committees approve.

Lenin's insurrection was planned by the Trotsky to precede the opening of the second Congress of Committees. It was carried out during the night of October 24 to 25 by the Bolshevik Military Revolutionary Committee under the direction of Trotsky. Armed workers, soldiers, and sailors entered the Winter Palace, seat of Kerensky's Government. Although seizure of power often costs many dead it was virtually bloodless as most people supported it. Ironically the same happened in 1991 when Lenin's one-party system collapsed. On the afternoon of October 25, 1917, Trotsky announced the arrest of Kerensky's Government to the Congress of the Councils. Some ministers were arrested later that day but Kerensky managed to escape to exile.

On October 25 the 2nd Congress of Committees started. The opening session, its speeches punctuated by rifle fire in the streets, was a stormy debate on the legality of

Lenin's insurrection which challenged the authority of the Congress. Many Menshevik and Socialist Revolutionary delegates accused Lenin of presenting them with accomplished facts, and - to Lenin's relief - walked out of the Congress. Left Social Revolutionaries stayed and formed a short-lived coalition government with Lenin.

On October 26 Lenin addressed the Congress, declaring: *"We shall now proceed to construct the socialist order"* The Congress then voted on three resolutions proposed by Lenin: 1) on peace, 2) on land, and 3) on setting up of a new government. The Congress unanimously approved Lenin's resolution calling to end WW1 by calling on *"all warring nations and their governments to open immediate negotiations for a just, democratic peace"* proposing an immediate ceasefire for three months.

Decisions on the land question were made in the form of a decree: *"The right to private property in the land is annulled forever ... The landlord's property in the land is annulled immediately and without any indemnity whatever ... "* All landed estates and the holdings of monasteries and churches were made national property and were placed under the protection of local land committees and committees of peasants. The holdings of poor peasants and of the rank and file of the Cossacks were exempted from confiscation. Hired labour on the land was prohibited, and the right of all citizens to cultivate land by their own labour was affirmed.

The Congress set up a governmental structure in which supreme authority was vested in the Congress itself. Implementing the decisions of the Congress was entrusted to a Committee of People's Commissars. Lenin was elected head of this committee. Other Bolsheviks elected to this committee were Trotsky and Stalin. With the establishment of the new government, the Congress of Committees adjourned.

The decisions of the Congress of Committees on peace and land evoked widespread support for the new government, and were decisive in assuring victory to the Bolsheviks in other cities and in the provinces. In November the Committee of People's Commissars also proclaimed the right of self-determination, including voluntary separation from Russia of the nationalities forcibly included in the Tsarist empire, but made it clear that it hoped that the "toiling masses" of the various nationalities would decide to remain with Russia. It also nationalized all banks and proclaimed the workers' control of production. Industry was nationalized gradually.

These policies were supported by most people in Russia, and by millions everywhere. What they did not know - and would not support if they knew - was that Lenin changed his former policy of *"All Power to the Committees"* to a new policy of *"All Power to my Party"* without admitting it openly. This was a fateful change which eventually caused the collapse of Lenin's achievements and a huge setback to the idea of a state-run, planned, economy. Why did Lenin change his policy? He was not motivated by lust for power but by mistrust of anyone who disagreed with him. He was a Marxist intellectual, and like all Marxists in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century he believed that Marx's ideas were the "Objective Truth" about history and society and he possessed it. He was sure that those who disagreed with him were wrong and therefore a threat to the revolution even if they had no intention to harm it. Marxists everywhere shared the same belief. They were not exceptional. Most 19<sup>th</sup> Century scientists thought that scientific theories are "Objective Truth". Catholics have the same conviction and therefore accept the infallibility of the Pope. Lenin was a secular Pope. The Party was a secular Church. Marxism was the secular religion. 19<sup>th</sup> century secular thinking inherited from religion the belief in Objective Truth. It gave up belief in a God whose existence could not be proved by experiment or by predictions, but retained the belief that a theory, tested by experiments, whose predictions are confirmed, is "Objective Truth". This caused more deaths than belief in God did.

One of the first Italian Communists, Ignazio Silone (1900-1978), met Lenin and wrote *"Between 1921 and 1927, I had repeated occasion to go to Moscow, and take part, as member of Italian Communist delegations, in a number of Congresses and meetings of the Executive (The leadership of the Comintern.A.O.) What struck me most about the Russian Communists, even in such exceptional personalities as Lenin and Trotsky, was their utter incapacity to be fair in discussing opinions that conflicted with their own. Their adversary, simply for daring to contradict, at once became a traitor, an opportunist, a hireling. An adversary in good faith is inconceivable to the Russian Communists. . . . Just as I was leaving Moscow in 1922 Alexandra Kollontai (a veteran member of Lenin's Party. A.O.) said to me: "If you read in the papers that Lenin has had me arrested for stealing the silver spoons in the Kremlin this simply means that I'm not entirely in agreement with him about some minor problem of agricultural or industrial policy." Kollontai had acquired her sense of humour in the West and so only used it with people from the West. But even then, in*

*those feverish years of building the new regime, when the new orthodoxy had not yet taken complete possession of cultural life, how difficult it was to reach an understanding with a Russian Communist on the simplest, and for us most obvious, questions. How difficult, I don't say to agree, but at least to understand each other, when talking what liberty means to a man of the West, even for a worker."*

("The God that failed" Columbia University Press, 2001, p. 101)

The reason for this attitude was not Lenin's psychology but his philosophy.

As a believer in Objective Truth he was convinced that views that differ from his are wrong. During revolution wrong political views harm the revolution. Those who hold them must be treated as anti-revolutionaries. Communists, and Catholics, shared a belief in Objective Truth. It is for this reason that Lenin changed his policy from "*Power to the Committees*" to "*Power to my Party*" even when the Bolshevik had a majority in the committees. The Committees included members of other revolutionary parties. Lenin believed all other parties held wrong views that threaten the revolution. So they had to be excluded. Actually, he didn't trust even his own Party but only its leadership, and not even all of it as can be seen from Kollontai's comment.

Related to Lenin's mistrust of other revolutionaries was his mistrust of the revolutionary class - the industrial workers. Marx saw that work in factories - unlike work on the land - depends on cooperation of workers and induces attitudes of cooperation rather than competition. These new attitudes make industrial workers into a class capable of changing the priority of society from Egocentrism to Anthropocentrism. Marx advocated "Proletarian Revolution" not because industrial workers ("the Industrial Proletariat") were exploited (Peasants were more exploited but Marx never considered them a revolutionary class) but because industrial workers can create a new society motivated by cooperation rather than competition, replacing the motives of selfishness created by city merchants – by human solidarity. No peasant uprising could do this. But Lenin saw that most workers cared only about their daily needs (wages and working conditions) ignoring their historical role - to set up a new society motivated by solidarity and cooperation to replace current society, motivated by selfishness, created by - and in the image of - city merchants.

Every ruling class shapes society in its own image. The landed aristocracy shaped a society motivated by obedience and submission. The city merchants shaped a society motivated by selfishness and competition. The Industrial workers could shape a society motivated by human solidarity and cooperation. This was Marx's hope.

Lenin's mistrust of the industrial working class shaped his policy on Trade-Unions. It was a sensitive issue. In privately-owned economies the workers need Unions to defend their daily interest against private employers. But do they need Unions to defend them when the employer is a "Workers' State" promoting their historical interests? Are workers' Unions needed in a "Workers' State"? and what is their role?

In 1920 Alexandra Kollontai and Shliapnikov formed a faction in Lenin's Party calling it "*The workers opposition*". It was opposition to Lenin.

Seven million workers (!) supported the "Workers Opposition".

The Workers Opposition began to form in 1919, as a result of the policies of War Communism, which produced domination of the Communist Party over local party affiliates and trade unions. Near the end of the Civil War the Workers Opposition began agitating against the party control of the workers, seeking to restore more power to local party affiliates and trade unions.

A sharp controversy began over this issue in the Ninth All-Russia Conference of the Communist Party in September, 1920. All sides recognized the danger of the growing Soviet bureaucracy and offered ways to defeat this bureaucracy.

Trotsky and Bukharin, suggested to transform trade unions into government organs, and in this way give unions some control over industrial administration. Lenin and the right wing of the party, including Zinoviev, Kamenev, Rykov, and Stalin, stated that unions should not be a part of industrial administration, but that it was the role of the party to teach unionized workers how to administer the whole national economy. They explained that with workers control, the needs of the community and the rest of society will be ignored, that factories were the property of the entire community, and not only of the workers who worked in them. Lenin explained: "*Why have a Party, if*

*industrial management is to be appointed by the trade unions, 9/10 of whose members are nonparty workers?" (Lenin, Collected Works, V. 32, Page 50)*

Lenin's comment about 90% of the workers not being members of his party reveals a lot about the nature of that party.

The *Workers' Opposition* represented the left wing of the party, composed almost exclusively of unionized workers, and was led by A.G. Shlyapnikov, S.P. Medvedev, and later Alexandra Kollontai. The group demanded that industrial administration be made the responsibility of unions, which would not only mean that workers of a particular factory would have control over that factory, but also that unions would control the national economy as a whole. Kollontai explained that only *workers* could decide what was best for *workers* - that it was not for party bureaucrats to decide what was needed for the whole society, but it was for workers themselves, the producers of the wealth of society. The Workers Opposition had substantial support among the members of the Communist Party, however the major leaders of the party refused its platform. Kollontai said: *The basis of the controversy is namely this: whether we shall realize communism through workers or over their heads by the hands of soviet officials..... The solution of this problem as it is proposed by the industrial unions, consists in giving complete freedom to the workers as regards experimenting, class training, adjusting and feeling out the new forms of production, as well as expression and development of their creative abilities, that is, to that class which alone can be the creator of communism.*

*There can be no self-activity without freedom of thought and opinion, for self-activity manifests itself not only in initiative, action, and work, but in independent thought as well. We are afraid of mass-activity. We are afraid to give freedom to the class activity, we are afraid of criticism, we have ceased to rely on the masses, and hence, we have bureaucracy with us. That is why the Workers' Opposition considers that bureaucracy is our enemy, our scourge, and the greatest danger for the future existence of the Communist Party itself.*

*In order to do away with the bureaucracy that is finding its shelter in the soviet institutions, we must first of all get rid of all bureaucracy in the party itself....*

*Wide publicity, freedom of opinion and discussion, right to criticize within the party and among the members of the trade unions -- such is the decisive step that can put an end to the prevailing system of bureaucracy. Freedom of criticism, right of different factions to freely present their views at party meetings, freedom of discussion - are no longer the demands of the Workers' Opposition alone".*

(see "The Workers Opposition" on the Internet)

Kollontai wrote: *"We believe that the question of reconstruction and development of the productive forces of our country can be solved only if the entire system of control over the people's economy is changed" (see Shliapnikov's report, December 30). Take notice comrades: ' only if the entire system of control is changed.' What does this mean? The basis of the [controversy [between the "Workers Opposition and Lenin. A.O.] revolves around the question: by what means during this period of transformation can our Communist Party carry out its economic policy - shall it be by means of the workers organised into their class union, or - over the workers' heads - by bureaucratic means, through canonized functionaries of the State.' The basis of the controversy is, therefore, this: shall we achieve Communism through the workers or over their heads, by the hands of Soviet officials? And let us, comrades, ponder whether it is possible to attain and build a Communist economy by the hands and creative abilities of the scions of the other class, who are imbued with their routine of the past. If we begin to think as Marxists, as men of science, we shall answer categorically and explicitly: 'No !'*

*The root of the controversy and the cause of the crisis lies in the supposition that 'practical men', technicians, specialists, and managers of capitalist production can suddenly release themselves from the bonds of their traditional conceptions of ways and means of handling labour (which have been deeply ingrained into their very flesh through the years of their service to Capital) and acquire the ability to create new forms of production, of labour organization, and of incentives to work. To suppose that this is possible is to forget the incontestable truth that a system of production cannot be changed by a few individual geniuses, but through the requirements of a class. (see "Kollontai Archive" on the Internet, article written in 1921)*

In her speech at the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress she warned the party: *"When you go to a factory of 900 workers, and during a meeting on a party resolution 22 vote, 4 abstain, and the*

*rest simply do nothing, it shows inertia, a split, the dark side of party life we do not fight against".* To awaken workers support for the party the "Workers Opposition" proposed that Unions participate in directing the factories while Lenin's government was running the economy by dictate and excluded Unions from all decision-making. The Workers' Opposition proposed that unionized workers (blue and white collar) should elect committees that will oversee the economy at all levels. Delegates elected by workers, responsible only to those who had elected them - not to the Party or to management - should participate in deciding industrial policy. The Workers' Opposition proposed that Lenin's Party officials at all levels cease to interfere in the operations of trade unions. The Workers' Opposition was not opposed to Lenin's employment of "Bourgeois specialists" in the economy, but it opposed giving them administrative powers, unchecked from below.

Lenin opposed this and the 10th Party Congress in 1921 rejected all these proposals and banned the Workers' Opposition. Lenin then introduced new party rules banning all factions in the party. These rules hold to this very day (2007) in every communist party. In the 11th Party Congress Lenin proposed to expel Kollontai from the Party, but lost the vote. It was one of the rare occasions where the majority of the delegates opposed him. But they accepted his policy on Trade-Unions. They rejected the idea that workers in a "Workers State" need Unions to defend their daily interests against the management of industry. They also forbade all strikes. This greatly contributed to the downfall of the one-party state. All State-run economies banned Workers' Unions and therefore many workers became indifferent - even hostile - to such States.

For a good description workers life in such a state (Hungary) in the 1950s see "*A worker in a Workers' State*" by Miklos Haraszti, Pelican books London 1977)

In 1953 workers in East Germany state-run, planned, economy demonstrated against their government and in 1956 the Hungarian workers rose against their state-appointed managers and set up workers committees to manage industry. USSR tanks invaded Hungary and put down the workers. The USSR rulers feared that success of Hungarian workers will inspire workers in all state-run, planned, economies to do the same. Polish workers demonstrated on this issue in 1970 and in 1980 they formed the Polish Trade-Union Federation in the Gdansk shipyards. Such attempts challenged

Lenin's one-party state. The invasion of Hungary and the use of tanks against workers shocked many communists, and turned workers in these states against this regime.

Lenin's policy switch from "*All Power to the committees*" to "*All Power to my Party*" did not pass without resistance. The most famous was the uprising in March 1921 of the sailors in the naval fortress of Kronstadt (see the Internet), outside St. Petersburg harbour. It is described in many books and pamphlets. One good account is by the socialist-anarchist Emma Goldman in her autobiography "Living my Life". She emigrated from Russia to the USA in 1886 but was deported back to Russia in 1919 for opposing US's participation in WW1. She supported the Russian revolution and was in St. Petersburg during the Kronstadt uprising. She tried to mediate between Lenin's government and the sailors, but failed. Another good account is by Ida Mett.

The uprising was started by a strike of St. Petersburg workers complaining about low food rations. Lenin's State saw itself as guardian of the historical interests of the working class and prohibited strikes by workers. Strikes did not endanger Lenin's state but damaged its image as a "Workers State". In the USSR all strikes were forbidden. Strikers were put down immediately by the army, if need be - by force. So troops were sent against the strikers. The accumulated frustration of the St.Petersburg strikers was caused by Lenin's one-party state denying democratic rights even to revolutionary parties. The event that triggered it off was a dispute over food rations. The sending of troops against strikers shocked many - including the troops themselves who desisted from shooting strikers. To fight the strike the St.Petersburg Soviet (ruling council) made up of Lenin loyalists, declared martial law in the city.

The sailors in Kronstadt fought for the revolution of 1917, Lenin and Trotsky called them "*The flower of the Revolution*". They sent a delegation to St. Petersburg to investigate events there. The delegation's report convinced the sailors to support the strikers. They published a declaration supporting the revolution but calling for return to the policy of "*All Power to the Committees*". This was rejected by Lenin, so too were all mediation attempts by Goldman and others. Lenin, Trotsky, and supporters of the one-Party State did not want a compromise with those demanding "*All Power to the Committees*". They wanted a total victory over them. Victor Serge, a supporter of Lenin and Trotsky wrote in his autobiography: "*An ultimatum was published*

*signed by Lenin and Trotsky and worded in disgusting terms: 'Surrender, or you will be shot down like rabbits'" ("Memoirs of a Revolutionary" by Victor Serge, p 129) Trotsky ordered a military attack on Kronstadt, killing some 500 sailors, and taking many prisoners, who were later shot lest they tell others what happened. Many sailors were shot while shouting "Long live the world revolution".*

In a speech three days later Lenin admitted: *"The Kronstadt men did not really want the counter-revolutionists. But neither did they want us."* Actually the strikers were not against Lenin's Party but against One-Party rule. They wanted rule by Committees in which all revolutionary Parties participate, not rule by one Party.

Until the 10<sup>th</sup> Party Congress - which took place in 1921 during the Kronstadt uprising - members of Lenin's Party could form groups to promote a particular policy. Such groups were known as "factions". In 1921 Lenin decided to stop this tradition. He proposed to the 10<sup>th</sup> Congress of his Party to vote on the following resolutions:

*"6. The Congress, therefore, hereby declares dissolved and orders the immediate dissolution of all groups without exception formed on the basis of one platform or another (such as the Workers' Opposition group, the Democratic Centralism group, etc.). Non-observance of this decision of the Congress shall entail unconditional and instant expulsion from the Party.*

*7. In order to ensure strict discipline within the Party and in all Soviet work and to secure the **maximum unanimity** in eliminating all factionalism, the Congress authorizes the Central Committee, in cases of breach of discipline or of a revival or toleration of factionalism, to apply all Party penalties, including expulsion, and in regard to members of the Central Committee, reduction to the status of candidate members and, as an extreme measure, expulsion from the Party. A necessary condition for the application of such an extreme measure to members of the Central Committee, candidate members of the Central Committee and members of the Control Committee is the convocation of a full Meeting of the Central Committee, to which all candidate members of the Central Committee and all members of the Control Committee shall be invited. If such a general assembly of the most responsible leaders of the Party deems it necessary by a two-thirds majority to reduce a member of the*

*Central Committee to the status of candidate member, or to expel him from the Party, this measure shall be put into effect immediately."*

(see the "Lenin Archive" on the Internet)

The 10<sup>th</sup> Party Congress (1921) approved Lenin's proposals as standard practice in the Party. Approval of the principle of "*maximum unanimity*" within the leadership of the Party abolished all consistent opposition to every leadership throughout the country. During the 1920s Party members were still allowed to criticize the Party's policy before it was approved by the majority, but once it was approved no criticism was allowed. At first critics of Party policy were labelled as "misguided", and although they were not punished they were denied influential jobs. Later they became labelled as "damaging the revolution" and were sent into exile. Finally, in the 1930s all criticism was forbidden and those who voiced it were considered "counter-revolutionary" and sentenced to death. This happened to leaders like Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kaminiev, etc. who were no longer considered as "opposition" but as "enemies". This way of thinking spread from the Party to all Committees, municipalities, Unions, Army, and all government Ministries. Acceptance of the principle of "*maximum unanimity*" abolished every opposition to every leadership throughout the country. Absence of opposition enabled harmful policies to persist long after their harm was recognized. It left no way to change leaders and policies other than by conspiracy. No opposition could express its views openly before it became a majority. Opponents of a policy had to meet secretly to collect adherents until they had a majority, and then stage a coup. After Lenin's death every change of leadership in his party was done by conspiracy. This was the case also with Managers in Industry, Cabinet Ministers, and Generals in the Army.

Every new leader in the Party, State, or Industry, had to pretend - before becoming leader - that he agrees with the present leader while conspiring secretly to depose him. Deceit became a way of life.

Rosa Luxemburg, founder of the Polish and German Communist Parties, lifelong ally of Lenin, criticized him in 1918 for abolishing the Russian Parliament. Shortly before she was murdered in Berlin (1919) by German Army officers she evaluated Lenin's revolution, in an article entitled "*The Russian Revolution*" where she warned:

*"Without general elections, without unrestricted freedom of press and assembly, Without free struggle of opinion, life dies out in every public institution and becomes a mere semblance of life, in which only the officials remain as the active element. Public life gradually falls asleep. A few dozen Party leaders of inexhaustible energy, and boundless experience, direct and rule. Among them, in reality, only a dozen outstanding heads do the leading and elite of the working class is invited from time to time to meetings where they are to applaud the speeches of the leaders. And to approve proposed resolutions unanimously. At bottom then - a clique affair - a dictatorship to be sure, not the dictatorship of the proletariat however, but only the dictatorship of a handful of politicians, that is a dictatorship in the bourgeois sense. In the sense of the rule of the Jacobins, (the postponement of the Committees Congress from 3-months periods to 6-months periods!) Yes, we can go even further; such conditions must inevitably cause shooting of hostages, etc. a brutalization of public life, attempted assassinations, etc."*

(see Rosa Luxemburg archive on the Internet)

Actually, Lenin held a General Elections in Russia two weeks after the revolution on November 12, 1917.

The results of the elections were as follows:

<b>Party</b>	<b>Ideology</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Russian Socialist Revolutionaries	Socialist	16,500,000
Bolsheviks	Communist	9,023,963
Ukrainian, Moslem, and other non-Russian Socialist Revolutionaries	Socialist	4,400,000
Constitutional Democrats	Liberal	1,856,639
Mensheviks	Social Democratic	668,064
Moslems	Religious	576,000
Jewish Bund	Socialist	550,000
Ukrainian socialists	Social Democratic	507,000
Popular Socialists	Social Democratic	312,000
Other Rightist groups	Rightist	292,000
Association of Rural Proprietors and Landowners	Rightist	215,000
Bashkirs	Ethnic	195,000
Poles	Ethnic	155,000
Germans	Ethnic	130,000
Ukrainian Social Democrats	Social Democratic	95,000
Cossacks	Ethnic	79,000
Old Believers	Religious	73,000
Letts	Ethnic	67,000
Co-operators	Social Democratic	51,000
German socialists	Social Democratic	44,000
Yedinstvo	Social Democratic	25,000
Finnish socialists	Social Democratic	14,000
Belarusian	Ethnic	12,000
<b>Total:</b>		<b>35,333,666</b>

On January 5, 1918. this all-Russian Parliament - with all parties represented - met. In this Parliament - unlike in the Workers and Soldiers Committees - Lenin's Party was a minority of 25%. Most other Parties did not support Lenin's policy of Peace with Germany. So he dissolved the Parliament. The leaders of most parties protested but the electorate wanted Peace more than a Parliament and did nothing to oppose Lenin. After this brief interlude with political freedom Lenin introduced his one-party State.

Very soon Luxemburg's prediction became reality with a vengeance. On August 30, 1918, Fanya Kaplan, member of the Social Revolutionary Party who spent 11 years in exile in Siberia for revolutionary activities against the Tsar, was so outraged by

Lenin's dissolution of the Parliament that she shot Lenin. He survived and responded by outlawing all other political Parties. Later he also banned all opposition within his own Party. He lived till 1924 but the assassination attempt empowered the secret police which eventually killed millions of innocents, including many revolutionaries and all Lenin's close friends.

The German Communist Party delayed publication of Rosa's article till 1922. Most communists never heard of it. It was a grave error since wide publicity of her article could have saved millions of lives - perhaps even the revolution itself.

In December 1922, 2,215 delegates, from Communist Parties of Russia, Ukraine, Byelorussia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, met in Moscow and declared the creation of the *"Union of Soviet Socialist Republics" (USSR)*. It was a State stretching from Finland to Alaska ruled by Lenin's Communist Party. A leading Party organizer named Josef Stalin declared the creation of the new State announcing:

*"Let us hope, comrades, that by forming our Union Republic we shall create a reliable bulwark against international capitalism, and that the new Union State will be another decisive step towards the union of the working people of the whole world into a World Soviet Socialist Republic"*. (see "The USSR" on the Internet)

The delegates agreed and the Union of Soviet, Socialist, Republics, was established.

Three of the four words describing the USSR were lies:

- 1) The USSR was not a UNION but a strictly hierarchical Dictatorship.
- 2) USSR was not ruled by "Soviets" ("Committees") but by a political Party.
- 3) All "REPUBLICS" were departments in the One-Party State.

The public had no say in these 'Re-publics' which never had a general election.

However, the USSR was Socialist, as it abolished private ownership of lands, factories, banks. It had a State-run - planned - economy, providing all citizens with full employment, State-funded housing, free healthcare, free education, and pensions. This, after all, was the key issue of Socialism and this was why most communists everywhere supported the USSR despite all their criticism of it

The USSR lasted till 1991 when it dismantled itself without violence or civil war. This was without precedent in history. How could a powerful State be dismantled without violence? Only because most of its citizens refused to defend it.

According to Marx in a State-run, planned, economy there are no private owners of means of production, no classes, and no class conflict and therefore this state cannot be overthrown by internal conflict. Certainly not seven decades after it was established. No wonder Marxists failed to predict, or explain, this collapse.

What flaw in Marx's theory caused its inability to predict - or explain - such an enormous event? Why did a 70-year old State-run, planned, economy, without a property-owning class, with economic equality, which provided all citizens with full employment, free housing, healthcare, education, and pensions, fail to motivate even a minority of its citizens to defend it against internal opposition?

The total lack of resistance to the demise of the USSR (and of the Communist Party) - even more than the demise itself - revealed that most people born, educated and indoctrinated for three generations in Lenin's one-party State, valued political freedom more than the economic benefits of the State-run, planned, economy.

The abolition of the USSR was not due to an economic crisis or external intervention. It was due to the accumulated frustration generated in most citizens by the lack of political freedom in the one-party system.

Most USSR citizens preferred political freedom to economic equality and security.

## 8. Rise and fall of Socialism

In 1922 Lenin created the post of "General Secretary" to handle the Party's administrative problems: arranging inner party elections, nominating people to posts, arranging congresses, He proposed Stalin for the job. Stalin was elected. Shortly before his death in 1924 Lenin regretted his choice and sent brief notes to the small group leading his Party (the "Politburo"). The notes became known as "Lenin's Political Testament". (See the Internet). Lenin feared that a split in the leadership between Stalin and Trotsky could divide the Party - and country - into two hostile camps and start a new civil war.

Some time before his death Lenin wrote to the leadership of his Party:

*"Stalin is too rude and this defect, although quite tolerable in our midst and in dealing among us Communists, becomes intolerable in a Secretary-General. That is why I suggest that the comrades think about a way of removing Stalin from that post and appointing another man in his stead who in all other respects differs from Comrade Stalin in having only one advantage, namely, that of being more tolerant, more loyal, more polite and more considerate to the comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may appear to be a negligible detail. But I think that from the standpoint of safeguards against a split and from the standpoint of what I wrote above about the relationship between Stalin and Trotsky it is not a [minor] detail, but it is a detail which can assume decisive importance. (see the Internet).*

After Lenin's death the members of the leadership of his Party read this note and voted on Lenin's proposal to remove Stalin from the post of "General Secretary". But the outcome of the vote - contrary to Lenin's advice - left Stalin in his post, Trotsky abstained. Why did members of the leadership ignore Lenin's advice (a mistake for which they paid with their lives)? They were divided on the issue of the "New Economic Policy". Bukharin wanted to continue it, Trotsky opposed this. Both were creative thinkers inventing new ideas. Stalin was a traditional thinker who used other people's ideas. Bukharin and his allies feared Trotsky will convince people to accept his ideas and preferred Stalin as leader hoping he will copy their ideas. Trotsky's allies preferred Stalin to Bukharin hoping he will copy Trotsky's ideas. They considered

Stalin's mediocrity as a thinker not his rudeness Lenin warned against. They paid with their lives for this mistake. Stalin was a great plotter, not a great theoretician, but in leadership struggles in all parties the best plotter - not the best theoretician - wins. Party leadership struggles are championships for plotters. The best plotter - not the best theoretician - becomes party leader. Stalin won and became leader of the party - And of the world revolutionary movement... Some years later he killed Bukharin and Trotsky and most of their allies.

It took Stalin four years to win complete control of the Party. There was much resistance against him. First he allied himself with Bukharin and expelled Trotsky and his allies from the Party (1929) replacing them by his own men. Then he used his men to expel Bukharin's men from the Party replacing them by more of his own loyalists. By 1929 he was the undisputed leader of the Party without open internal opposition. Most biographers describe him as a cold, cruel, killer. Demonization of leaders obscures the understanding of their politics. Stalin was not a theoretician but a pragmatist. He concluded that in the near future there will be no more revolutions outside Russia. He had no doubt that privately-owned economies will do all they can to destroy the USSR state-run, planned, economy. He decided that preserving the USSR is more important than promoting more revolutions. In the USSR he represented the full-time state and party officials. These officials ran the party and the state, and supported him. They wanted stability, not revolution. So did Stalin. They feared the "Old Guard", the revolutionaries like Trotsky Bukharin, Zinoviev, Kaminiev, and they mistrusted the population. To safeguard the USSR - and their roles - they killed the "Old Guard" and terrorized the population.

Stalin used his plotting skills to install people loyal to him as leaders of the Comintern and of most Communist Parties. During the 1930s Stalinist leaders loyal to his policy of "*Defending the USSR*" replaced most revolutionary leaders loyal to "*Promoting revolution*". Apart from a few exceptions all Communist Parties became Stalinist. The Communist movement became a church with Stalin as its Pope. For them he was infallible. All his policies were accepted without hesitation or criticism. Not out of fear but out of deference to the party that carried out a successful revolution and set up a state-run, planned, economy. This party's "General Secretary" - whoever he was -

represented the entire Party, the Revolution, and the state-run, economy. For them - opposing Stalin meant opposing the revolution and the state-run, planned, economy.

Ignazio Silone, leader of the clandestine Italian Communist Party in Mussolini's Fascist Italy, attended meetings of the Comintern leadership, and described this attitude - and Stalin's tactics - as he witnessed them:

*"In May 1927, as a representative of the Italian Communist Party, I took part with Togliatti (leader of Italian Communist Party (ICP) A.O.) in an extraordinary session of the enlarged Executive of the Comintern. Togliatti had come from Paris where he was running the political secretariat of the Party, and I from Italy, where I was in charge of the underground organization (in 1925 Mussolini established his Fascist dictatorship in Italy and declared the Communist Party illegal. Many Communists were killed and arrested and the ICP became a clandestine organization. A.O.) . We met in Berlin and went to Moscow together. The meeting - ostensibly summoned for an urgent discussion of what direction should be given to the Communist Parties in the struggle "against the imminent imperialist war", was actually designed to begin the "liquidation" of Trotsky and Zinoviev, who were still members of the Comintern's Executive. As usual, to avoid surprises, the full session had been preceded - and every detail prepared - by the so-called Senior-convener, consisting of the heads of the most important delegations. Togliatti, on that occasion insisted, that I should accompany him to these restricted sittings. According to the rules, only he had a right to attend on behalf of the Italian delegation; but rightly foreseeing what complications were about to arise, he preferred to have the support of the representative of the clandestine organization. At the first sitting which we attended I had the impression that we had arrived too late. We were in a small office in the Comintern Headquarters. The German Thalemann was presiding and began reading out a proposed resolution against Trotsky, to be presented at the full session. This resolution condemned, in the most violent terms, a document which Trotsky had addressed to the Politburo of the Russian Communist Party. The Russian delegation at that day's session of the Senior-convener was an exceptional one - Stalin, Rikov, Bukharin, and Manuilsky.*

*At the end of the reading Thalemann asked if we were in agreement with the proposed resolution. The Finn Ottomar Kuusinen found that it was not strong enough. "It should be said openly" he suggested "that the document sent by Trotsky to the Politburo of the Russian Communist Party is of an entirely counter-revolutionary*

*character and constitutes clear proof that the man who wrote it no longer has anything in common with the working class." As no one else asked to speak, after consulting Togliatti, I made my apologies for having arrived late and so not having been able to see the document which was to be condemned. "To tell the truth" Thalemann declared candidly "we haven't seen the document either".*

*Preferring not to believe my ears I repeated my objection in other words: "It may very well be true" I said, "that Trotsky's document should be condemned, but obviously I cannot condemn it before I've read it". "Neither have we" repeated Thalemann, "neither have the majority of the delegations present here except for the Russians, read the document". Thalemann spoke in German and his words were translated into Russian for Stalin and into French for two or three of us. The reply given to me was so incredible that I rounded on the translator. "It's impossible" I said "that Thalemann should have said that. I must ask you to repeat his answer word for word". At this point Stalin intervened. He was standing over at one side of the room, and seemed the only person present who was calm and unruffled. "The Political Office of the Party" said Stalin "has considered that it would not be expedient to translate and distribute Trotsky's document to the delegates of the International Executive, because there are various allusions in it to the policy of the Soviet State". (The mysterious document was later published abroad by Trotsky himself in a booklet entitled "Problems of the Chinese revolution" and as anyone can today see for himself it contains no mention of the policy of the Soviet State but a closely reasoned attack on the policy practiced in China by Stalin and the Comintern. In a speech of April 15 1927, in the presence of the Moscow Committees, Stalin had sung the praises of Chiang Kai-Shek and confirmed his personal confidence in the Kuomintang (Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalist Party. A.O.) . This was barely a week before the famous anti-Communist volte-face of the Chinese Nationalist leader and of his Party. The Communists were expelled from the Kuomintang overnight; tens of thousands of workers were massacred in Shanghai and, a month later, in Wuhan. It was natural therefore that Stalin should have been anxious to avoid a debate on these matters seeking to protect himself behind a screen of 'raison d'Etat'.)*

*Ernst Thalemann asked me if I was satisfied with Stalin's explanation. "I do not contest the right of the Politburo of the Russian Communist Party to keep any documents secret" I said "But I do not understand how others can be asked to condemn an unknown document". At this indignation against myself and Togliatti,*

*who appeared to agree with what I had said, knew no bounds. It was especially violent on the part of the Finn, whom I have already mentioned, a Bulgarian and one or two Hungarians. "It unheard of" cried Kuusinen, very red in the face, "that we still have such petty-bourgeois in the fortress of World Revolution. He pronounced the words "petty-bourgeois" with an extremely comical expression of contempt and disgust. The only person who remained calm and imperturbable was Stalin. He said: "If a single delegation is against the proposed resolution, it should not be presented." Then he added "Perhaps our Italian comrades are not fully aware of the internal situation. I propose that the sitting be suspended until tomorrow and that one of those present should be assigned the task of spending the evening with our Italian comrades and explain our internal situation to them"*

*The Bulgarian Vasil Kolarov was given this ungrateful task. He carried it out with tact and good humour. He invited us to have a glass of tea that evening in his room at the Hotel Lux. He faced up to the thorny subject without much preamble.*

*"Let's be frank" he said to us with a smile "Do you think I've read the document? No I haven't. To tell you the whole truth I can add that that document doesn't even interest me. Shall I go further? If Trotsky had sent me a copy here secretly, I'd refuse to read it. My dear Italian friends this isn't a question of documents. I know that Italy is a classic country of academies, but we aren't in an academy here. Here we are in the thick of a struggle for power between two rival groups of the Russian Politburo. Which of the two groups do we want to line up with? That's the point. Documents don't come into it. It's not a question of finding the historic truth about an unsuccessful Chinese revolution. It's a question of a struggle for power between two hostile - irreconcilable – groups. One's got to choose. I'm for the majority group. Whatever the minority says or does, whatever document it draws up against the majority, I repeat to you that I'm for the majority. Documents don't interest me. We aren't in an academy here." He refilled our glasses with tea and scrutinized us with the air of a schoolmaster obliged to deal with two unruly youngsters. "Do I make myself clear?" he asked addressing me specifically. "Certainly" I replied. "Very clear indeed". "Have I persuaded you?" he asked again. "No" I said. "And why not?" he wanted to know. "I should have to explain to you" I said "why I am against Fascism". Kolarov pretended to be indignant, while Togliatti expressed his opinion in more moderate, but no less succinct, terms. "One can't just declare oneself for the majority*

*or for the minority in advance" he said, "One can't ignore the political base of the question". Kolarov listened to us with a benevolent smile of pity "You're still too young" he explained as he accompanied us to the door. "You haven't yet understood what politics are all about".*

*Next morning in the Senior-convent, the scene of the day before was repeated. An unusual atmosphere of nervousness pervaded the little room into which a dozen of us were packed. "Have you explained the situation to our Italian comrades?" Stalin asked Kolarov. "Fully" the Bulgarian assured him. "If a single delegate" Stalin repeated "is against the proposed resolution it cannot be presented in the full session. A resolution against Trotsky can only be taken unanimously. Are our Italian comrades" he added turning to us "favourable to the proposed resolution?"*

*After consulting Togliatti I declared: "Before taking the resolution into consideration we must see the document concerned" The Frenchman Albert Treint and the Swiss Jules Humbert-Droz made identical declarations (both of them, a few years later, also ended outside the Comintern). "The proposed resolution is withdrawn" said Stalin. After which we had the same hysterical scene as the day before, with the indignant, angry, protests, of Kuusinen, Rakosi, Pepper, and the others. Thalemann argued from our "scandalous" attitude that the whole trend of our anti-Fascist activity in Italy was most probably wrong and that if fascism was still so firmly entrenched in Italy it must be our fault. He asked because of this that the policy of the Italian Communist Party should be subjected to a thorough sifting.*

*This was done and as a reprisal for our "impertinent" conduct those fanatical censors discovered that the fundamental guiding lines of our activity, traced in the course of the previous years by Antonio Gramsci, were seriously contaminated by a petty-bourgeois spirit. Togliatti decided that it would be prudent for us to address a letter to the Politburo of the Russian Communist Party explaining the reasons for our attitude at that meeting of the Executive. No communist, the letter said in effect would presume to question the historical pre-eminence of our Russian comrades in the leadership of the Comintern. But this pre-eminence imposed special duties on our Russian comrades. They could not apply the rights it gave them in a mechanical and authoritarian way. This letter was received by Bukharin who sent for us at once and advised us to withdraw it so as not to worsen our already appalling political situation." ("The God that failed" Columbia University Press. 2001 p 106)*

But this wasn't the end of the affair.

*"In Berlin, on my way back, I read in the paper that the Executive of the Comintern had severely rebuked Trotsky for a document he had prepared about recent events in China. I went to the offices of the German Communist Party and asked Thalemann for an explanation. "This is untrue" I said to him sharply. But he explained that the statutes of the Comintern authorized the Presidium, in case of urgency, to adopt any resolution in the name of the Executive. During the few days I had to stay in Berlin, while waiting for my false documents to be put in order, I read in the papers that the American, Hungarian and Czechoslovak Communist Parties had energetically deplored Trotsky's letter. "Has the mysterious document finally been produced then?" "No" he answered me "But I hope the example set by the American, Hungarian, and Czechoslovak Communists has shown you what Communist discipline means. These things were said with no hint of irony but indeed with dismal seriousness that befitted the nightmare reality to which they referred." ("The God that failed" p. 111)*

Why did German, American, Hungarian, and Czechoslovak communists behave like this? In 1927 communists outside the USSR did not fear reprisals by Stalin. Togliatti remained leader of the Italian Communist Party till his death in 1964. Support for Stalin at that time was not due to fear. The fervent support reveals behaviour typical to most communists everywhere. Their sense of criticism - sharp and alert when dealing with privately-owned economies - was paralyzed when dealing with Lenin's state, and economy. Even leaders like Bill Haywood, founder of the American IWW (International Workers of the World) suffered from this symptom. {see "Living my Life" by Emma Goldman, Vol.2 p..915).

In the 1930s Stalin's behaviour changed and many feared to criticize him lest they - or their families - loose their jobs, freedom, or lives. But in the 1920's Communists did not fear Stalin yet they adamantly refused to criticize him. Why? For two reasons:

1. Fear of disillusionment.

They feared that if Stalin is wrong something is wrong with a State-run, planned, economy. Maybe even with Marxism. This would shatter their hope that a State-run, planned, economy solves all social ills. If it doesn't why make a revolution. They feared to loose hope. For many people hope matters more than life, and loss of hope is worse than loss of life.

2. Respect of those striving to set up a state-run, economy for the first revolutionary Party that achieved this aim. The Leader of that Party - whoever he was - (If Trotsky,

Bukharin, or Kirov, were leaders the attitude would have been the same) symbolized - for most communists the whole Party, and the Party symbolized the Revolution. They believed - wrongly - that loyalty to the leader was loyalty to the revolution.

Ignazio Silone recounts an incident which illustrates the reverence for Lenin:

*"One of my best friend, the Head of the Russian Communist Youth, Lazar Schatzky, one evening confided to me how sad he was to have been born too late, and not to have taken part either in the 1905 or 1917 revolutions. "But there'll still be revolutions", I said to console him, "There'll always be need of revolutions, even in Russia". We were in the Red Square, not far from the tomb of Lenin. "What kind?" he wanted to know, "And how long have we got to wait?" Then I pointed to the tomb, which was still made of wood at that time, and before which we used to see everyday an interminable procession of poor ragged peasant slowly filing. "I presume you love Lenin", I said to him "I knew him too and have a very vivid recollection of him. You must admit with me that this superstitious cult of his mummy is an insult to his memory and a disgrace to a revolutionary city like Moscow". I suggested to him, in short, that we should get hold of a tin or two of petrol, and make "a little revolution" on our own by burning the totem hut. To be frank, I did not expect him to accept my proposal there and then, but at least I thought he would laugh about it. Instead of which my poor friend went very pale and began to tremble violently. Then he begged me not to say dreadful things of that kind, either to him or still less to others. (Ten years later, when he was being searched for as an accomplice of Zinoviev, he committed suicide by throwing himself from the fifth floor of the house he lived in).*

*I have been present at the marching-past of immense parades of people and armies at the Red-Square, but in my mind the recollection of that young friend's emotion and of his frightened and affectionate voice has remained stronger than any other image there. It may be that that memory is "Objectively" more important".*

("The God that failed" Columbia University Press, 2001, p.102)

Not only Schatzky's reverence was genuine, so was that of the peasants filing past the tomb. It wasn't a *"superstitious cult of a mummy"* but a voluntary gesture of respect for the man who gave them land. No one forced them to do it, and to reach Moscow they had to overcome many obstacles. Yet they undertook these hardships to express their gratitude. When millions of mourners kept filing past Lenin's coffin after his

death in 1924 the political leadership decided - against protests of Lenin's widow - to embalm his body, and use it as a symbol of support for the regime.

Most visitors came to pay homage to the man, not to the regime.

The conflict between Stalin and Trotsky had of course personal reasons. Stalin was driven by jealousy and Paranoia. He envied, hated and feared Trotsky's brilliance as orator and thinker, whose predictions were confirmed repeatedly while Stalin's failed repeatedly. Trotsky's intellectual superiority caused him to underestimate Stalin and ignore his cunning as a plotter. Trotsky looked down on Stalin as stupid, dishonest, and vulgar. Stalin knew Trotsky had the ability - and credentials - to replace him as leader of the USSR and of the world revolutionary movement. He knew that if he commits a big blunder Trotsky could replace him. As long as Trotsky was alive Stalin felt politically insecure. This motivated him to kill Trotsky in Mexico even as late as 1940, though he knew Trotsky had neither men nor means to harm him.

However, the basic cause for this conflict was not personal but political and it would have surfaced anyway, even with different personalities. Marx believed that economic collapse of privately-owned economies and their replacement by State-run, planned, economies is an inevitable process in the evolution of every society. This could not occur simultaneously everywhere but was bound to start in industrial societies and spread gradually to all others. How should a State with a State-run, planned, economy relate to States with a privately-owned economy which have not yet had a revolution? Marx never considered this question. Moreover, a State-run, planned, economy in an agricultural society of 140 million illiterate peasants contradicted Marx's theory. When Lenin won Power he faced another problem: To act as a State or to act as a revolutionary? To conduct a foreign policy aiming to establish normal relations with all other States or to help their revolutionaries to overthrow them?

As most States were hostile to Lenin's regime how should the USSR defend itself?

Two foreign policy strategies were possible.

1) Help revolutionaries everywhere to make more revolutions. (As the leader of North Vietnam, Ho-Chi-Min, used to say: *"The best way to help Vietnam is to make a revolution in your own country"*)

2) Establish normal relations with other States and convince them that the USSR has no intention to overthrow them, thus defending the USSR from attack by other States.

The first approach was called "Permanent Revolution" - the second "Socialism in One Country" (rather than everywhere). These two strategies contradicted each other. Lenin did not resolve this contradiction. He set up the Comintern to promote revolutions but also set up embassies in most countries to promote normal relations.

Trotsky supported "Permanent Revolution" and Stalin - "Socialism in One country". When Stalin won the power struggle in the Politburo he redefined a revolutionary as: *"One who always defends the USSR"* This changed the activities of revolutionaries everywhere - from efforts to create a State-run economy in their own country - to defending the USSR. If a revolution could cause problems for the USSR it had to be abandoned. No wonder that in May 1943 Stalin dismantled the Comintern. Milovan Djilas, one of Yugoslavia's communist leaders who visited Stalin at the time recounts that Stalin said to him: *"...The situation with the Comintern was becoming more and more abnormal. Here Molotov and I were racking our brains [how to improve relations with USA and UK during WW2. A.O] while the Comintern was pulling in its own direction and the discord grew. It is easy to work with Dimitrov [the Bulgarian leader of the Comintern. A.O.] but with the others it was harder. Most important of all, there was something abnormal, something unnatural about the very existence of a general Communist forum when the Communist parties should have been searching for a national language and fight under the conditions prevailing in their own countries"* ("Conversations with Stalin" by Milovan Djilas, Harcourt, Brace, New-York 1962.p.80). Djilas adds that Dimitrov himself told him: *"It was apparent that the main power in the spread of Communism was the Soviet Union and that therefore all forces had to gather around it."* [same book p.33]

The original definition: *"A revolutionary is one who promotes revolution"* was denounced by Stalin as *"irresponsible adventurism"*. It was replaced by a new one: *"A revolutionary is one who always, and everywhere, defends the USSR"* .

Stalin knew that if the USSR supports revolutionaries in some country its government will join efforts to destroy the USSR. Trotsky argued that this will be the case even if the USSR did not support revolutionaries. The policies towards the USSR were not a response to its foreign policy but to its state-run, planned, economy. All states with privately-owned economies feared the attraction of the benefits of state-run economy on their own citizens. The USSR full employment, free health service and education attracted their unemployed, underpaid, and unpensioned workers who could not afford

to send their children to college, or pay a doctor. In the USSR there was no unemployment, and the state provided free education and healthcare. Privately-owned economies had unemployment and economic crises while the state-run economy had full employment and free housing-healthcare-education and pensions. The USSR gave women full equality in jobs and wages, and legalized abortions - paid by the state. This caused many in privately-owned economies to support a state-run economy and threatened privately-owned economies from within. They did not fear a military attack by the USSR. They feared the attraction of its social benefits on their own citizens.

Stalin agreed to sacrifice revolutions outside the USSR to prevent war on the USSR. Trotsky argued that this will not stop hostility against the USSR. In 1927 Stalin supported the Chinese Nationalists led by Chiang-Kai-Shek while Trotsky argued against this. Stalin ordered the Chinese communists to form an alliance with Chiang-Kai-Shek. This put them under Chiang's control. He used the first opportunity to massacre them. In 1937, when the Japanese invaded China and the USA gave Chiang weapons to fight them. They asked him: *"Why do you use our weapons against the Chinese Communists rather than against the Japanese invaders?"* Chiang replied: *"Because the Japanese are a rash on the skin but the communists are a cancer".*

In 1945 Japan surrendered. In 1949 Mao-Tse-Tung's Communists defeated Chiang-Kai-Shek's nationalists and set up a State-run economy in China. Their first concern was to guarantee that everyone in China got at least one cup of rice per day. In a country of 400M people, where every year millions died of hunger, this was a great achievement. All State-run economies were strengthened by Mao's victory far more than by an alliance with the Chinese nationalists. Trotsky was proved right again.

In the 1950s and 1960s the USSR foreign policy dilemma faced with the struggles for independence in British, French, Portuguese, Belgian, and Dutch colonies in Africa and Asia. In most colonies there were two groups fighting for independence: a Nationalist group and a Marxist group. The first wanted independence only, the second – independence and a State-run economy. Stalin's heirs continued Stalin's policy by supporting mostly nationalists, not revolutionaries. Stalin's heirs feared that support for revolutionaries will increase hostility to the USSR. Even Fidel Castro - while fighting in the Cuban mountains against the corrupt Batista regime - was denounced by all communists as a "petty bourgeois adventurer".

In addition to the problem of Foreign Policy, the USSR had a unique problem - its agricultural economy. The 140 Million Peasants with privately owned farms, who originally supported Lenin, were bound to come into conflict with the State-run, planned, economy. In 1921 Lenin approved the "New Economic Policy" allowing the peasants to sell part of their produce at their own prices (the other part was sold to the State at fixed price and ensured basic food rations to all citizens). The taxes imposed on the peasants enabled the regime to pay for industrialization, to build dams, power stations, and heavy industry. But the pace of industrialization was slow, and the peasants found that their money could not buy much. Stalin feared that the peasant lack of motivation will slow down the industrialization and even cause food shortages. In 1928 he decided to take a drastic step to abolish private farms and set up collective, state-run, farms. 140 million peasants lost their farms overnight. At a stroke he turned all peasants into enemies of the USSR. From supporters of Lenin they became overnight enemies of Stalin. In 1929 he set up State-owned communal farms ("Kolkhozes") and forced the peasants into them. It was a fateful decision, causing a famine in which seven million peasants died. To make the peasants work Stalin terrorized them by arresting 30 millions and sending them to forced Labour camps. A network of labour camps ("Gulag") was set up all over the USSR and millions were forced to work in abysmal conditions. Experts estimate that some 20 million peasants died due to the setting up of collective farms. In 1928 Stalin introduced his first "Five Year Plan" to accelerate industrialization. Its success in achieving its goals was declared already in 1932 but Stalin stated that the USSR was 50 years behind industrial powers of the time, and must "*industrialize or be crushed*".

Despite difficulties with the first plan, Stalin went ahead with the Second Five Year plan in 1932. The Second Five-Year Plan (1932-1937) brought a spectacular rise in steel production, more than 17 million tons, placing the USSR close to Germany as one of the major steel-producing countries of the world. The second 5-year plan was not uniformly successful, failing to reach the recommended production levels in such crucial areas as coal, and oil. However, industrialization progressed fast and by 1938 the USSR was an industrial power. In 1941 it produced 6590 tanks while Germany (whose "Blitzkrieg" war depended on tanks) produced only 5200. In 1942 (during WW2) it produced 24,446 tanks and Germany only 9300. In 1941 USSR produced 15,735 aircrafts but Germany only 11,776. In 1942 it produced 25,436 aircrafts and

Germany only 15,556. The industrial workforce in USSR was 11M in 1941 while the German was 16M. Considering that USSR state-run, planned, economy started industrialization only in 1921 in a devastated backward country without experts or loans from abroad its achievements were amazing. However, the hardships caused by industrialization initiated secret opposition to Stalin even within the ruling party itself. Stalin feared he might be replaced by Kirov, the Party leader in Leningrad.

In January 1934 at the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Party all delegates cheered Stalin's speech but in the secret ballot for the leader of the party they voted for Kirov, not for Stalin. Molotov faked the results announcing Stalin as winner. The election result alarmed Stalin. In December '34 Kirov was assassinated (probably by Stalin's instigation). Stalin blamed former Party leaders and rigged a series of show trials (1936/7/8) against Party leaders and Lenin's friends. All were framed on false charges and shot as "Enemies of the Revolution". In this manner Stalin eliminated most leaders of the 1917 revolution and anyone who could replace him.

From 1937 onwards the Party was merely a rubber stamp for Stalin's decisions.

In 1956, Nikita Khrushchev, the new leader of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) made a secret speech to the 20<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Party where he said:

*"Having at its disposal numerous data showing brutal and arbitrary steps against Party officials, the present Central Committee set up a Party commission under the control of the Central Committee's Presidium. It has been charged with investigating what made possible mass repressions against the majority of the Central Committee members and candidates elected to the 17th Congress of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks). This commission has become acquainted with a large quantity of materials in the NKVD archives and with other documents. It has established many facts pertaining to the fabrication of cases against Communists, to false accusations, [and] to glaring abuses of socialist legality, which resulted in the death of innocent people. It became apparent that many Party, Soviet and economic activists who in 1937-1938 were branded "enemies" were actually never enemies, spies, wreckers, etc., but were always honest Communists. They were merely stigmatized [as enemies]. Often, no longer able to bear barbaric tortures, they charged themselves (at the order of the investigative judges/falsifiers) with grave and unlikely crimes.*

*The commission has presented to the Central Committee's Presidium lengthy and documented materials pertaining to mass repressions against the delegates to the 17th Party Congress and against members of the Central Committee elected at that Congress. These materials have been studied by the Presidium.*

*It was determined that of the 139 members and candidates of the Central Committee who were elected at the 17th Congress, 98 persons (i.e. 70%) were arrested and shot (mostly in 1937-1938). What was the composition of the delegates to the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress? It is known that 80% of the voting participants of the 17th Congress joined the Party during the years before the Revolution and during the Civil War, i.e. before 1921. By social origin the basic mass of the delegates to the Congress were workers (60% of the voting members). For this reason, it is inconceivable that a Congress so composed could have elected a Central Committee in which a majority would prove to be enemies of the Party. The only reasons why 70% of the Central Committee members and candidates elected at the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress were branded as enemies of the Party and of the people were because honest Communists were slandered, accusations against them were fabricated, and revolutionary legality was gravely undermined.*

*The same fate met not only Central Committee members but also the majority of the delegates to the 17th Party Congress. Of 1,966 delegates with either voting or advisory rights, 1,108 persons were arrested on charges of anti-revolutionary crimes, i.e., decidedly more than a majority. This very fact shows how absurd, wild and contrary to common sense were the charges of counterrevolutionary crimes made out, as we now see, against a majority of participants at the 17th Party Congress..."*

(for the full speech see the Internet).

Every ruling Party has unpleasant secrets which it hides even from its most dedicated members. Nothing similar to Khrushchev's revelations ever occurred in any other party. However, his speech was not a result of a "troubled conscience". It was designed to pre-empt attempts by pro-Stalin members in the leadership to depose him. He used these (partial) revelations to discredit all Stalin's supporters.

While Stalin was warning the people of the USSR to "*industrialize or be crushed*" All privately run economies sank into their worst economic crisis ever.

The collapse of the New-York stock market on "Black Thursday", October 24, 1929, plunged all privately-owned economies into their worst economic crisis (labelled "Depression" rather than "Crisis"...). Numbers of unemployed in all privately-owned economies reached all time records. Many businessmen committed suicide. But in the USSR citizens enjoyed full employment (some of it forced) and free housing-healthcare-education and pensions. Communist Parties in all crisis stricken privately-owned economies gained popularity - and members. The advantages of a State-run, planned, economy over a privately-owned economy were never more glaring than during the 1930s. The USSR state-run, economy expanded rapidly providing all citizens with jobs, incomes, free housing, free education, free health services and pensions, while the privately-owned economies created continuous unemployment for 25% of the workforce, and no state support for their housing, healthcare, education.

German unemployed swelled the ranks of two Parties - Nazis and Communists. Each proposed to solve the economic crisis. The Nazis - by war. The Communists - by a state-run, economy. The Nazis promised full employment and revival of National pride, shattered by the defeat in WW1 and the humiliating conditions of the Versailles Peace treaty. The Communists promised a State-run, economy with full employment, free housing-healthcare-education and pensions. An alliance of Communists and Social-Democrats could defeat the Nazis but Stalin opposed it. As a result the Nazis won the elections and outlawed all other parties. They imprisoned all Communists. Hitler declared repeatedly he will destroy Communism. So did Mussolini. This pleased the British and French governments. After Mussolini set up his fascist dictatorship in Italy (1925) Winston Churchill visited him in 1927 and declared:

*"If I were an Italian I am sure that I would have been wholeheartedly with you from start to finish in your triumphant struggle against the bestial appetites and passions of Leninism. . . . Your movement has rendered a service to the whole world. The great fear which has always beset every democratic leader or working-class leader has been that of being undermined or overbid by someone more extreme than he. It seems that continuous progression to the Left, a sort of an inevitable landslide into the abyss, was the characteristic of all revolutions. Italy has shown that there is a way of fighting the subversive forces, which can rally the mass of the people, properly led, to value and wish to defend the honour and stability of civilized society. She has provided the necessary antidote to the Russian poison"* ("The Times" 21.1. 1927).

Shortly after WW1 (in March 1920) Churchill sent Prime Minister Lloyd-George a memorandum suggesting rebuilding Germany as a bulwark against Lenin's regime. In 1935 Churchill said: *"One may dislike Hitler's system and yet admire his patriotic achievement. If our country were defeated I hope we could find a champion as admirable to restore our courage and lead us back to our place among the nations"*. ("Winston Churchill in war and peace" Emrys Hughes, London 1950. p. 139)

Churchill's proposal to use Hitler as a bulwark against Communism did not remain a theory. The Versailles Treaty forbade Germany to build tanks, war planes, guns bigger than 150mm, or keep an army of more than 100,000 soldiers. ARTICLE 198. of the Treaty states: *"The armed forces of Germany must not include any military or naval air forces."* Hitler ignored these conditions. By 1936 Germany had an air force, tanks, a navy and a big army. This was no secret but Britain and France ignored it.

On April 26, 1937, Hitler's new air force, helping General Franco's rebellion against the elected government of Spain, bombarded and destroyed the Basque town of Guernica killing some 1700 people and wounding many more. This was the very first planned bombardment of civilians and created world-wide protest. Many governments declared the bombardment of civilians as a War Crime. Film newsreels all over the world showed the German bombers of Hitler's new air force dropping their bombs. In 1945, after WW2, at the [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuremberg\\_Trials](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuremberg_Trials) war-crimes trials of Nazis in Nuremberg, Hermann Goering, the Nazi commander of Hitler's air force said: *"The Spanish Civil War gave me an opportunity to put my young air force to the test, and a means for my men to gain experience."* He tested not only the military capabilities of Hitler's air force but also the responses of Britain, France, and USA to this blatant violation of the Versailles Treaty. And what did the test show? Britain and France took no step whatsoever against Hitler's violation of the Versailles Treaty. Why? Because the governments of Britain, France and USA, expected Hitler's air force will destroy the USSR and its State-run, planned, economy. In 1937 Hitler continued to test Britain and France's response to violations of the Versailles Treaty by marching his army into the Rhineland. His Generals warned him against this as the German Army was still too weak to oppose a British and French military intervention enforcing the Versailles Treaty. Hitler told his Generals that Britain and France will not intervene. His prediction was correct.

In his speeches Hitler repeatedly attacked the USSR and Communism. This convinced the British and French governments Hitler were not only a bulwark against the USSR but the force that will destroy it. He revived the German arms industry and this provided employment. Much of this was financed by loans from British, French, and American Banks. Hitler created the most powerful modern army by openly violating all clauses of the Versailles Treaty. Britain and France acquiesced.

Small countries bordering with Germany, like Poland and Czechoslovakia, became worried and signed treaties with Britain and France committing these powers to defend them if attacked. Czechoslovakia also signed such a pact with the USSR.

In March 1938 Hitler annexed Austria arguing that he unites all German-speaking people, he then demanded that Sudetenland, the part of Czechoslovakia, inhabited mostly by Germans, be handed to Germany. Czechoslovak resistance to his demand could face him with a challenge - to invade or back down. He hinted he intends to invade. This posed a dilemma for Britain, France, and the USSR, who had treaties with Czechoslovakia committing them to defend it. The USSR was ready to honour its commitment but the British and French Prime Ministers flew to Munich (without informing Stalin) to assure Hitler they will not honour their treaties with Czechoslovakia, and signed the notorious Munich Agreement of September 1938. Why? First, they were unwilling to go to war over this issue, and second - hoping the USSR will honour its treaty with Czechoslovakia a war between Germany and the USSR would start. This suited them. Czechoslovakia decided to hand Sudetenland to Hitler. As Britain and France did not inform Stalin they are going to sign an agreement with Hitler he was convinced they are plotting against him. He saw their readiness to hand over Sudetenland to Hitler as a step designed to push him into war against Hitler, after which Britain and France would pick up the shattered pieces of both. It seemed as if a war between Germany and the USSR was imminent. However, in March 1939 Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia and annexed all of it. This was contrary to the Munich agreement. Hitler thought Britain and France will acquiesce as they did over Sudetenland. But they realized he cannot be trusted and declared that if he invades Poland (with whom they signed similar treaties) they will declare war against him. To counter this possibility Hitler rushed to secure his eastern flank by signing a non-aggression pact with Stalin who was delighted to outwit Britain and France by signing it. This pact divided northern Europe (and Poland) into two "Spheres of

Influence" between Hitler and Stalin. The Hitler-Stalin pact (named "Molotov-Ribbentrop pact" after the Foreign Ministers who signed it) was signed on August 24<sup>th</sup> 1939. On September 1<sup>st</sup> Hitler attacked Poland with 62 divisions. Within 5 weeks he won that war. Britain and France declared war on Hitler on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. They had 110 divisions. They could have invaded Germany from the west to help Poland. They didn't. Hitler had only 23 divisions facing west, but they were never needed. Stalin annexed Poland's other half. The USA kept neutral. For the next 8 months almost no fighting took place. After this "Phoney War" Hitler launched an offensive in the west on May 19<sup>th</sup> 1940 conquering Holland and Belgium. British and French forces fought back but on June 22 France surrendered. The British army retreated from Europe and prepared to defend Britain against a Nazi invasion.

Hitler now ruled most of Europe and in 1941 felt strong enough to fulfil his main aim. He invaded the USSR on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 1941 believing that by Christmas that year he'll win. In November his army reached Moscow taking 2 million Russian prisoners of war. It seemed WW2 will soon end in a Nazi victory and the USSR will be destroyed.

The Stalin-Hitler pact caused a major crisis in every Communist Party. Before the pact communists everywhere fought Fascism and Nazism as their main enemies. Fascist and Nazi ideology flaunted racism and practiced it. When Mussolini became dictator in Italy (1925) and Hitler in Germany (1933) they declared the Italian and German Communist Parties illegal, killed many communists, and imprisoned the rest. During General Franco's Fascist rebellion in Spain (1936-1939). Hitler and Mussolini openly supported Franco sending him arms and soldiers. This enabled him to defeat the Spanish democracy and set up his Fascist dictatorship which lasted almost 40 years. Britain and France, repeatedly declaring their commitment to democracy refused to help the democratic Spanish Republic. They imposed an arms embargo on it, damaging its efforts to defend itself against the Fascist rebels. They even recognized Franco's Fascist dictatorship (on 27.2.1939) while the Spanish Republic was still fighting against him. This strengthened the resolve of genuine democrats and communists everywhere to fight Nazism and Fascism. However, when Stalin signed his pact with Hitler all Communist Parties ceased to fight Nazis and Fascists. Their policy imitated the USSR's foreign policy. This shocked many people. All Communist Parties lost members and credibility because of the Stalin-Hitler Pact. The American Communist Party which gained much influence and members during

the "Great Depression" lost them after this pact. Former sympathizers began to deride its members by greeting them with the Nazi outstretched arm salute calling "Hail Hitler". The CP of USA turned from a force into a wreck and never recovered.

Two points merit contemplation when considering the Stalin-Hitler Pact:

1. if the pact was a tactic to gain time for preparing the USSR against an impending Nazi attack, it can be justified. However, if it was a strategy, dividing Europe between Stalin and Hitler for a historical era, it is a betrayal of everything Marx and Lenin stood for. Hitler's racist state was an enemy of everything civilized humanity stood for. Any partner of Hitler is an enemy of humanity. In 1991 some secret archives were opened to the public in the USSR (many remain closed). From these archives it appears that Stalin saw his pact with Hitler as a strategic arrangement rather than as a tactical step. This issue is still undecided.

2. Even if the pact is justified as a tactical move designed to give the USSR time to prepare for an impending Nazi attack, the Communist Parties should have continued their anti-Nazi struggles despite this pact. They did not. They linked their policy to the foreign policy of the USSR. Communist Parties linking their policies to the USSR's foreign policy ruined their revolutionary credibility. Revolutionary Parties are not States and should not act like states. States are not revolutionary Parties. States seek stability but revolutionaries seek revolution. Stability and revolution contradict each other. Communist Parties should have maintained their revolutionary policies whatever the foreign policy of the USSR. The USSR foreign policy alternated between Socialist principles and needs of a State. Its policy towards Nazi Germany is a good example. From 1933 to 1939 it was guided by Socialist principles opposing Nazi racism, dictatorship, and war mongering. But from 1939 to 1941 it was guided by the needs of the USSR as a State. Communist Parties who supported such twists and turns of USSR foreign policy undermined their revolutionary credibility. They changed from revolutionaries into puppets of USSR's foreign policy. The USSR neither consulted them, nor informed them, before changing its foreign policy.

By signing the non-aggression pact with Hitler Stalin turned the tables on Britain and France. Hitler, instead of declaring war on the USSR, invaded Poland. This time Britain and France honoured their treaties with Poland and on September 3 declared war on Germany (but sent no military aid to Poland). Hitler conquered Poland in five

weeks but did not immediately start a serious military campaign against Britain and France. From September 1939 to April 1940 he waged a "Phoney War" against them. During this time efforts were made to reconcile Britain with Germany. Hitler believed this was possible since the King of England, Edward VIII, who abdicated in 1936 because Parliament opposed his marriage to the American divorcee, Mrs. Wallis Simpson, visited Germany in 1937 as personal guest of Hitler, and praised the Nazis. The German media publicized this. The British land-owning Aristocracy despised the greedy British merchants and bankers - their old foes - and some Lords sympathized with the National Socialism. Prince Philip Battenberg's (a.k.a. Mountbatten) sister and his brother in law were both Nazi Party members in Germany. Oswald Moseley, 6<sup>th</sup> Baronet, and Lady Diana Mitford (and her sister Unity) were close friends of Hitler, and only the best known of them. The FBI believed Ms. Simpson was a friend of Ribbentrop and pro-Nazi and that Hitler intends to reinstate Edward VIII as a puppet king of England after conquering it. Hitler waited to check out this possibility.

When Churchill became Prime Minister on May 10, 1940 he dashed these hopes. He hated Communism, but the USSR was weak and did not threaten Britain, whereas Nazi Germany was an ominous military threat. Hitler then ended the "Phoney War" and started his "Battle of France" in June 1940. The German tank divisions burst through the Ardennes region and advanced rapidly to the west, then turned north in the so-called "sickle cut". To the east, it conquered Holland and advanced westward through Belgium. To everyone's surprise France surrendered to Hitler on June 22, 1940 after fighting only three weeks. The French Right preferred the Nazis as rulers to the French Left. Britain was left alone to fight Hitler. He tried to win air superiority over Britain, to enable Nazi troops to invade it. This started the aerial "Battle of Britain" which ended in a German defeat forcing Hitler to postpone his invasion to Britain. He did not covet Britain. He coveted the USSR and wanted to finalize military preparations to conquer it. He yearned to destroy Communism, to conquer Russia's vast grain-growing territories and the oil fields of the Caucasus. He intended to use the USSR population as slave labour. Conquest of the USSR, providing Germany with grain, oil, and manpower, could turn Nazi Germany into the most powerful state in Europe, and in the world. This was Hitler's aim.

On June 22, 1941 the Nazi Army invaded the USSR. Stalin was stunned. He systematically rejected the many warnings he received about this invasion. He was convinced they were a British ploy. At first he thought a Nazi General acted on his own initiative so he forbade the Red Army to fight back. When he realized it was an invasion on a vast scale he suffered a nervous breakdown and hid in his villa outside Moscow. His Foreign Minister Molotov had to inform the USSR's citizens they are at war. A few days later, members of the Politburo went to Stalin to ask him to return to Moscow. He opened the door asking: *"Have you come to execute me?"* expecting them to behave as he would in such circumstances. He returned to Moscow but addressed the USSR's citizens on radio only eleven days after the USSR was invaded.

Stalin's conviction that Hitler will not attack the USSR misled the Red Army. Moreover, in 1937 Stalin executed most Red Army Generals. The Chief of Staff, Michail Tukhachevsky, and 3 out of 5 Marshals (equivalent to 6-stars US General), 13 out of 15 army-commanders (equivalent to 5 and 4-stars US Generals) 8 out of 9 admirals, 50 out of 57 army Corps Generals, 154 out of 186 Division Generals, all 16 Army Commissars, and 25 out of 28 army Corps Commissars, were executed. This deprived the Red Army of its High Command. Hitler knew this.

When Hitler's 3 million soldiers and 4000 tanks invaded the USSR in June 1941 the Red Army was confused, unprepared, and lacked its experienced High Command.

At first many in the USSR population welcomed the Nazi invaders as liberators. They hated Stalin and his regime and thought the Nazi regime could not be worse. Stalin and his men knew this so they called the population to defend their Fatherland - rather than Socialism. For this reason they named this war *"The Great Patriotic War"*. This resort to nationalism contradicted Marx's and Lenin's opposition to all nationalism but Stalin saw no other way to induce his subjects to fight. Nazi atrocities soon convinced people in the USSR that the Nazis were worse than Stalin and his men.

In November 1941 the Nazi Army reached Moscow. Two million Red Army soldiers were taken prisoner. The USSR looked defeated. Hitler expected the war to end any moment. However, Stalin was told that Japan, Germany's ally, will not attack the USSR in the East. The Japanese intended to conquer east Asia and block USA's intervention and didn't want to fight also the USSR. This enabled Stalin to move a

million soldiers kept in the east against a Japanese invasion - to Moscow. The winter of 1941 was very severe. It paralyzed the Nazi army. German soldiers wore summer uniforms as they expected to conquer Moscow before winter. They began to freeze. Oil froze in all Tanks, cars, airplanes. The Red Army launched a counter attack with fresh troops from the east well equipped for winter. They threw the Nazis back and relieved the siege on Moscow. It was never renewed. In a long series of battles, culminating in the Battle of Stalingrad (winter 1942) and Kursk (spring 1943) the Red Army pushed the Nazi Army back to Germany, and conquered half of Germany by 1945. The turning point in WW2 was the German defeat in Stalingrad when 100,000 German soldiers, with their Generals, surrendered.

The battle of Stalingrad was the largest single battle in human history. It raged for 199 days. Numbers of casualties are difficult to compile owing to the vast scope of the battle and the fact that Stalin didn't allow estimates to be published for fear this might create opposition. In its initial phases, the Nazis inflicted heavy casualties on the Red Army; but the USSR counter attack cut off and annihilated the entire 6th Army (which was exceptionally strong) and parts of the 4th Panzer Army. Scholars have estimated the Nazis suffered 850,000 casualties of all types among all branches of the Nazi armed forces and its allies: 400,000 Germans, 200,000 Romanians, 130,000 Italians, 120,000 Hungarians were killed, wounded or captured. In addition, and as many as 50,000 Russian "Whites", fighting with the Nazis, were killed or captured by the Red Army. According to archives, the Red Army suffered 478,741 men killed and 650,878 wounded (for a total of 1,129,619). These figures; however, include a wide scope of operations. Also, more than 40,000 Russian civilians died in Stalingrad and its suburbs during a single week of aerial bombing as the 6th and 4th Panzer armies approached the city. The total number of civilians killed in the regions outside the city is unknown. In all, a total of anywhere from 1.7 million to 2 million German and Russian casualties were caused by this one battle, making it by far the largest in human history. This battle was the turning point in the war which ended in the unconditional surrender of the Nazis on May 8, 1945

During the 1930s Hitler repeatedly declared his commitment to destroy Communism but to everybody's surprise (including Stalin himself) WW2 turned the USSR into the world's most powerful State. No other State had an army as big. Stalin's army

numbered 4 Million experienced soldiers, equipped with 20,000 tanks, and 10,000 airplanes. The British and US armies together numbered less than one million soldiers. Stalin could conquer the whole of Europe within a month. Many Europeans saw the Red Army as liberator because it defeated the Nazis. Many wanted a State-run, planned, economy. Some USSR Generals suggested to Stalin to conquer all Europe. But he rejected their proposal, saying: *"How shall we feed all these people?"* The war ruined Europe, fields lay waste, farmers were killed, factories, roads, and railways, were destroyed. Anyone ruling Europe would face the immense task of rebuilding it. Stalin had to rebuild the USSR, he preferred that Britain and USA, who invaded Europe in June 1944, and conquered half of Germany, will solve this problem. They did.

President Roosevelt died a month before the end of WW2. George Marshall, the US Chief of Staff during WW2, warned the new US President Harry Truman, that without help from the USA most people in Europe might opt for a state--run economy as the best way to reconstruct their countries. This influenced Truman to convince US Congress to pay for an immense program of economic aid to resurrect the privately-owned economies of Europe. It was later called "The Marshall Plan" and Marshall received the Nobel Peace Prize for it. Marshall was named Secretary of State in 1947. In this role, on June 5 1947 at a speech at Harvard University; he outlined the U.S. government's plan to contribute to European recovery, he said:

*"Our policy is directed not against any country or doctrine but against hunger, poverty, desperation, and chaos. Its purpose should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist."* By "doctrine" he meant Communism and the term "Free institutions" is the American euphemism for "privately-owned economy". The European Recovery Plan, known as the "Marshall Plan", helped rebuild Europe's privately-owned economy. What motivated the "Marshall Plan" was the US fear that Europeans will set up their own State-run, planned, economies. Marshall estimated that the hardships caused by war and the mistrust of traditional politicians and businessmen who exploited it, might motivate many Europeans to set up State-run, planned, economies. US foreign policy since the Russian Revolution was determined to prevent this. From October 1917 the governments of USA, Britain, and France tried

to destroy Lenin's State-run, planned, economy. In 1935 they allowed Hitler to resurrect the German army hoping he will use it against the USSR. In 1938 - they agreed to Hitler's annexation of part of Czechoslovakia hoping this will turn him against the USSR. They told him they will not honour their promise to defend Czechoslovakia, but did not inform Stalin, hoping he will honour his promise to Czechoslovakia and get involved in war with Hitler. In 1947 US sent aid to war-ravaged Europe to prevent it from developing a State-run, planned, economy. These policies were consistent, aiming to destroy all State-run, planned, economies.

The war in Europe ended on May 8, 1945 but the war against Japan went on. The Japanese Army kept fighting and the US started to bombard mainland Japan. On March 9, 1945, the US launched a bombardment of Tokyo killing 100,000 civilians.

In February 1945 Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill met in Yalta, in the Crimea, and agreed that the USSR will enter the war against Japan on land in Manchuria three months after Germany's defeat. This gave the USSR time to move its Army from Germany to Japan. Germany surrendered on May 8, 1945, so the date for the USSR's entry to war against Japan was to be August 8, 1945, which it kept exactly to the day. Churchill called this: "*...another example of the fidelity and punctuality with which Marshal Stalin and his valiant armies always kept their military engagements.*" (Winston Churchill, House of Commons.)

But the Truman wanted Japan to surrender to USA alone since surrender to the USSR would grant the USSR many rights in Japan. US Generals wanted to test the new nuclear bombs on a real target. To assess the effect of Atomic bombs accurately they needed a city that was not bombed by conventional bombs. Hiroshima was an undamaged target, so it was selected for the "experiment" on August 6, 1945.

US Strategic Bombing Survey 4, "Summary Report on the Pacific War" Stated:  
*"It seems clear that, even without the atom bomb attacks, air supremacy over Japan could have exerted sufficient pressure to bring unconditional surrender and obviate the need for invasion... Based on a detailed investigation of all the facts and supported by the testimony of the surviving Japanese leaders involved, it is the survey's opinion that certainly prior to December 31, 1945 Japan would have*

*surrendered even if the atom bomb had not been dropped, even if Russia had not entered the war, and even if no invasion had been planned or contemplated."*

Thomas K. Finletter, Chairman of US Air Policy Council, said:

*"There was not enough time between 16 July when we saw at New Mexico that the bomb works, and 8 August, the Russian deadline date, for us to have set up the very complicated machinery of a test atomic bombing involving time-consuming problems of area preparations, etc... No, any test would have been impossible if the purpose was to knock Japan out before Russia came in - or at least before Russia could do anything other than a token of participation prior to a Japanese collapse."*

US historian W. Manchester, in "The Glory and the Dream." Wrote:

*"The Americans had no bombs to waste. . . There were just two bombs bearing the names "Little Boy" and "Fat Man."*

Japan was effectively defeated and had already offered to surrender. The Japanese had asked the Soviet Union to mediate in surrender terms and peace negotiations as early as March 1945. Truman decided at the beginning of July 1945 to drop the atom bomb on Japan and Japan's offer of surrender on July 22, 1945 was rejected.

British Prime Minister Clement Attlee said: *"...The decision to use the atomic weapon against Japan was taken at the beginning of July, 1945. The first atomic bomb was dropped on August 6 and the offer of peace made by Japan on July 22 was not accepted till August 10.* ("News Chronicle", Dec 5, 1946.)

Why didn't the US respond to Japan's offer to surrender made on July 22?

The US was informed again, on July 28 at the Potsdam Conference, before the bomb was used, that Japan was prepared to surrender: *Stalin: "I want to inform you that we, the Russian delegation, have received a new proposal from Japan - it is offering to cooperate with us. We intend to reply to them in the same spirit as last time."* *Truman: "We do not object."* *Attlee: "We agree."*

(Protocol of the Potsdam Conference, July 28, 1945.)

But the US did not respond to this offer either.

Joseph Rotblatt, A Physicist who worked on the nuclear bomb in the "Manhattan Project" in Los-Alamos, told the London "Times": *"In March 1944 I experienced a disagreeable shock. In a casual conversation, General Leslie Groves, the head of the Manhattan Project, said, "You realize, of course, that the real purpose of making the bomb is to subdue our chief enemy, the Russians!". Until then I thought that our work was to prevent a Nazi victory."* ("The Times" July 17 1985.)

Building A-bombs began in 1942 to counter the possibility that Hitler might build them. When Groves spoke the USSR was fighting with the US against Germany.

On hearing Groves' comment Rotblatt resigned from the "Manhattan Project".

Nobel Laureate Physicist Patrick Blackett who was a President of the Royal Society (1965-1970) and member of the British Advisory Committee on Atomic Energy wrote in his 1948 detailed study: *"The dropping of the atomic bomb was not so much the last military act of WW2, as the first act of the cold war with the Russians."* ("Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy." P.M.S. Blackett, Turnstile Press, London 1948, p.127)

US apologists justify the dropping of the A-Bomb of Hiroshima and Nagasaki arguing that this was done to save the lives of American soldiers who would have died in a US invasion of Japan. They estimated US Army casualties would amount to at least 100,000. They fail to answer a simple question: Why was it necessary to invade Japan at all? The Japanese air-force and navy had been destroyed, and Japan lacked natural resources like fuel. A US naval blockade could starve the Japanese within weeks without the loss of a single American soldier. Why didn't the US consider the possibility of blockading Japan? No one asked this question and no one answered it. But the answer is clear: USSR participation in this siege was inevitable, and this would grant USSR rights in Japan after its surrender. This contradicted the US policy towards the USSR. General Leslie Groves said it already in 1944: *"The real purpose of the A-bomb is to deter the USSR after the war"*. In WW2 Japan kept its peace with the USSR to concentrate its efforts on conquering Asia. This saved the USSR in November 1941 by using the troops it prepared against a Japanese invasion to throw back Hitler's army besieging Moscow. In the Yalta Conference (February 1945) Stalin agreed to join the war against the Japan within 90 days of Germany's surrender. Germany surrendered on May 8. 90 day later was August 8. By dropping its A-bomb on Hiroshima on August 6 the USA ensured that Japan will surrender only to the USA, not to the USSR. This also explains why the USA was unwilling to conduct a naval blockade against Japan although this could force Japan to surrender without loss of life of a single US soldier. A blockade would have been a length affair and the USSR would have joined it. All leaders of the USA wanted to avoid this.

The USA realized that the USSR will emerge from WW2 with its army much bigger than the combined UK-USA armies. So it decided to use its Atomic -bombs to deter Stalin from using his army to conquer Europe. Actually, Stalin had no such intentions.

After WW2 the USSR and the USA emerged as superpowers while former powers like Britain and France were much weakened, and Germany - and Japan - defeated. In the Yalta Conference (February 1945) Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin divided between them the post-war world into sphere of influence. Western Europe - half of Germany, Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, France, Spain, Italy, and Greece - were to be in Roosevelt's and Churchill's sphere, whereas Poland, the Baltic States, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, the Balkans except Greece, were to be in Stalin's sphere. Due to this division Britain did not intervene when local Communists took over Czechoslovakia and Poland, and Stalin did not intervene when the British Army defeated the Communist forces in Greece (1946).

This started a tense period known as "The Cold War" (1947-1991) in which the USA tried to avoid the creation of more state-run, planned, economies, and the USSR supported anti-colonial struggles in Asia and Africa. Both sides tried to avoid a hot war. The US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) overthrew three democratically elected governments - of Mossadeq in Iran (1953), of Arbenz in Guatemala (1954), and of Allende in Chile (1973) because they nationalized parts of their economy (see the Internet). In Chile the US helped assassinate the Chief of Staff who refused to overthrow Allende. These governments were replaced by military dictators loyal to the CIA. The CIA organized an invasion to Cuba to overthrow Castro ("Bay of pigs" 1961) that failed abysmally. The US feared that state-run, planned, economies will spread and threaten interests of privately-owned economies. US leaders knew the USSR will not attack the USA but feared it might conquer Europe. Stalin had no such intention. Like all Marxists he believed that privately-owned economies will collapse due to economic crises predicted by Marx. He was sure the US and Britain will continue their efforts to destroy the USSR, as they did since 1917. US ground forces were inadequate for this task so US developed its nuclear bombs - and air force - to threaten the USSR.

After using its only two A-bombs on Japan in 1945 the US began to mass-produce them. They were the main weapon against the USSR. Some 70,000 were built. Many

were a thousand times stronger than the Hiroshima bomb. To deliver these bombs the US set up in 1946 a special air force ("Strategic Air Command" (SAC)) of 2000 long-range "Stratojet" bombers carrying atomic bombs and flying non-stop around the USSR. In an hour they could destroy any - or all - major cities in the USSR. Its commander was Curtis Le-May (nicknamed "*Bombs Away Le-May*"). He proposed repeatedly to "*bomb the USSR back into the stone age*". Stanley Kubrick's film "Dr. Strangelove" parodied SAC and its strategy. SAC was dismantled only in 1992 many years after nuclear submarines carrying long-range nuclear missiles, took over its role.

After WW2 an immense arms industry grew in the USA to build nuclear bombs, airplanes (for SAC), submarines and rockets. It craved ever larger defence budgets and exerted ever growing pressures on US politicians and politics. The US Army, Navy and Air Force had powerful lobbies in Washington - backed by thousands of employees in arms factories. Their influence became so severe that General Dwight Eisenhower, Supreme Commander of Allied forces in Europe in WW2, and President of the USA (1953-1961), warned in his famous farewell speech (17.1.1961):

*"...We face a hostile ideology global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method . . . A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction."*

*"Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no arms industry. American makers of ploughshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defence; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defence establishment. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations. This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence - economic, political, and even spiritual - is felt in every city, every State house, and every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society."*

*In the committees of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defence with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together. "* (see the Internet)

The warning was well meant but how could politicians (whose careers depend on voters) ignore pressures of company directors whose careers depend on profits and who hire/fire the people who vote for the politicians? Directors want to show more profits, employees want more jobs. They pressurize their political representatives

In the USSR a similar gigantic military-industrial complex emerged. It too exerted pressure on politicians - and politics. In 1945 the US estimated it will take the USSR a decade to develop its own nuclear bombs but the USSR had one by 1949. This caused panic in the US which assumed that spies passed atomic science secrets to the USSR. A US witch-hunt started against anyone suspected of pro-communist leanings. It was led by Senator Joe McCarthy and lasted till 1956. A few spies were found but it seems their information was auxiliary rather than crucial.

The USSR and the US were now locked in an arms race to produce ever more powerful weapons. In 1957 the USSR launched the first earth satellite, "Sputnik", into space. This meant it had powerful rockets capable of carrying nuclear bombs to the US, and launch satellites with cameras to spy on the US. The US began to develop its own space rockets. After early failures it managed to do so and in 1969 sent the first men to land on the moon. This "Space Race" produced a "space industry". Like all "Cold War" industries it provided jobs and incomes preventing economic crises or a "Hot War". Whole generations of new bombs, airplanes, warships, submarines, were built, stockpiled - and scrapped - without being put into use. This served the political - and economic - needs of the privately-owned economy.

The US constructed rocket launching bases around the USSR and created anti-USSR military pacts like North-Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), South-East Asia

Treaty organization (SEATO) surrounding the USSR with a cordon of hostile military treaties. The USSR retaliated by setting up a missile base in Cuba. This was also done to protect Cuba from a second US invasion aiming to destroy Cuba's State-run, economy. When the US discovered this it threatened the USSR with war unless it dismantles this base (October 1962). The USSR agreed but only after the US agreed not to invade Cuba and to dismantle some of its rocket bases surrounding the USSR.

During Cuban missile crisis politicians on both sides realized that nuclear war destroying all life on earth could start due to a minor error of a junior army officer rather than by decision of political leaders. Those interested in this issue are advised to read on the Internet the transcript of "The fog of war". This is a TV interview with US Secretary of Defence (1961-68) Robert McNamara made by Errol Morris (2003). The Cuban Missile Crisis motivated US and USSR leaders to start a series of talks leading to agreements to reduce and dismantle nuclear weapons. As a result the first Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT) was signed in 1972. A series of similar treaties followed in a "Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty" (CTBT) banning all nuclear explosions in all environments, for military or civilian purposes. Later a series of "Strategic Arms Reduction Treaties" (START) initiated the dismantling of thousands of nuclear bombs. START 3 will establish by December 31, 2007 a maximum of 2,000-2,500 strategic nuclear weapons for each of the parties, representing a 30-45 percent reduction in the number of strategic warheads permitted under START 2. Most of these weapons are about 1000 times more powerful than the bomb dropped on Hiroshima in 1945 killing some 100,000 people.

The "Cold War" arms race fed both privately-owned and State-run, planned, economies. In privately-owned economies it reduced the effects of repeated economic "recessions" by providing jobs paid for by government "Defence Budgets". In State-run, planned, economies it reduced the funds allocated to State-paid housing, healthcare and educational systems, and reduced production of consumer goods.

Before WW1 Russia was a major grain exporter to Europe but 70 years later, between 1981 and 1985, it imported some 42 million tons annually, twice as much as during the years 1976-81 and three times as much as during 1971-1975. In the one-party state agriculture malfunctioned. The bulk of this grain was bought from privately-owned

economies. In 1985, 94% of the USSR's grain imports came from privately-owned economies, with the US selling 14.1 million tons.

Until 1870 most people in the world worked in agriculture. In 1970 a mere 5% of the workforce in the USA grew enough food to feed the entire world. Industrialization of agricultural, machines and pesticides, made this possible. Within a century food production problems changed from coping with shortages to coping with surpluses.

Privately-owned economies suffer repeated recessions. State-run economies suffered from corruption, inefficiency of party nominated managers and indifference of disaffected workers, lacking basic conditions and independent Unions. This indifference contributed to the collapse of many State-run, economies in 1991.

In 1956, a new leader of the Communist Party of the USSR, Nikita Khrushchev, gave a secret speech to his Party's 20<sup>th</sup> Congress (see the Internet) admitting that Stalin killed millions of innocent people, including many honest revolutionaries, by accusing them of false charges. During the speech someone in the audience shouted: *"And what did you, comrade Khrushchev, do about it?"* Khrushchev replied: *"Who asked this question?"* when no one stood up Khrushchev said: *"That's your answer"*.

His speech shook the entire Communist movement. In Poland and Hungary workers rose up against their Stalinist rulers. Many communists everywhere left their parties; others began to criticize leaders and policies. This started a chain reaction of disintegration of the entire communist movement, ending in 1991 by the demise of the USSR and most one-party states - without civil war. No regime in history disappeared like this. It happened because most citizens of one-party states refused to defend them despite the benefits their state-run, planned, economies conferred on them.

After WW2 struggles for independence started in all British, French, Belgian, Portuguese and Dutch colonies in Asia and Africa. Some freedom fighters were nationalists, some were Marxists. Both wanted independence but the Marxists wanted a state-run, planned, economy. Countries like Korea and Vietnam became divided into two, in the north - a state-run, planned, economy. In the south - a privately-owned economy. Wars between North and South started. The North could have won easily but the US, Britain, and France, rushed to help the South. In the Korean War (1950-

1953) they saved the south. In the Vietnam War (1954-1975) they lost. Today state-run, planned, economies still exist in one-party states like China, Cuba, Vietnam and North Korea. Most people living in such states oppose the one-party system.

In one-party states all opposition was forbidden. The ban on opposition in Lenin's party was duplicated in every department of its state, economy, municipalities, and Army. Lack of opposition increased inefficiency, corruption, dishonesty, conspiracy. Lenin forbade opposition in his party not as an emergency during the civil war (1919-1921) but after winning the civil war when his party began to set up its new state. He believed in 'Objective Truth' in history, society, and economics and saw himself as possessing it. He believed all other views on history, society and economics are false - and harmful - hence those holding them must be excluded from politics. After Lenin prohibited factions in his party - and state - Communists had to keep their real thoughts to themselves and became yes-men parroting their leaders or conspirators plotting secretly to overthrow them - or both. Leaders and policies could not be criticized openly and replaced. Policies that failed persisted due to lack of criticism. Subordinates trying to please superiors fed them false reports. Dishonesty within the party became standard practice. This caused damage, waste and accidents, like the worst nuclear accident in history at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in 1986. The radiation emitted by this explosion exceeded that of the Hiroshima bomb. Management in industry - and workers - became inefficient. Managers - by trying to please superiors, covering up failures, and fearing to criticize a policy or a superior. Workers - by obeying orders blindly. Two kinds of Statistics, one official and one unofficial, were used in the economy. The first confirmed that all targets of the economic plan have been achieved. The second spelt out the real situation. These attitudes and practices originated in the party, not in the economy. They ruined the state-run, planned, economy.

Citizens' resentment and conspiracies by leaders caused the collapse of many one-party states. When the state collapsed no one managed the state-run economy. So it too collapsed. Many think this proves the non-viability of the state-run economy. This reasoning is flawed. State-run economies collapsed due to political causes not due to economic causes. The collapse of the state caused the collapse of the economy, not the other way round. One-party states will collapse whatever their economy. When

all opposition is banned, corruption and inefficiency go unheeded. This ruins the state. Most former citizens of the USSR do not regret the abolition of their one-party state, but they do regret the collapse of their state-run, planned, economy.

Some people argue that even in a multi-party state like Britain, which nationalized the Bank of England, steel, coal, gas, electricity, water, railways, telephones, and created the national health-system in 1945, the nationalized branches of the economy lost money, and had to be sold to private owners to make them profitable. A debate on the profitability of nationalized economy in a multi-party state requires a detailed study rather than a few comments. Two points need to be discussed: 1) Which state-run, planned, branch of the economy should be run for profits and which should be run as a public-service? 2) In a multi-party state like Britain where the Labour Party and the Conservative Party take turns in running the state, what damage did their conflicting policies cause the state-run part of the economy?

Political Parties value their power more than the welfare of their citizens. This ruins a state-run economy in multi-party states just as in one-party states. Only a non-party state can prevent the quest for power and profits from harming the welfare of society. In non-party states political parties exist and propose policies but they do not rule. The citizens themselves rule by voting directly on policies and not on representatives. In a non-party state every citizen has, every minute, the right to propose and vote on every policy (feasible today by SMS). In such a state, no person or party wields power. If the majority in a non-party state votes to run the economy for profits rather than as a public service for all citizens - so be it. If the citizens later regret this decision they can always revoke it. In a non-party state where all citizens decide all policies, a state-run, planned, economy can be free from corruption and inefficiency and easily provide every citizen with secure employment and income, free housing, free healthcare, free education, and decent pensions. In such a state citizens can still run private businesses for profits - if the majority approves it. In a non-party state a state-run, planned, economy can create a new quality of life by putting people before profits, by caring for peoples' basic needs, liberating them from enslavement to these needs. This can create a future free from all economic worries totally different from all human past. After all, permanent preoccupation with power, profits, and economics, is not an ultimate role for humanity.

## 9. **The May 1968 strike in France.**

Most people today are fed up with political parties and politicians but see no other way to run society. The General Strike in France in May 1968 was the first attempt of people in a modern industrial society to try run work and education themselves, without Politicians, Managers, or State and Union officials. It was a unique strike, unlike any other strike in history. It was unique in its demands and in the way it was run. It did not demand higher wages and was not run by Unions. The strikers demanded "Self-management" at work, in education, in neighbourhoods, and ran the strike by "action committees" elected by themselves, not by Unions or Political Parties. The strike was preceded by University students' strikes and demonstrations against authoritarian University regulations and education. Young workers joined the strike in solidarity with the students. The Unions and Political Parties opposed the strike at first. Only after realizing they will lose members if they do not support the strike did the Unions join it trying to control it. The strike erupted like a volcano and all attempts by all political parties and Union to control it - failed.

Like WW1, the outbreak of this strike surprised everyone, including the strikers themselves. It occurred during a period of economic expansion that started after France lost the war against the Algerian people struggling for independence.

Why did people strike? They did not demand higher pay or better working conditions. They demanded the right to decide how their work, their neighbourhoods, their education, and the entire country - should be run. This demand grew from frustration caused not by some policy but by the very structure of political system. People were fed-up with Government officials, Politicians and Political Parties, Unions, and all those who decide for them without even consulting them. They were fed-up with Rule by Representatives (RR). This system is based on electing representatives who elect their representatives to decide what society should do. Citizens can only decide which party will decide who will decide policies for them. Parliament has become a barrier between the citizens and the political decisions that affect their lives. To call this system "Democracy" is dishonest and misleading. Original "Demos-Kratia" in ancient Athens meant that the "Demos" (in antiquity this meant all free men). vote directly on policies, not on politicians. A Parliament where elected representatives make all political decisions is preferable to a Monarchy where one unelected person decides

policy for all but no parliamentary system is a democracy. Democracy is direct rule by all citizens, without a parliament, without representatives. In a democracy every citizen has every moment the right to propose and vote on every political decision. Demos-Kratia means that the demos - not politicians - decides all policies.

The French strike had three stages:

1. The Student's revolt.
2. The General Strike.
3. The decline of the strike.

Since 1960 students everywhere demonstrated against US war in Vietnam. The French Students' struggle peaked in March '68. There were student revolts in Germany, Britain, and USA. A few politically active students started them. Most students were busy with their studies and exams. They wanted to get jobs, and start their careers. A minority of student activists expressed what many citizens felt. The Press and TV publicized it. Students protested against authoritarian University regulations, and policies of the authorities.

In the USA the students demonstrated against discrimination of Blacks in the South. This gave rise to Freedom Marches led by Martin Luther King (see the Internet) and to the Free Speech Movement (FSM) in the University of Berkley, California, led by Mario Savio (see the Internet). German students protested against murder of Iranian Students in Germany by the Iranian Secret Police (SAVAK) and against the attempt to assassinate Rudi Dutschke, (see Internet) leader of Left German students. French students protested against authoritarian University regulations and Police brutality. Some protested against the content of the lectures and how they were taught.

The birth-control pill freed women from fear of pregnancy. Students were the first to enjoy the sexual freedom granted by the pill but University authorities defended traditional morality and attitudes. When students ignored outdated University regulations the authorities called the police. This caused clashes between Police and Students. Students were expelled from University or arrested. Their friends demonstrated demanding their release. The police attacked student demonstrations violently. This was shown on TV and outraged many people. Eventually this drove young workers to join the students' demonstrations against the police. This developed into the largest General Strike in History.

A revolution in popular music added fuel to the flames. Young people were fed up with banal tunes and lyrics like *"I can't live without you"*. They preferred angry hits like *"I can't get no satisfaction"* of the "Rolling Stones" with lyrics saying:

*"When I'm drivin' in my car /And a man comes on the radio /He's telling me more and more /About some useless information /Supposed to fire my imagination/ I can't get no, oh no no no / Hey hey hey, that's what I say/ I can't get no satisfaction/ I can't get no satisfaction/ 'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try/ I can't get no, I can't get no, Satisfaction/*

*When I'm watchin' my TV /And a man comes on to tell me/ How white my shirts can be /But he can't be a man 'cause he doesn't smoke /The same cigarettes as me/ I can't get no, oh no no no / Hey hey hey, that's what I say/ I can't get no satisfaction/ 'Cause I try and I try and I try and I try/ I can't get no, I can't get no/ I can't get no satisfaction/ No satisfaction, no satisfaction, no satisfaction /*

Disgust with boring consumerism and rule by managers - not low wages - motivated most strikers in May '68. The crucial dates in this strike were as follows:

March 22 At Nanterre University in Paris, 150 students occupy the administration offices. The University authorities suspend all courses till April 1.

April 12 German Students leader Rudi Dutschke is shot in Berlin. Students in France and Germany demonstrate in protest against this assassination attempt and against incitement of the yellow press against students.

May 3 Anti-demonstration Police (CRS) clears Students from Sorbonne courtyard. Clashes between CRS and Students in the Latin Quarter. 100 Students injured, 596 arrested.

May 4 Sorbonne authorities suspend all courses. The University Teachers Union declares an unlimited strike.

May 10 *"The Night of the Barricades"*. Massive battles between CRS and Students in Latin Quarter: 251 Police and 116 students hospitalized, 468 arrested, 720 hurt, 60 cars burnt, 188 damaged.

May 11 Workers Unions CGT, CFDT, and the National Union of Students call for general strike to start on May 13.

May 13 800,000 Students and workers demonstrate in Paris. Students' leaders march in the front, Union leaders in the rear. The Sorbonne is re-occupied by Students who start a non-stop free debate. Anyone - including non-students - can address the audience.

May 14 Workers at Sud-Aviation factory in Nantes occupy their factory.

May 15 Workers at Renault factory in Cleon occupy their factory.

May 16 Workers all over France join strike, occupy factories. So do workers in French railways and Paris Transport.

May 20 10 Million French workers are on strike. France is paralyzed.

May 25 French Radio and TV workers join the strike. No Radio/TV News.

May 27 To end the strike the Government signs "Grenelle Accord" with Unions agreeing to raise Basic wage by 15%, and cut working hours, reduce retirement age. CGT (Communist) Union leader Seguy announces this to strikers who reject it shouting: *"We don't want a larger slice of the economic cake. We want to run the bakery"*.

May 29 President De-Gaulle flees secretly to Germany to meet General Massu, Commander of French troops stationed there to plan use of French Troops against strikers in Paris. The Plan fails.

May 30 De-Gaulle dissolves National Assembly. Announces early elections. One million of his supporters demonstrate in Paris.

June 10 French elections. The Right wins an overwhelming majority. Left loses 61 seats, Communists lose 39. Strike begins to decline.

#### 1969

April 4 De-Gaulle announces referendum to see if French want him as President.

April 27 Vote results: " YES" - 10,901,753. "NO" - 12,007,102 .

June 10 De-Gaulle resigns. Georges Pompidou becomes President of France.

To give the reader an idea what this strike was like I shall quote passages from a book by two British Journalists who went to Paris to report for the British magazine "The Observer". Their book - *"French Revolution 1968"* (Penguin books" London, 1968) - is based on their reports. The journalists - Patrick Seale and Maureen McConville - were not members of any British political organization. They came from an Irish Catholic background but were open to learn from new experiences rather than judge them by traditional standards. The following are some of their observations:

*"What the strikers really wanted, although they did not put it in that way, was local autonomy, perhaps an essential precondition for a successful university. They wanted to devise their own methods of work and research, to revamp the curricula in the light of new knowledge, to specialize as they please." (p.31)*

*"The new militants were groping towards a far more ambitious programme inspired by the challenging belief that students have a role to play in the shaping of society as a whole. But this function presupposes a radical transformation of the university itself. . . . a struggle against the authoritarian caste-ridden university, and rejection of the university as a servant of a technocratic society" (p45)*

*"In the week from Monday 6 May, to Monday 13 May, the students' revolt changed fundamentally in character. From pranking and street brawls it became a mass insurrection. In that week the revolutionary leaders first took command - however tenuously - of large-scale forces, and demonstrated their gift for mobile strategy , spreading disorder across the face of Paris and tying down tens of thousands of police. The revolutionaries set the pace. They seized the initiative, forcing a baffled government into error after error. Within 24 hours the movement spread to provincial universities, provoking a rash of demonstrations and strikes at Aix-en-Provence, Bordeaux, Caen, Clermont-Ferrand, Dijon, Grenoble, Montpellier, Nantes, Rouen, and Toulouse. In that first unforgettable week the most striking quality of the student explosion was - Joy. . . .There was a spontaneous surge of the spirit expressed in the marvellous claim scrawled on the faculty wall: "Here Imagination Rules". The most cynical adults were moved. Public sympathy welled up enclosing the rebels in a protective cocoon so they became invulnerable. The authorities only blackened themselves by striking at them" (p 71/2)*

*"The immense demonstration, some 800,000 strong, on Monday, 13 May, was a landmark. By forcing the Unions to strike in their favour, by bringing such hordes into the streets, the student leaders demonstrated once and for all that they are no longer a lunatic fringe groupuscule but a national force. They managed to touch something very profound in the conscience of the country, and here, in the massed ranks of the workers and in the countless fluttering banners, was the proof of it. They were proved right and those who sneered at them were proved wrong" (p. 92)*

*On this demonstration "The young revolutionaries wanted no one to muscle-in on their act, no political Party to take them over. As usual it was Cohn-Bendit who most pungently expressed their contempt for the official Left: "The Communist Party? Nothing gave me greater pleasure than to be at the head of a demonstration with all that Stalinist filth at the rear". To the alarm of their Union leaders many young workers seemed thrilled by the students' slogans. The virus was spreading to the labour force eating away the Union leaders' authority... Cohn-Bendit called for action committees to be set up in every firm and in every area of Paris" (p.93/4)*

*"Pompidou (French Prime Minister. A.O.) kept his promise: the imprisoned students had been released, the police had pulled back from the Latin Quarter, the gates of the Sorbonne stood open. The students surged in and took possession. That was the first night of the Student's Soviet - an extraordinary example of primitive communism in the heart of a Western industrial country - it did not end till their expulsion 34 days later, on June 16. Fired by the students' example the workers too struck and occupied, first at an aircraft plant at Nantes on Tuesday, and then - like wildfire - throughout France. How were these Committees organized? What was the mood of this novel experiment? What has remained? These are some of the questions which the following pages will seek to answer" (p. 93)*

*"To live through a revolution is a delirious experience. It is a little frightening, but also exhilarating, to see authority flouted and then routed. In the two or three weeks after the "Night of the Barricades" France was in a state of revolution. That is to say, the existing power structure - not only political power but every sort of power - was challenged and in some cases overthrown, and an attempt was made, however confused and disorderly, to put another in its stead. Students, workers, active citizens,*

*joined together spontaneously in hundreds of insurrectional committees all over Paris but also in the provinces. This very widespread revolt against the old forms of established authority was accompanied by an acute, and profoundly enjoyable, sense of liberation. All sorts of people felt it in all walks of life. A great gust of fresh air blew through dusty minds and offices and bureaucratic structures. This throwing-off of constraint, this sense of relief was the authentic stamp of the Revolution, the proof that the changes being wrought were really of revolutionary proportions. Quite suddenly, and for a few precious days, the French, whose normal life is bound by many petty regulations, enjoyed the pleasures of a primitive anarchistic society. It was a society without policemen, with everyone his own traffic cop. In spite of the vexations of life, of the strike, and the drying up of petrol pumps, men will look back on that period and remember it with joy. The most striking feature of these days was the sight of people talking to each other - not only casual exchanges but long intense conversations between total strangers, clustered at street corners, in cafés, in the Sorbonne of course. There was an explosion of talk, as if people had been saving up what they had to say for years. And what was impressive was the tolerance with which they listened to each other, as if all those endless dialogues were a form of group-therapy. Many French men and women woke up to the fact that their relations with each other had been far too stiff and suspicious, far too unfraternal. It seemed as if the system were wrong: Children not speaking freely to their parents, employees touching their caps to their bosses, the whole nation standing to attention before the General. ...General De-Gaulle's decade of rule is doubtless among the major causes of the May outburst. His paternalism, the control he has exerted over information, the cant and pomp of his style of government, irritate and do not impress the young ... But De-Gaulle is not alone to blame...Everywhere petty bureaucrats sit, passing up dossiers to hierarchical superiors, jealously exercising their limited authority according to the rule-book". (p.94/5)*

*" The most original and creative phase of the Revolution was the last three weeks of May, from the Night of the Barricades, to De-Gaulle's prodigious recovery on 30 May. It was then that a new political vocabulary emerged, drawing the crowd into action as allies of the young revolutionary leaders. It was then that the insurrectional committees sprang up, embodying the thirst for de-centralization as well as the urge to run one's own affairs, which lay at the root of the revolt.*

*From the start of their protest movement, the revolutionaries preached 'direct action' as opposed to negotiations. Now the slogan was 'direct democracy' as opposed to the classical delegation of powers within a Parliamentary system. Both in 'direct action' and 'direct democracy' was present the notion of 'permanent contestation' - the view that the bourgeois State and all its institutions must be subject to constant harassment and questioning. Nothing was taken for granted. The 'contestation' could equally well take the form of mobbing a Professor, of 'occupying' a faculty, of defying the power of the State by a street demonstration, of locking a factory manager into his office.*

*Everywhere, from one end of France to another, 'action committees' were spontaneously formed at grassroots level, forums of debate as well as of decision. They were the translation into practical (but often impractical) terms of the twin notions of 'direct action' and 'direct democracy'. These action committees were conceived as the agents of revolutionary change. They were to be the forerunners of a totally new type of society, in which everyone had the right had the right to talk and the right to share in decision-making. These committees - of which 450 were set up in those three weeks of May, with widely different functions and memberships - were the most characteristic expression of the Revolution. They justified the claim that new, and original 'power structures' new revolutionary channels of authority. were emerging. " (p. 99)*

*" For just over a month, from 13 May to 16 June, 1968. the Sorbonne was the central fortress of the Students' Soviet. When it fell the heart was knocked out of this utopia. While it held it inspired the whole Latin Quarter to exultant insurrection, to become a free State within the Gaullist empire. The Sorbonne under student management is perhaps the most eloquent symbol of the May Revolution. It was both a Political laboratory in which the students tested out their theories of direct democracy, and an example which fired the workers, if not to do likewise, at least to strike and occupy their factories." (p.101)*

*"Gradually, through trial and error, out of feverish debate, took shape a tentative command structure. Simply to describe it is to ignore the countless changes, accretions, squabbles of that hectic month. At the base, and in the theory the source of all sovereignty, was the General Assembly, a vast shapeless mob which nightly packed the Grand Amphitheatre. This was Direct Democracy in action, a talking shop of infinite permissiveness. One of the first acts of the first General Assembly on 13 May was to declare the Sorbonne an Autonomous Popular University, open day*

*and night to all workers. In principle all decisions taken in the building had to be put to the Assembly for approval. Each night the Assembly elected a 15-man Occupation Committee which was the seat of executive power. Its mandate was limited to a single day and night on the theory that power corrupts and that every elected representative must constantly give an account of himself to his electors. The bureaucracy must not be given time to ossify. The system did not last beyond the first few days." (p. 104)*

There were many different committees running various affairs, from recording every case of police brutality, to allocating rooms for activists visiting Paris: *"For the thousands of young people taking part (in running these committees. A.O.) it was a delirious and unforgettable experience, one of the most formative they might ever live through. If the May Revolution was anything at all, it was this roaring mass of spontaneous student committees and assemblies running its own affairs." (p105)*

*"The legacy of May is likely to be three-fold: A new and healthier student-teacher relationship. A certain measure of local autonomy both at faculty and provincial university level. A far greater share by the students in the planning and running of their studies. In planning these reforms the State must – inevitably - take into account the detailed proposals - some running to hundreds of pages long – which students and teachers drafted during the crisis." (p.106)*

*"The "Comite' d'action" was the vehicle chosen by the revolutionary leadership to mobilize mass-support for its aims.... They sprang up with incredible speed in schools, universities, government offices, professional organizations, and firms but also in residential areas on the basis of a network of streets. These committees were in many cases no more than groups of active citizens, usually between ten and fifty strong, unaffiliated for the most part to any particular political movement. What they had in common in those uncertain, delirious, May days, when the Gaullist State seemed to be melting away, was the idea that revolution is something you do yourself, not something you leave to others. They were the expression of a will for direct, extra-parliamentary, action. They declared themselves ready to pass from spontaneous violence to preparation of organized violence.... The movement reached its peak in the last week of May, when there were at least 450 action committees in Paris alone. They formed a remarkably flexible and effective instrument in the hands of the*

*revolutionary leaders who exerted some control over these far-flung cells through a Coordinating Committee. This met daily for two weeks in the Sorbonne after its occupation, then moved to the Institute of Psychology in the rue Serpente, where at the time of the writing it still was"*(p. 122)

High school (Lyce'e) students were extremely active in the strike. Their action committees were known as CAL ("Comite' d'Action Lyce'en"). At a meeting called as early as February 26 they supported secondary school teachers on strike. *"That same night six hundred school boys and girls gathered to discuss what should be the future role of their embryonic organization. It was an important meeting. For the first time school militancy was linked to left-wing political objectives. The leaders presented a report claiming that education was a slave to the economic system. Words like 'capitalist' and 'socialist' were mentioned. It was suggested that the role of CAL was to denounce the education system as an instrument of social selection. The idea was to challenge society by challenging the school. This was as far as they got by April 1968, still a small movement in a handful of lyce'es, affecting about 500 school children. The street fighting on 3 May, following the police invasion of the Sorbonne, had a shattering effect on adolescents. In many lyce'es there were immediate strikes. Classes were interrupted as young people abandoned their studies to discuss the situation. Many rushed to join the demonstrations, some were wounded. On 10 May CAL called an all-day strike in all Paris lyce'es and a teenage force of some 8000 to 9000 strong marched to join their seniors in the great demonstration which ended at the barricades. What propaganda had failed to do in a year, action did in three hours. A long tradition of schoolboy passivity was broken. The CAL preached that the pressures of home, school, and police, were all faces of the same repression. At the barricades that night the lesson was rammed home: faced with the choice at midnight of going home to mummy or staying out all night to fight, many chose to stay. From then on the lyce'ens were never absent from the front line. Once the Sorbonne was occupied the CAL took over the Grand Amphitheatre for their General Assembly on 19 May. It was then that they decided on the next crucial step - a general strike and the occupation of the schools. The next day the movement was widely followed with teachers in some cases joining in and spending the night on the premises. Committees were formed to discuss school and university problems, but also politics: subjects like students' struggles in Europe, the role of university in society, student-worker links,*

*and so on. Here, as in other sectors of French life, the Revolution brought an extraordinary explosion of talk. Thousands of young people were drawn in who had never had a political idea in their lives. Parents came to watch and wonder. Teachers found themselves arguing with their students with an interest they had never had in class. Workers were invited to see Russian films. The general tone was intensely serious, more so than at university level. There was none of the libertine anarchy of the Sorbonne. Instead earnest committees sat late and drafted reports, largely on school reform. No fewer than three hundred were produced in the last fortnight of May. The CAL emerged from the Revolution as a force in French national education...they are aiming for a share in decision-making inside the schools."* (P.127-129)

*"If proof were needed that the events of May amounted to a revolution the profound upheaval which took place in the liberal professions provides it. There was not a movement of a handful of enrage's (small group of extremists in the 1789 French Revolution. A.O.). No sinister foreign hand could here be suspected. The rebels were doctors, men of Law, churchmen, journalists, film makers, artists, musicians, painters, writers, social scientists and statisticians, archivists, librarians and astronomers, atomic scientists and museum directors. They were the intellectual backbone of the country, and in their thousands they rose to challenge the 'structures' which governed their work. They rebelled, that is, against excessive centralization, poor delegation of power, against the 'mandarins' 'satraps' and 'grand patrons' who until May ruled over French professional life. Inevitably the professions most immediately affected were those with close links with the university, but the virus soon spread very much further afield." (p. 130).*

*"The May Revolution set off an angry ferment in the arts which would need a book to do it justice. We have space for only one or two points: this was not a limited phenomenon but one affecting musicians, painters, film-makers, actors, writers, and countless others, and it was not a revolt of the 'lunatic fringe' but of the best young men at work in France today. Thirty Directors of provincial theatres and Maisons de la Culture - Culture Minister Andre' Malraux's multi-purpose art centres - met for a whole week at the height of the crisis in May pondering what should be France's cultural policy of the future. It is to Malraux's credit that these men are on the whole leftist non-Gaullist, but the joint statement they issued was a sharp indictment of the*

*Minister's pet scheme of bringing the arts to the provinces. To a man they wanted a far more radical programme than the governments' highbrow cultural colonies provide. "We must get at the 'non-public', they declared, 'and draw it out of its ghetto'. They made a bid for socially committed art - cultural action should give people a chance to discover their humanity repressed by the absurdity of the social system. Painters, critics, and gallery directors formed an 'action committee for the plastic arts'. One day in May some of them decided to march to the National Museum of Modern Art and close it down in protest against its role of 'conservation rather than lively encounter'. They got there to find the doors locked so they pasted up a poster saying: "Closed because useless". Artists met trade-Unionists to discuss exhibiting their work in factories." (p. 134)*

*"..About 1,300 people in the cinema industry met regularly in Paris for nearly a month from 17 May onwards in the so-called 'Parliament of the French Cinema'. They split into working parties, drafted reports, prepared 'a Charter' for the renovation of the whole industry. At the root of these ambitious plans was the feeling that the French cinema was cut off from the social and political realities of the country. . . . The Parliament approved a programme of proposed reforms, of which perhaps the most important were the creation of a single national film distribution organization; the setting-up of autonomous production groups freed from the pressures of the profit motive, the doing away with censorship, and the merger of television and film production". (p.136)*

*"Two hundred museum curators from all over France met to ponder the role of museums in society while their staffs 'at one with the great movement of renovation now sweeping the country', called for an overhaul of old-fashioned, sterile, over centralized, museum administration". (p.138)*

*"Even footballers could not fail to be moved by the spirit of the time. About a hundred of them occupied the offices of the French Football Federation, on the Avenue D'Iena on 22 May, hoisted the red flag from the balcony, locked up the Secretary General, and the national instructor, and flung a banner over the façade saying: "Le football aux footballeours". "(p. 139)*

*"No strike last spring caused the regime more fury, and in no sector was it more eager to reassert its authority than in the ORTF - Office de la Radio et Television Francaise. As in so many other sectors of intellectual life, this was not a strike about wages, working conditions, or trade union rights. It was a strike for a complete overhaul of the ORTF 1964 statute and its replacement by a new charter guaranteeing internal autonomy, freedom from ministerial pressures, and an impartial news service to include freer access to radio and TV for opposition politicians. What united all but 2000 of the 14000 employees was, in the words of one of them: "Shame. Shame that when the fighting broke out in the Latin Quarter, the State TV service, under government pressure, ignored it." (p. 140)*

What role was played by 'blue collar' industrial workers and 'white collar' office employees in this strike? Everyone in France knew that only when this sector of society joins the strike will it turn into a force capable of changing society.

*"From mid-May to mid-June 1968 France lay inert in the chains of a great strike. It was the biggest Labour revolt in French history (actually - in all history. A.O.) and it ended in a political fiasco. Why? Historians will long debate the paradox of how a movement involving nearly 10 million workers - politically roused and determined as never before - ended with an overwhelming Gaullist victory at the polls. Was the Revolution bungled or betrayed? Was it an illusion or did the advanced Western world miss by a hair's breadth its first successful proletarian uprising? ... Had the workers not joined the nation-wide protest movement, the events of May would have had no more - and no less - significance than the student explosions of Berlin, Rome, or Buenos-Aires. What distinguished the French situation from that of other movements is that here the students' example was immediately and massively copied by the workers carrying the crisis to a new level of gravity. From one end of France to another men and women in key industries seized their places of work and closed the gates. For the first time in recent history intellectuals and manual workers seemed to be marching side by side to revolution. And yet President De-Gaulle's regime survived. . . . We shall try in this chapter to reconstruct the way the French crisis, after the sombre Night Of the Barricades 10-11 May, entered a new phase, leaping like a spark from students to workers - and back again - setting off a chain-reaction of explosions, each nourished by the other. No one is absolutely certain how the great strike started. There is no easy explanation why men, driven to the limits of*

*exasperation, suddenly lay down their tools, like an act of war."*(p.146)

On May 13 "some 800,000 students and workers had paraded through Paris in the biggest demonstration the capital had witnessed for years. To a generation which had not seen the Liberation (from Nazi occupation of France in WW2. A.O.) let alone the upheavals of 1936, Monday 13 May was a stupendous landmark, the sealing of a revolutionary alliance against the Gaullist State. That night the Sorbonne was occupied and the "Students Soviet" launched on its delirious course under the gaze of workers as well as students everywhere. The watertight compartments (between workers and students. .A.O.) had been breached. Within hours...workers in a small aircraft plant on the outskirts of Nantes struck and occupied their factory and locked up the manager in his office.

Quite independently that Tuesday some workshops at the Renault plant manufacturing gear-boxes at Cleon, near Rouen, downed tools. On Wednesday some 200 young strikers tried to get the night shift to join them but failed, so they barricaded themselves inside the works. When the morning shift arrived at 5 am on Tuesday 16 May they found the doors barred, the factory occupied, and the manager locked up. Two coach-loads of strikers set off immediately for the Renault plant at Flins in the Seine valley to bring them out as well - the red flag was hoisted at 2p.m.- and then on to the great Renault bastion in the Paris suburb of Boulogne-Billancourt, the parent and pace-setter of the whole state-owned car industry. In the meantime, ever since the first spontaneous and disquieting outbreak at Nantes, the phone had been ringing in the Paris headquarters of France's two Trade-Union federations, the communist-led CGT and its social-democratic rival, the CFDT. The Union bosses were caught off-guard by this extraordinary militant phenomenon. What was 'the base' up to? To forestall any further surprises CGT headquarters acted swiftly. On Wednesday night it sent a hard-core commando to close down the Billancourt works and occupy the factory, where 60% of the 25,000 workers are CGT loyalists. 4000 men spent that night in the factory sleeping on stretchers filched from the first-aid posts, or on bundles of rags, or on inflatable rubber mattresses, relics of last summer's holiday which their wives had brought to the works with packets of sandwiches and bottles of wine. Within 48 hours, spreading with extraordinary speed, the strike-and-occupy movement paralyzed French industry across the country. Was this the concerted action of fully mobilized Unions? Or was it a semi-spontaneous process, springing

*from a decade of unsatisfied grievances and triggered off in some mysterious way by the Students' example and the police repression? " (p. 148)*

*"In those first few days of the strike no one in France was quite certain what was happening. Attention was, if anything, focused on the more spectacular developments on the Students' front - on the Libertarian experiment played out at the Sorbonne, and, it soon appeared, in every university faculty in France. The Union high-command themselves did not know what to make of it, and met that week in anxious sessions to try and see what the future might hold. Neither the CGT nor the CFDT could fail to be struck by the governments' climb down in the face of the students' violence, and particularly by the way the Students' leaders forced the government to release their imprisoned comrades. The government had also bowed to the 24-hour General Strike of 13 May even though it had been called without the statutory 5-day warning. These were signs of weakness which could surely be exploited. It was here that the two most powerful Union federations parted company. The Communist bosses of the CGT were obsessed by the threat on their flank represented by activist groupuscules such as the Trotskyite JCR and the pro-Chinese UJC(M-L). These were ideological enemies who could be given no quarter. They threatened to outflank the Party on its left and weaken its control over the working class. These considerations lie at the root of the CGT's attitude in the first week of the strike. It spared no effort to separate the workers from the students, issuing order to its branch-officials that no students were to be allowed inside factories under their control. It sought to limit the strike because it did not like its nature or its spontaneous genesis and yet it was driven to take the leadership of it to deny it to the uncontrolled 'Leftists'. CGT tactics therefore were to cold-shoulder the student revolutionaries and to advance on behalf of the working class purely economic claims. It wanted for its members a bigger share of the capitalist cake, not, it would appear, the change or overthrow of the capitalist system. The CFDT in contrast hastened to declare their sympathy for the student movement. Several CFDT leaders went to the Sorbonne shortly after its 'occupation' to listen to the furious debates and ponder their meanings. 'The students are not only concerned with material considerations' the CFDT declared 'but seek to pose a fundamental challenge to the rigid and stifling class-structure of a society in which they can assume no responsibility. The students; struggle to democratize the universities is of the same nature as the workers' struggle to democratize the factories'. The essential difference*

*between the two Unions was this: the CGT saw the crisis as nothing but the work of 'Leftist adventurists' . The CFDT, free from the bonds of Communist dogma, was more penetrating. It sensed that more and more young people found French society, as at present organized, intolerable. One of the CFDT's ablest leaders, Albert D'etraz, put it in this way: "It is not an accident that black flags now challenge the monopoly of red flags in street demonstrations. There is here a rebirth of an ideal of Liberty. It is a timely reminder to some political and union leaders, that a society without real democracy is a barracks". (p. 149-150).*

*On Thursday, 16 May, a group of some 1000 students "... marched from the Sorbonne to the great Renault works on the Seine at Boulogne-Billancourt which had struck that afternoon. They carried a banner saying: 'This flag of struggle will pass to the worker from our fragile hands'. The workers thanked them courteously but would not let them into the factory so the students marched around the works singing the INTERNATIONALE. Small groups of students and workers formed here and there in the street and talk continued late into the night. 'To begin with' one student said later 'we chose rather simple words and spoke slowly as if to foreigners. But we found they spoke the same language as we did'. The Communist Union bosses would have none of such fraternization ... On 14 May 200 men were on strike. On 19 May - 2,000,000. On 22 May – over 9,000,000." (p.152)*

*"The paralysis spread with incredible speed and spontaneity. At no time did a General Strike order go out from the Paris headquarters of the Union federations, and yet all over the country, a calm irresistible wave of working-class power engulfed the commanding heights of the French economy. In thousands of plants the workers not only struck, but locked themselves in with their silent machines, turning the factories into fortified camps. The revolutionary students cannot claim the credit for this vast resolute stoppage but they undoubtedly had something to do with it. The analogy with the student 'Occupations' was too blatant. The student protest was steeped in the vocabulary of the workers' struggle and in the ideal of workers' brotherhood. From May 3 onwards the student leaders called persistently for a workers' revolt. It was as if they were trying to revive in the proletariat forgotten traditions of militancy. Who can tell what emotions they awakened? Old workers with memories of past struggles may have been stirred by the combativity of these young intellectuals. Young workers, not yet reconciled to the view that life is just the pay-*

*packet may have thrilled in turn to the cry from the Sorbonne. In every University town across France workers and students met and fraternized in the streets. Though it cannot be proved it is hard to believe that the solidarity young people feel for each other did not play a role, or that workers were not impressed by the effectiveness of 'direct action' in the students hands. Would it have happened had the workers not seen the government reel back from the clash at the barricades? Would it have happened if the great demonstration of 13 May had not reminded the strikers of their numbers and their power? One thing is certain: the great well-oiled Union apparatus of the CGT, as well as its less-powerful sisters, the CFDT and Force Ouvrier, did their best to channel and control the movement but did not provide its fuel. The question is - What did? The fighting contribution of the students would have raised no echo in the working class had it not found there a mass of frustrations. (p.153)*

*"The CGT focused its attention on wage levels, a guaranteed working week, a minimum monthly wage, disdaining involvement in corporate affairs let alone the formation of works-council. To show an interest in them would be to show an acknowledgement that private capitalism was here to stay. This CGT attitude suited a large number of older workers. They wished to have nothing to do with French industrial capitalism except to draw money from it. But a new generation is growing up which finds inadequate this view of a Union's role. It believes workers representatives should be involved in decision-making at plant level. It is deeply concerned with the recognition of Union rights and the spread of information from the manager's office downward." (p. 156) "...The CGT is wage orientated while the CFDT seeks profound reforms at the factory level to give the workers a direct share in management. What was striking about the May crisis is that it saw the emergence of yet a third trend on the French labour scene, as hostile to the CFDT as to the CGT. This trend was frankly revolutionary: its ambition to overthrow capitalism led it first to attempt to undermine the Communist-led CGT monolith, which it saw as an unwitting pillar of the bourgeois State." (p. 157)*

Commenting on the general atmosphere of the strike the authors write: *"Industrial noise died in France as everything seemed to head for a state of nature ... It could have been a bonus vacation, a deliciously prolonged day-off, untroubled by pangs of conscience or a nagging wife. Indeed, wives and children joined the strikers on Sundays, turning the factory yards into fairgrounds. It was as if the working class has*

*opted out of the political struggle. And yet, on another view, this casual idleness, this proprietary lolling about the works, was the essence of revolution. Never had workers talked so much, thrashed out so many issues, got to know each other so well, or so meticulously explored those clean carpeted rooms where managers used to rule. The strike reached its peak on 22 May, leaving untouched no corner of the country. At 'Berliet', the great commercial vehicle manufacturer at Lyons, the workers rearranged the letters on the front of the factory to spell out 'Liberte'. The Paris headquarters of the French employers federation - a club for top bosses if ever there was one - was 'occupied' for two hours by 'commandos' of insurgent engineers. The Merchant Navy was on strike, and the undertakers, and some big Paris hotels. Department stores put up their shutters on all their gay windows, and hundreds of town-halls were closed. Even the Bank of France, the Finance Ministry, and the nuclear plant at Marcoule were not spared. Even the Weather-forecasters struck. It was extraordinarily and delightfully quiet. Petrol was running short but there was no real panic. ...The predominant mood was not alarm but joy and liberation. With the collapse of public transport people rediscovered their legs. Friendships sprang up in the great march along the pavements. Shyness and modesty and snobbery were swept away as everyone<sup>4</sup> turned hitch-hiker. The atmosphere was as gaily libertine as on a wartime holiday and the spring air was intoxicating. Salut camarade. (p. 161-162)*

To give the reader an idea what went on inside many firms I quote from a document by a French group of activists called 'Informations et Correspondence Ouvrière' [ICO] describing events at the Insurance company 'Assurances Générales de France':

*"The Assurances Générales de France, second largest insurance company in France, is a nationalized enterprise which in four years has experienced a double concentration: first, a merger of seven companies into one group and then of this new group with three others. Added to this was automation and centralization. Neither the Trade Unions nor the employees ever talked about workers' control but confined themselves to denouncing the arbitrary character of the management, which left the employees out of every decision (and which, in addition, had been taken over by a Gaullist clique). A tiny minority of employees decided on Friday, May 17 (before the strike which was to go into effect May 20) to raise the question of control in clear terms in a leaflet distributed by students of the March 22 Movement in all the companies of the group, and of which the following is the essential part:*

\* \* \*

*Call a general meeting of all employees of the "Groupe des Assurances Générales de France" to discuss - and vote on - the following proposals:*

1. *The Assurances Générales de France continues to function normally, managed by autonomous control of all those working there now.*
2. *All directors and Union Officials are relieved of their former duties. Each department will elect one or several representatives chosen solely for their human qualities and their competence.*
3. *Elected Department representative will have a double role: to coordinate the operations of the department under control of all employees; and to organize with other departments a 'Representatives Management Council' which, under control of all employees, will assure the functioning of the enterprise.*
4. *Department representatives will explain their conduct to all employees whenever asked to do so and will be revocable at any time by those who elected them.*
5. *The hierarchy of wages is abolished. Every employee, official, or director, will receive provisionally standard salary equal to the average May wage (total wages divided by the number of employees present).*
6. *Personal files on employees kept by the management will be returned to the employees. They will be able to remove any information that is not purely administrative.*
7. *All property and materials of the Assurances Générales de France become the property of all, administered by all. Every employee is responsible for its protection under all circumstances.*
8. *To meet any threat, a volunteer squad under control of the elected Council managing the firm, will guard the enterprise day and night.*

*(see [http://www.geocities.com/cordobacaf/ico\\_may.html?200613](http://www.geocities.com/cordobacaf/ico_may.html?200613) }*

*One city in France - Nantes - crossed the line separating a strike from an insurrection. Its population tried to run the entire city by "Self-management".*

*"For six remarkable days, from 26 May to 31 May, the city of Nantes, at the head of the Loire estuary in Southern Brittany was the seat of what amounted to an autonomous Soviet. A 'Central Strike Committee' - representing workers' peasants' and students' unions - set itself up in the Town Hall becoming in effect the real local authority. The Mayor representing the central government in Paris was left with no*

*staff except a doorman and a small force of police which he dared not use. Short-lived and chaotic though it was this experiment in 'Workers Power' was nevertheless of considerable historical importance. In Nantes the strikers crossed the frontier from protest to revolution. There emerged embryonic institutions replacing those of the Bourgeois State which were paralyzed by the strike. Here was an example of that 'double pouvoir' ('Dual Power' as in Russia in 1917. A.O.) for which the revolutionists longed. But the example was not followed and in Nantes itself did not survive by more than a few hours General De-Gaulle's tough 30 May speech. As we saw in the last chapter the CGT was ferociously opposed to any such insurrection." (p. 163)*

*"The peasant Unions had in the meantime called on their members to cooperate in feeding the strikers. Teams of workers and students went out to help the farmers pick the new potatoes. By cutting out middlemen the new revolutionary authorities slashed retail prices: a litre of milk fell from 80 to 50 centimes, a kilo of potatoes from 70 to 12 centimes and of carrots from 80 to 50 centimes. The big grocery stores were forced to close. ... Workers and peasants, so often at loggerheads started working together. Power workers made sure there was no break in electricity current for the milking machines. Normal deliveries to farms of animal feed and petrol were maintained. Peasant came to march the streets of Nantes side by side with workers and students."(p.168)*

*"There were spectacular moments during the May crisis when the junction of students and workers appeared to take place, such as at the great demonstration on 13 May and at the mass-meeting in the Charlety Stadium on 27 May. The brotherhood of youth was in the air breaking down barriers of class and nationality. Groups of students marched to the factories in support of the strikers. In the Sorbonne (and later at the Institute of Psychology in the rue Serpente) a Student-Worker liaison committee tried to keep track of the many spontaneous contacts which sprang up. Workers in plants in the Paris area would themselves come to the Committee to seek student help - particularly in June when the strike movement was under strain and cracking up."(p. 164)*

*"What the student revolutionaries hoped for was that the workers would move beyond the 'strike and occupy' phase and actually encroach on the powers of the managers. They wanted to see workers' institutions set up at factory level which would be the*

*precursors of a 'Workers' State'. These ambitions were not satisfied in May. Many other developments took place at factory level but not quite that"(p.165)*

*However, this did not mean the workers were concerned only about wages and working conditions. Their response to the Unions achievements in the "Grenelle accord" was quite unexpected. "Mr. Pompidou round table talks with the Unions and employers were held over the weekend of 25-27 May at the Hotel du Chatelet, seat of the Ministry of Social Affairs, in the rue de Grenelle. The negotiations lasted a gruelling 25 hours, ending at 7.30 on Monday morning, when M. Pompidou gave the results to the nation in a radio talk at breakfast time. For two days, millions of workers, idle in factories, followed the bargaining over their transistor radios. Scores of journalists camped, seizing on a phrase here, or a smile there, to plot the course of the debates going on in the conference hall." (p. 175)*

*"All the men involved in the vast negotiations were deeply conscious of the need to reach an agreement – even if their motives differed. For M. Pompidou, his career seemed to stand or fall on a successful outcome ... for the Union leaders, substantial concessions secured at the conference table would, they hoped, allow them to cut the ground from under the feet of the troublesome leftists. Both sides were aware that failure, in the current climate of violence, could tip France from a national crisis into a state of revolution with results unpredictable for everyone. But finally a draft agreement was hammered out conferring what seemed unprecedented advantages relating to wages, the working week, the age of retirement, family allowance, old people's allowances, union rights, and so on - the biggest benefits secured for the French working class since the Liberation. (from Nazi occupation in 1944 A.O.) (p. 176)*

*"At dawn on the 27 May Pompidou emerged from the conference room, exhausted by triumphant, and himself read the terms of the agreements to the nation. The Union bosses, George Seguy of the CGT, Eugene Descamps of the CFDT, and Andre Bergeron of the Force Ouvriere – smiled and gave the 'thumbs up' sign as they left to carry the news to their members. By mid-morning their smiles had withered. Angry shop stewards bawled their protests down the telephone from every corner of the country. The unthinkable had happened. The rank and file turned down the agreements and disavowed their leaders, leaving them far out on a limb in an*

*uncomfortable posture of seeming collusion with the employers and the government. Still more alarming, the embattled strikers, looking beyond mere economic benefits, raised the cry for 'Government of the people'. It seemed horribly clear that the spark of revolution, struck by the student extremists, had found tinder on the shop floor. Suddenly revolution seemed everywhere in the air, feared or hoped for. For the first time, solid citizens, canny politicians, and the students themselves, grasped that the movement, begun as a utopian dream, had made a real dent in the political spectrum." (p.192)*

*"...the Grenelle Agreement as negotiated that weekend was a landmark in French social history, in the same league as the Matignon Agreements of 1936 and the social legislation which followed the Liberation (of France from the Nazis in 1944. A.O.) Seguy and Frachon must have felt that they had led their Union safely through the breach blown open by the students and had secured enormous benefits for the working class. ... But that Monday at Renault Seguy's speech was met with boos and whistles. From the first catcall he was in full retreat. In spite of all the information which had flowed to him in the conference room, he underestimated the success of an active minority in giving a political content to the strike. He was faced with a situation, comparable to - but far more dangerous than - the one he had confronted on 14-15 May, when the unofficial 'strike and occupy' movement first got under way. Then he was driven to seize the leadership of the movement in order to control it. Now he too had to underwrite the strikers' call for a popular government. But it must be said and repeated, that the CGT and its controlling body - the French Communist Party never seriously considered insurrection". (p. 194)*

This is inaccurate for two reasons.

First, the strikers' did not call for a '*popular government*' but for "*Self-management*'. They shouted to Seguy: "*We do not want a larger slice of the economic cake. We want to run the bakery*". '*Running the bakery*' means employees' management - not 'control' - of their place of employment, and government by deputies of employees committees, not by political Parties.

Second, for Communist Parties everywhere - whose leaders were approved by Stalin, or later by his successors, this smacked of Trotsky's "*Permanent Revolution*". Stalinists everywhere were horrified by this idea. They were committed to "*Defending the USSR*" and "*Socialism in one country*". For them any call for a State run by employees' committees was "*irresponsible adventurism*". Moreover, had the French

succeeded in setting up a State run by employees' committees it would have been a direct threat to the One-Party State in the USSR itself. Workers in the USSR might then realize that Socialism did not mean a State run by a Party but a State run by employees' committees. The USSR rulers feared that even news reports about the events in France might inspire people in the USSR to revive demands for rule by employees' committees rather than by Party officials, therefore the TV, Press, and Radio in the USSR consistently referred to the French General Strike as "*Student Hooliganism*". This terminology was used in all other One-Party States - in Poland, East-Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Albania, China, North-Korea. This was a side-effect of May '68 that the French strikers were unaware of. It reveals the far-reaching repercussions of the French upheaval around the world. It also explains the profound hatred - and fear - of the French Communist Party, and its Union - the CGT - to anyone demanding "Self-Management". Had the strikers succeeded in setting up a State run by employees' committees based on a system of employees' management of their place of employment, they would have rendered obsolete not only private owners and Unions, but also political Parties, and 'Leaders', purporting to 'represent the interests of the workers'. When all employees decide how to run their place of employment, and all citizens decide how to run society, all representatives become obsolete. The whole system of Rule by Representatives becomes obsolete. The sheer fact that this possibility was expressed - and demanded in public - horrified Union officials, Parties, and Politicians everywhere.

During May many walls in France were covered by political graffiti. Insistence on self-management was expressed by a graffiti saying "*Don't liberate me - I shall take care of this*", which can be paraphrased "*Don't represent me - I'll do it myself*". Many of the May 68 graffiti are listed on the Internet. Here I quote but a few:

*Workers of all countries, enjoy!*

*Since 1936 I have fought for wage increases.  
My father before me fought for wage increases.  
Now I have a TV, a fridge, a Volkswagen.  
Yet my whole life has been a drag.  
Don't negotiate with bosses. Abolish them.*

*A boss needs you, you don't need a boss.*

*By stopping our machines together we will demonstrate their weakness.*

*Don't stay at home, occupy the factories.*

*Power to the employees committees.  
(an enragé)*

*Power to the enragés committees.  
(an employee)*

*Worker: You may be only 25 years old,  
but your union dates from the last century.*

*Labour unions are Mafias.*

*Stalinists, your children are with us!*

*Man is neither Rousseau's noble savage nor  
the Church's or La Rochefoucauld's depraved sinner.  
He is violent when oppressed, but gentle when free.*

*Conflict is the origin of everything.  
(Heraclites)*

*We refuse to be high-rised, diplomaed, licensed,  
inventoried, registered, indoctrinated, dominated, suburbanized,  
sermonized, tele-manipulated, gassed, booked.*

*We are all "undesirables" (After Cohn-Bendit was declared "undesirable" and  
deported to Germany)*

*We must remain "inadaptable"*

*"My aim is to agitate and disturb people.  
I'm not selling bread, I'm selling yeast."  
(Unamuno)*

*Conservatism is a synonym for boredom, rottenness, and ugliness.*

*You will end up dying of comfort - and boredom*

*Meanwhile everyone wants to breathe and nobody can and many say "We will breathe  
later" and most of them don't die because they are already dead.*

*The prospect of finding pleasure tomorrow will  
never compensate for today's boredom.*

*The bosses buy your happiness, steal it.*

*Fight for your right to Happiness*

*Be realistic, demand the impossible.*

*Workers of the world - have fun.*

*Power to the Imagination.*

From this small selection one can see that the French May '68 strike was something new, qualitatively different from all previous social upheavals and General Strikes. The strikers' motives, demands, and aims, were new. This strike opened a new era of political struggles aiming not only to improve peoples' material conditions within the existing political system, but to set up a new system of authority relations.

One point many commentators miss is the age of the activists. Most students and worker activists in 1968 were born after WW2. Their attitudes and expectations were very different from those of people born before WW2. Before WW2 most people saw life as determined by "objective conditions" within which their struggles can only improve their place. Working people accepted material hardships (poverty and unemployment) as part of an employee's life and all they hoped for was to minimize such hardships. After WW2 many began to see the "external conditions: as something they can change. They started to see their life as depending not on "objective conditions" but on what they do. They were convinced that unemployment and poverty can be eliminated by government policies. They considered full employment and decent wages as their inalienable right. British workers demanded - and got - State funded Health and Education systems providing these services free to all citizens. These new attitudes (expressed by the "Existentialist" philosophy) created new expectations and aims. Young people wanted more than secure employment and good wages. They wanted a share in deciding their life. However, in 1968 those in France born after WW2 were still less than a third of the population. At least half of them were below voting age. This minority could not - and did not want to - impose its will on the majority. It challenged the view of the majority but had no intention to coerce the majority. Therefore, when De-Gaulle declared on May 30 that the Constituent Assembly is dissolved and new elections will take place in June they did not object. They awaited the results of the elections. This transferred the initiative from the strikers to de-Gaulle's supporters, who immediately rallied on May 30 in an impressive - one million strong - demonstration in Paris.

In the June '68 elections the entire Left (both "Old" and "New") suffered the worst defeat in its history when Socialists and Communists together lost 100 seats in the Constituent Assembly. Only 42.5% of the electorate voted for them.

This convinced most strikers that their efforts to create a new political system based on "Self-management" were premature. One cannot impose "self-management" on people who do not want to manage their own life. Seale and McConville comment: *"...Most of the factories in France stayed closed and occupied well into June, and Renault, the bastion of the strike, did not yield until 18 of June, nearly five weeks after the first wild-cat rebellion at Nantes on May 14. Right across French industry the Grenelle Agreements were now used as a 'platform' from which to negotiate still greater wage benefits - increases of between 10% and 14% at Renault, already the highest paid industrial workers in the country; but the CFDT's tentative claim for 'workers power' was nowhere conceded. The great strike of May 1968 gave everyone a fatter wage packet and in many cases a shorter working week but it resulted in no profound changes in management-worker authority relations".* (p. 219)

This gives a partial answer to the frequently asked question *"Why didn't the strike succeed?"* - It succeeded to increase wages and improve working conditions, but it failed to change authority relations at work and in the State because the election results showed clearly that the majority does not want such a change.

Behind this explicit reason lies another, implicit, reason. Suppose 60% of the electorate had voted for the Left indicating they want a change of authority relations at work and in politics. How could the new authority relations be implemented? Student and Staff committees in universities and schools can manage the universities and schools much better than their appointed directors, but how could millions of citizens decide educational policy of the entire country and manage the educational system as a whole? To decide educational policy there must be debates in which all citizens can participate and at least two rounds of voting. This requires means of communication capable of providing millions of inputs and immediate counting. No such means existed in 1968.

Employees' committees in every factory and office can easily manage their factories and offices better - and cheaper - than their hierarchical management, eliminating the

costs of managers, supervisors, clerks, and Unions, but how could millions of citizens decide the economic policy of the entire country? How could millions of citizens participate in the debate on the country's budget? And then vote on it? If millions of citizens are to have the right to participate in policy debates and to vote on every policy there must be means enabling them to do so. In 1968 no such means existed. Magnetic cards, computerized Banking and shopping, PCs, the Internet, and mobile phones appeared only decades later. Lack of a technology enabling every citizen to participate in every debate and vote on every policy rendered such participation utopian. The aim was laudable - but unattainable. No one said it but all knew it. The strike in 1968 ended because its loftier aims could not be implemented.

Although in some places - as in the LIP watch factory - workers continued to occupy their factory for months after the elections the strike began to subside and fizzled out soon after the elections. A year later the same electorate voted to dismiss De-Gaulle. Most French voters rejected his authoritarian style in politics. The rigid authoritarian relations in French Universities and factories became more relaxed and less authoritarian. Hierarchy at work, education, and politics, remained but became more tolerant and open to criticism. The French upheaval had effects outside France. In Czechoslovakia (and Poland) it encouraged the communist liberalization known as "The Prague Spring" (June 1968) which lasted till soviet tanks rolled in on August 21 to put it down. In Chile it helped elect the Marxist Salvador Allende to president in 1970 till a CIA instigated Coup led by General Pinochet, in 1973, killed him. So far, - thanks to the media - the May '68 Strike slipped from memory and slid into oblivion. Even its activists started to remember it as an exceptional event.

Was this extraordinary strike a first political earthquake caused by a new - universal - process accumulating frustration or was it something specific to France? If we assume it was caused by rejection of authority relations at work and in politics then the answer lies in peoples' attitudes to these relations today. Are most people *outside* France today satisfied with authority relations at work and in politics? If the answer is "Yes" then the May '68 upheaval was indeed unique to France. But if the answer is "No" then outbreaks of similar strikes in other countries is merely a matter of time. What delays them is the fact that so far most people do not see an alternative to the multi-party system. They have not yet grasped that electronic communications -

mobile phones, computers and the Internet - make a non-party state where all citizens vote directly on policies rather than on politicians, a feasible option. When people realize this then May '68 will become for them what the 1905 revolution in Russia was for the 1917 revolutions - an early indicator of the possibilities. If the process that caused the May 1968 upheaval is universal then so are the events it produced.

After abolition of the one-party state in the USSR a respectable political thinker wrote: *"Some form of managed Capitalism and a rather diluted, not very participatory liberal democracy, is what history has in store for mankind, and that is that...dreams of a leap into some radically new world have to be abandoned."* {Alan Ryan, Warden of New College, Oxford, "Whatever happened to the Left" The New York Review of Books, Oct. 17, 1996. p. 42)

Paraphrasing Heraclites we reply: *"Darkness falls only on those who allow themselves to fall into darkness, but for those who don't - the sun is new every day"*. Today Electronic communications make the most participatory democracy feasible. When enough people decide to set up a non-party state the 21st Century will be very different from a *"rather diluted, not very participatory liberal democracy"* Today - unlike in 1968 - the leap into a radically new political system is technically feasible.

## 10. **Women's Liberation**

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the struggles for women's liberation achieved more than they did in all previous human history. Professor Yeshayau Leibovitz (1903-1994), the Israeli scholar with 7 Ph.D.s and a world authority on Maimonides and Spinoza said in 1992: *"Until the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century no woman had a foothold in a university, and this was the norm. A little over a century ago there was no woman lawyer, doctor, or professor, anywhere. In all great political revolutions, starting with the two English revolutions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the American Revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the French revolution at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, it never occurred to revolutionaries to give women political rights. In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, something happened that I consider as the greatest revolution in human history from the Palaeolithic age to our times - namely, that the domains of intellectual, spiritual and political life, ceased to be male affairs and became human affairs."* (see [www.leibowitz.co.il](http://www.leibowitz.co.il))

This change was due to the successes of the women's struggles for equal rights. These struggles - and their achievements - were not spectacular like wars or revolutions therefore most History books ignore them. Any description of history that ignores struggles concerning half of humanity is profoundly flawed.

Successful liberation struggles liberate not only the oppressed but also the oppressors. Liberation of women from domination by men liberates men from their obsessive craving for domination. Liberation of women redefines the roles of men and women in society superseding their biological functions. Each society defines these roles in its own way. Gender roles are not imposed on humanity - or on animals - by nature. Biology does not define social roles. Sex differences exist in baboons and in elephants but gender roles amongst baboons are totally different from gender roles amongst elephants. If biological differences determine gender roles in society why are these roles in Islamic society different from those in Danish society? Gender roles are defined by society, not by biology. They can be re-defined by society. In computer terms we can say they are defined by society's software not by nature's hardware.

To get an idea of the women liberation struggles in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the reader is advised to consult the Internet. This book gives only a brief overview of these profoundly important struggles to enable the reader to view the overall process.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century women's struggles passed three stages. The first began in Europe and USA before WW1. It aimed to win women's right to vote to Parliament. This was achieved after WW1 when women won the right to vote in many parliaments (in the UK – 1918, USA - 1920, France - 1944, Switzerland - 1971). The second stage started in Europe after WW1. Its aim was to legalize abortion. The invention of the birth-control pill in the late 1950s was a tremendous improvement. For the first time women could enjoy sexual relations without fear of getting pregnant. It reduced the urgency of the abortion issue but the struggle to legalize it is far from over. The third stage started in the 1970s. Its aim was to win for women workers, lesbians, gays, and single-parent families, all social and legal rights, opportunities, and support, that heterosexual men are entitled to. It has achieved many of its demands, but not all.

Most histories of women's liberation written in Europe and USA ignore the great contribution of Lenin's Revolution to this struggle. In his excellent study "Class struggle and Women's Liberation" (see the Internet) Tony Cliff writes in Chapter 9:

*"The first conference of women convened by the Bolsheviks after the October revolution took place on 19 November 1917 (a fortnight after the revolution. A.O.) 500 delegates representing 80,000 women from factories, workshops, trade unions and party organizations attended. The conference was called specifically for mobilizing support for the Bolsheviks in the elections to the Constituent Assembly.*

*A year later, on 16 November 1918, the Bolshevik Party convened the first all-Russian Congress of Working Women. It was organized by a commission which included Inessa Armand, Alexandra Kollontai, Klavdiia Nikolaeva and Yaakov Sverdlov (secretary of the Bolshevik Party), who sent agitators to the provinces to arrange for the local election of delegates.*

*In the Kremlin Hall of Unions there gathered 1,147 women, including workers and peasant women from distant regions of the country. The programme presented to the congress was impressive: to win the support of women for Soviet power; to involve*

women in the party, government and trade unions; to combat domestic slavery and a double standard of morality; to establish communal living accommodation in order to release women from household drudgery; to protect women's labour and maternity; to end prostitution; to refashion women as members of the future communist society. Nikolaeva chaired the congress. Sverdlov welcomed the delegates. The main speeches were delivered by Kollontai and Inessa Armand. Lenin addressed the congress on its fourth day. After outlining the measures already taken by the Soviet government to improve women's conditions, he called on women to play a more active political role. "The experience of all liberation movements has shown that the success of a revolution depends on how much the women take part in it."

The congress led to the creation of Commissions for Agitation and Propaganda among Working Women. Their special methods of political work were elaborated by Kollontai at the Eighth Congress of the party in March 1919. She explained that because most women were politically backward, the party had really not had much success in trying to approach and recruit them on the basis of general political appeals. Furthermore, she argued that it was women's oppression which led to their lack of involvement in political life; the cares and concerns of the family and the household robbed the woman worker of her time and energy and prevented her from becoming involved in broader political and social pursuits. Kollontai proposed that the way to attract women to Bolshevism was to draw them into socially useful projects, such as day nurseries, public dining rooms and maternity homes, which would serve to liberate women in their everyday lives.

*We have to conduct a struggle against conditions oppressing woman, to emancipate her as a housewife, as a mother. And this is the best approach toward women - this is agitation not only by words, but also by the deed.*

*This principle of political organization, which became known as "agitation by the deed", was the distinctive feature of the activities of the Bolshevik women's organization in this early period. (see the Internet)*

The USSR legal system was the first to give equal rights of marriage and divorce to men and women, simplifying these procedures. It was the first to legalize abortion.

*"A Decree on the Legalization of Abortions was issued in November 1920. Soviet Russia thus became the first country in the world to legalize abortion. To protect the health of women the decree stipulated: "... such operations will be performed freely and without any charge in Soviet hospitals, where conditions are assured of minimizing the harm of the operation."*

*But the laws alone were far from enough to gain women real equality. The economic foundation of the traditional family had to be assaulted. This was attempted in a set of decrees abolishing the right of inheritance and transferring the property of the deceased to the state, which was to take over "women's work" through its communal institutions: maternity homes, nurseries, kindergartens, schools, communal dining rooms, communal laundries, mending centres and so on. Lenin explained:*

*" Notwithstanding all the laws emancipating woman, she continues to be a domestic slave, because petty housework crushes, strangles, stultifies and degrades her, chains her to the kitchen and the nursery, and she wastes her labour on barbarously unproductive, petty, nerve-racking, stultifying and crushing drudgery. The real emancipation of women, real communism, will begin only where and when an all-out struggle begins (led by the proletariat wielding the state power) against this petty housekeeping, or rather when its wholesale transformation into a large-scale socialist economy begins". ("Class struggle and women's liberation" by Tony Cliff, on the Internet)*

In the USSR all jobs were open to women, (including that of fighter-pilots in the air force) and the principle of equal pay for equal work was maintained.

One of the greatest achievements of the State-run, planned, economy was the policy on women giving birth. In 1989 USSR law extended maternity leave *to three years paid by the State (!)* at the end of which the mother could return to her former job.

All USSR factories and offices provided child-care nurseries for their employees with full board from morning till night at a fixed low cost. This enabled every woman with infants below school age to work.

During Stalin's reign (1924-1953) there was a setback in marital law. Some earlier progressive rights were abolished and new laws - strengthening the nuclear family - were introduced.

*"In 1936 legal abortion was abolished, except where life or health was endangered or a serious disease might be inherited. The laws of 1935-6 also provided some sanctions against divorce: fees of 50, 150 and 300 roubles for the first, second and subsequent divorces. Probably more important, it required entry of the fact of divorce in the personal documents of those involved. Sexual freedom was virulently attacked and Puritanism extolled."* ("Class struggle and women's liberation" on the Internet)

One contribution of the women's struggles in the 1970s to liberation struggles generally merits special mentioning. In the 1970s women in European-Left groups formed "women's consciousness-raising groups" to discuss women's problems without the presence of men. This was criticized by men who wanted to support the women's struggle. The women explained that presence of men inhibits many women who lack the assertiveness of men. Many women find it easier to overcome their inhibition to express themselves when no man is present. When women in these groups began to describe their problems they suddenly realized that what each believed to be her personal problem was shared by many other women. Before such discussions occurred each woman thought her problems were hers alone, and her fault. On realizing that many other women had the same problems they realized it wasn't their fault but the fault of a social norm in their society. This created an awareness that what looks like a personal problem is often caused by a tradition, a law, or a custom, of society, not by the individual. This useful insight was summarized in the formula: *"The personal is political"* meaning that often what looks like a personal problem is very widespread and is therefore a problem of society as a whole, not of the particular individual. Today this may seem obvious, but in the 1970s it came as a revelation to most women – and to most men. Even today, in 2007, many psychoanalysts still reject this principle.

Many women outside Europe and North America do not enjoy the achievements of the women's liberation movements. Much effort is still needed till all women, everywhere, enjoy rights that many women in Europe and North America have won.

All three stages of women's liberation struggles demanded equality with men. Women demanded the same rights, roles, and incomes, as men. Lesbians and gays demanded the same rights - and opportunities - as heterosexuals. Single parent mothers demanded the same rights as ordinary families. However, a demand for equality ignores the quality of what one wants to be equal to. When Ms. Thatcher became the first woman Prime Minister in the UK she did not change the role of Prime Minister nor the condition of women. Her policy of privatization made the conditions of most working men and women much worse. Women did not benefit from the fact that UK's PM was a woman. The Conservatives' views on the role of women in society (the traditional medieval view: "*Children, Kitchen, Church,*") contradict women's liberation. The fact that British women now have an equal right to men to be Prime Ministers did not improve their lot. Equal right to perform a man's role does not change the nature of that role. Equality does not change the quality that is being shared equally.

If future struggles for women's liberation move beyond demands for gender equality in existing roles and strive towards creating new roles, they will elevate their struggle from "women's liberation" to "human liberation", from demands for equality to the creation of new human qualities.

## 11. Privatization or Nationalisation?

On December 24, 1991 the USSR was still a "union" of fifteen republics. Next day, on December 25, 1991 the USSR Parliament abolished this union and the USSR ceased to exist. Remarkably, there were no mass demonstrations protesting against this decision, very few confrontations between civilians and army and no civil war.

For three generations Lenin's one-party state educated, and shaped its citizens' mentality. Every newspaper, radio or TV program, every book, film, or theatre play USSR citizens were allowed to see passed strict censorship by the state. Yet despite this mind control (or maybe because of it) USSR citizens did not defend their state when it was abolished in 1991, unlike 1919 when many tried to bring back the Tsar's regime. In 1919 there was a 2-year civil war trying to reinstate the Tsar's regime. In 1991 no one fought a civil war to bring back Lenin's regime.

When the USSR Parliament voted to dismantle the Union of 15 Socialist Republics into its constituent republics the Soviet space-station Soyuz TM-13 was circling earth with two soviet cosmonauts aboard - Sergey Krikalev and Alexander Volkov. They were due to return to earth a few days later. When the return date arrived the USSR no longer existed and there was no one to cover the costs of their return. They were stuck in space till a way was found to pay for their return. Krikalev and Volkov were "the last Soviet citizens" as down on earth the demise of the USSR terminated soviet citizenship. Soyuz 13 was a brilliant invention; it was - like the cosmonauts - a success. The Soviet space program was a success. It did not fail. What failed was the one-party state that managed it. When that state collapsed it stopped managing all its projects, so the space program stopped. This was not due to some fault of the space program. Nor was the USSR treasury bankrupt. It was due to the demise of the management of the program. This also happened to the state-run, planned, economy. Like the space program it stopped not due to bankruptcy or failure but due to the demise of the state that ran it. It stopped like a locomotive whose driver was sacked. Most USSR citizens rejected their one-party state but not their state-run, planned, economy or space programme. The demise of the state terminated all its projects. The economy did not collapse. The State did. In the USA economics determine politics but in USSR politics determined economics.

The state-owned economy in the USSR had amazing achievements. It began - in 1921 - to build a new economic foundation for a ruined country. Three years of WW1 killed 2 million peasant-soldiers, and disabled another 5 million. Fields lay waste, there was hunger in the cities. The German occupation ravaged hundreds of towns and villages. The two revolutions in 1917 destroyed all the administration of the country. Offices, documents, and practices that used to administer 150 million citizens were destroyed. New - inexperienced - people began to administer the economy in new - untested - ways. British, French, American, and Japanese troops, invaded Russia trying to topple Lenin's regime. When they failed they armed and financed Tsarist generals to start a civil war lasting 2 years (1919-1921). This further ruined the country parts of which changed hands many times. At certain moments Lenin's regime existed only in St.Petersburg and Moscow. All the rest of the country was held by enemies of the revolution. Only in 1921 did the fighting end and the regime began to construct a new economic base from scratch without any help from abroad. Moreover, Britain, France, and the USA imposed a trade embargo on Russia to strangle its economy. No foreign Bank was willing to lend the USSR money. Yet despite all this, in a mere 17 years, the USSR became a major industrial power manufacturing more tractors, tanks, and combines than Germany. Canals were dug, power stations and the electricity grid were built, rails laid, steel plants constructed, and plants to construct ships, locomotives, airplanes, trucks, pumps. Hundreds of new schools, hospitals, and housing estates were built. All this with very few engineers trained by the Tsarist regime. This was done - before labor camps existed - by many young volunteers, under the leadership of dedicated planners like Piatakov and Preobrazhensky, and a great organizer like Ordjonikidze, all inspired by Lenin's motto: *"Socialism is rule by workers Committees plus the electricity grid"*. The volunteers were enthusiastic even though the Committees were run by the Party, not by the workers. Moreover, Lenin's one-party state slowed down industrialization by its bureaucratic practices: 1) It appointed managers loyal to the party rather than to their technical task. 2) It appointed political commissars to control workers, curbing their enthusiasm, initiative, and creativity. Despite these obstacles the rapid industrialization succeeded. In the first decade of industrialization the obstacles were overcome by genuine revolutionaries who refused to obey the party blindly and by the enthusiasm of the youth inspired by the task of creating a new society. When Stalin purged the party of its original revolutionaries in his show trials in 1936-38 he killed

Piatakov and Preobrazhensky. Ordjonikidze committed suicide. Stalin took the credit for industrialization to himself and turned the party into his rubber stamp. From 1937 on only those obeying him blindly got leadership posts.

Starting in 1928, the first 'Five-Year plans' built the foundation for a heavy industry in Russia's underdeveloped economy without waiting years for capital to accumulate through the expansion of light industry, and without reliance on external financing. The country now became industrialized at an unbelievable pace, surpassing Germany's pace of industrialization in the nineteenth century and Japan's earlier in the twentieth. After the reconstruction of the economy, and after the initial plans of further industrialization were fulfilled, the rate of growth slowed down, but it still surpassed most of the other countries in terms of total material production (GDP) until the period of Brezhnev stagnation in the second half of the 1970s.

Industrialization came with expansion of medical and educational services, which improved labor productivity. Diseases like typhoid, cholera and malaria, disappeared; numbers of doctors and engineers increased as rapidly as facilities and training would permit; and death and infant mortality rates steadily decreased.

The state-run, planned, economy performed very well from the early 1930s to the 1970s. The USSR became the world's leading producer of oil, coal, iron ore, cement, manganese, gold, diamonds, natural gas and other minerals.

Growth slowed after 1960 but this was considered characteristic of a mature, industrialized economy. However, Moscow planning ministries had failed to loosen their control at enterprise level thus causing the stagnation of the 1970s and 1980s which showed signs of a chronic problem. The USSR planned economy was not tailored to the demands of the modern economy it had helped to forge. As the economy grew, the monopoly of party planners in Moscow over every enterprise in the country strangled the economy. It curbed local initiative and creativity. The cumbersome procedures of bureaucratic administration by a single centre blocked free communication at the enterprise level, curbed creativity and initiative causing alienation of workers and customers. Calls for greater freedom for local managers to deal directly with suppliers and customers were ignored. This caused stagnation of the economy and frustration of the population. After dissolving the USSR all former

Soviet republics scrapped their Soviet-era systems of centralized planning and state ownership, ruining the economy and breeding massive corruption. The State-run, planned, economy of the USSR had achievements no privately-owned economy had. In 1957 it was the first to launch a satellite - "Sputnik" - to circle earth. This stunned the entire world and drew world wide respect. In 1989 it passed a law giving every woman three-year maternity leave paid by the state. The USA, the world's richest privately-owned economy, has no law granting women any maternity leave even today. However, the one-party system greatly reduced the efficiency of the state-owned economy and limited its capabilities. The nature of the state determines the nature of the state-owned economy - and society. In a non-party state a state-owned economy would have functioned incomparably better.

This does not relieve us of the need to discuss the pros and cons of state participation in the economy. In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the controversy between supporters of state participation in the economy and their opponents passed four stages: 1) before WW1 state participation in the economy was not taken seriously. 2) In the 1930s, following the Russian revolution, the US "Great Depression", Roosevelt's "New Deal", and the emergence of the USSR as a major industrial power, economists began to see state participation in the economy as essential for reducing unemployment and increasing production. 3) After WW2 and the nationalization of coal, steel, railways, and the Bank of England, by the Labour Party in Britain in 1945, and the creation of the state-run, planned, National Health System, a state-run, planned, sector in the economy was introduced in most European economies. Many new States in Asia and Africa did the same. 4) From 1976 onwards, there was growing criticism of state-participation in the economy. In the 1980s Britain's P.M. Margaret Thatcher, and US President Ronald Reagan began to sell state-owned, enterprises to private owners. Branches of the economy like coal, gas, railways, telephone services, were sold off to private owners. The argument for doing this was that state-owned enterprises are inefficient, unprofitable, and waste tax-payers' money. The debate between supporters of the two systems was renewed. Supporters of private-economy were on the attack.

One reason for this was the effect of electronic computers on the economy. The electronic digital computer was invented in WW2 to speed up calculations of weather forecasts (necessary for aerial bombing) shell trajectories, and nuclear processes. At

first computers were very few, very big, very expensive, and very prone to stoppages due to burnt out vacuum valves. When transistors replaced vacuum valves (1956) computers became smaller, cheaper, reliable and numerous. By mid-1960s every Bank, Insurance Company, University, and factory had one. In the 1970s they began to replace workers in industry. Computer-controlled machines made thousands of industrial workers redundant. A new phenomenon of increased production linked to reduced employment started. This baffled all economists. Hitherto production and employment rose and fell together. This was the basic idea of J.M. Keynes (see below) who argued in the 1930s that state-intervention in the privately-owned economy is essential for turning a fall in production and employment (predicted by Marx) into a growth of both. Most privately-owned economies applied his ideas. But in the 1970s, for the first time, production grew while employment fell. Privately-owned economies became afflicted with a new problem of rising productivity coupled to rising unemployment. Advocates of privately-owned economies named it “Stagflation” (“Stagnation+Inflation”) and used it as an argument against Keynesian state-participation in the economy. The solution of this “riddle” is simple: when private-owners in industry replaced worker-driven machines by computer-driven machines they fired workers and increased the pace and duration of production. When less workers produce more goods profits grow - and so does unemployment. This was not a necessary outcome of modernization but of selfish acquisition of the benefits of modernization. A labour-saving device can serve to reduce working hours (but not pay) rather than jobs. In this manner its benefits would be shared by all involved in production. This possibility was never mentioned in the “Stagflation” debate. When computer-driven machines increase production, working hours - not jobs - can be cut (but not pay). Profits will still rise. Workers can be re-trained for new jobs, not sacked.

The “Stagflation” of the 1970s and the collapse of the USSR in 1991 were used by advocates of privately-owned economies as a "proof" that all state-participation in the economy is doomed. But what collapsed in the USSR was the state not the economy and “Stagflation” was caused by greed of private owners not by “economic laws”

Many economists debated the pros and cons of state participation in the economy. Best known among them were Friedrich Von Hayek, Milton Friedman, John Maynard Keynes, and Kenneth Galbraith. The first two opposed state intervention in the

economy, the last two – advocated it. Their arguments can be found on the Internet. Here only the gist their arguments will be mentioned.

The Austrian economist Friedrich von Hayek (1899-1992), mentor of Margaret Thatcher, dismantler of the British "Welfare State", was the best known opponent of State participation in the economy. His main point was that any State participation in the economy is bound to reduce the freedom of the individual citizens. Hayek ends his best known book "The road to Serfdom" (1944) with the words: *"Though we neither can wish, nor posses, the power to go back to the reality of the nineteenth century, we have the opportunity to realize its ideals. ...The guiding principle that a policy of freedom for the individual is the only truly progressive policy remains as true today as it was in the nineteenth century."* ("The road to Serfdom" by F.V. Hayek, University of Chicago Press 1994. p. 262)

Most of Hayek's book argues that any economic planning by a government undermines the freedom of the individual and paves "the road to serfdom". Nowhere does he comment on the fact that the freedom of individuals like Henri Ford or John. D. Rockefeller seriously undermined the freedom of a millions of other individuals who worked for them, competed with them, or were dispossessed by them.

Two economists commented on John D. Rockefeller: *" John D. Rockefeller knew a thing or two about power. His Standard Oil of New-Jersey became a blueprint for corporate centralization. He pioneered new methods of stock rigging and financial mischief. He destroyed competition wherever he could and set new standards for industrial sabotage and union busting. He manipulated the tastes of 'rational consumers' and made 'policymakers' dance to his tune. He used violence to expropriate from indigenou Americans their resource-rich lands and religion to pacify their resistance. He harnessed the U.S. military to impose American 'free trade' on the rest of the world. Raw power made Rockefeller and his family enormously rich. And yet, to the end of his life, John D. insisted that his best investment ever was the \$45 million he donated to rebuild the Baptist University of Chicago. Rockefeller saw Chicago as a religious asset. The philanthropy helped silence his critics in this world and pave his way to heaven in the next. It bought him the loyalty of spiritual shepherds and academic retainers, all eager to sing the praise of Standard Oil and glorify its devout owner. But in the long run the biggest yield*

*came from the university's department of economics. After the Second World War, Chicago emerged as the bastion of a new religion: neoclassical economics. The key tenets of the faith were laid down already at the end of the nineteenth century, and it was Chicago – perhaps more than any other university – that helped propagate them. Its professors, nicknamed the Chicago Boys, spread the gospel of perfect competition and free trade. They insisted that consumers were sovereign and economic actors rational. They called for the separation of politics from economics. They preached monetarism and demanded small government and sound finance. They made economics a mathematical pseudo-science, impenetrable to the laity. And they advocated the production function and the marginal productivity of capital – an ingenious model that justified the political rule of capital while making capitalists such as Rockefeller perfectly invisible. For these feats, the Chicago Boys were awarded plenty of Nobel Prizes. These included, among others, the prize to Gary Becker for his human capital, to Theodore Schultz for his development economics, to Robert Lucas for his rational expectations, to George Stigler for his attack on regulation, to Ronald Coase for his transaction costs and to Milton Friedman for his anti-Keynesianism. Subsequent generations of the Rockefellers presented a more moderate image than did their forefather. Theirs was no longer the wild capitalism of John D. The mutual business sabotage and political confrontations that characterized the nineteenth century gave way in the twentieth century to a more stable formation of statism and corporate alliances. The Rockefellers entered high politics where they promoted a mellow hybrid of 'liberal Republicanism,' they engaged in imperial philanthropy, and they financed an intricate web of research foundations that helped soften the harshness of capitalism. But the original virus nourished by John D. was unstoppable. Neoclassical ideology – or neoliberalism, as it is now known – continued to spread throughout the globe. It programmed the technocrats from Santiago to Moscow. It placated the populace from China to South Africa. It reduced risk far better than any other organized religion. It helped open the world for business."*

("The Rockefeller Boys" by Bichler and Nitzan, [www.bnarchive.net](http://www.bnarchive.net) )

No wonder von-Hayek got a job in Chicago University in 1950. Hayek's disciple, Milton Friedman (1912-2006) a prominent "Chicago Boy" and mentor of President Reagan, wrote in his introduction to the 1994 edition of Hayek's book:

*"The fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) the collapse of communism behind the 'Iron Curtain' (1989-1991) and the changing character of China have reduced the defenders of a Marxian type collectivism to a small hardy band concentrated in*

*Western Universities. Today there is wide agreement that socialism is a failure, capitalism a success. Yet this apparent conversion of the intellectual community to what might be called a Hayekian view is deceptive. While the talk is about free markets and private property and it is more respectable than it was a few decades ago to defend near-complete laissez-faire, the bulk of the intellectual community almost automatically favors any expansion of government power so long as it is advertised as a way to protect individuals from big bad corporations, relieve poverty, protect the environment, or promote "equality". ...Government intervention in the post WW2 period was smaller and less intrusive than it is today. President Johnson's "Great Society" programs, including Medi-care and Medicaid, and Bush's "Clean Air" and "Americans with Disabilities Acts" were all still ahead ...Total government spending, federal state, and local, in the United States has gone from 25% of national Income in 1950 to 45% in 1993. Much the same has been true in Britain, in one sense more dramatically. The Labour party, formerly openly socialist, now defends free private markets. The Conservative Party, once content to administer Labour's socialist policies, has tried to reverse, and to some extent, under Margaret Thatcher has succeeded in reversing, the extent of government ownership and operation. ... While there has been a considerable amount of "privatization" there as here, government today spends a larger fraction of the national income and is more intrusive than it was in 1950. On both sides of the Atlantic, it is only a little overstated to say that we preach individualism and competitive capitalism but practice socialism." (Friedman's introduction to "Road to Serfdom", University of Chicago Press, 1994, page xvi)*

Friedman concentrated his intellectual efforts to refute John Maynard Keynes's economic theories which influenced many economists and politicians after WW2.

Keynes (1883-1946) advocated a mixed economy where both the state and the private sector play an important role. Keynesian economics challenges laissez-faire economics (economic theory based on the belief that markets and the private sector could operate well on their own, without state intervention). In Keynes's theory, trends set by the government can shape the behaviour of individuals. Instead of the economic process being based on continuous increase of output as most classical economists had believed from the late 1700s on, Keynes argued that aggregate demand for goods is the driving force of the economy, especially in periods of

downturn. He advocated government economic projects arguing they will boost demand in the entire economy, reduce unemployment and deflation. A central conclusion of Keynesian economics is that in an unplanned economy there is no automatic tendency for output and employment to rise and therefore the government must intervene to prevent a crisis. A government can always print money to pay for new projects. One of his famous quotations after WW1 was: *"The decadent international but individualistic capitalism in the hands of which we found ourselves after the war is not a success. It is not intelligent. It is not beautiful. It is not just. It is not virtuous. And it doesn't deliver the goods."*

Keynes criticized individualistic capitalism, not capitalism itself. He advocated government intervention in the economy to protect capitalism, not to replace it. He never discussed the question: who produced all the wars? All supporters - and most opponents - of privately owned economies gloss over the shocking fact that it was privately owned economies trying to solve their unemployment crisis, to defeat their enemies, and to conquer new markets that produced WW1 and WW2, and also Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in 1936, Japan's invasion of China in 1931, the Spanish civil war ('36-'39), and all colonial wars. No state-owned economy produced these wars. They were all products of privately-owned economies.

US economist John Kenneth Galbraith (1908-2006) supported state intervention in the economy. On March 19, 1997 he gave a talk in Pittsburgh where he outlined his views. Galbraith's lecture, *"Liberalism in America's Political Future,"* was part of the Pittsburgh University's 'American Experience' lecture series. In US political jargon "Liberalism" is like "Left" in European political jargon. Galbraith, 89, Harvard's Paul M. Warburg Professor of Economics Emeritus, entered American public life in the time of Franklin Roosevelt's 'New Deal'. He was chief of the World War II-era Office of Price Control while still in his 30s and at the end of the war directed the U.S. Strategic Bombing Survey, for which he was awarded the Medal of Freedom in 1946. He was an adviser to the presidential campaigns of Adlai Stevenson and John F. Kennedy, who later appointed him ambassador to India. He is the author of many books, best known for his classic, *"The Affluent Society."* To a crowd packed into David Lawrence Hall auditorium, Galbraith laid out an agenda for "socially concerned" people. He intertwined it with a critique of the market system economy,

which, according to him, survives thanks to the "socially concerned" : *"Capitalism in its original form was an insufferably cruel thing which produced militant criticism and opposition," said Galbraith, noting that only with tools like trade unions, laws protecting workers' health and rights, public health care, housing for the poor, pensions for the old, and compensation for the unemployed did capitalism become a viable economic system in a human society. Let us not be reticent. We the socially concerned are the custodians of the political tradition and action that saved capitalism from itself.*" Galbraith made his case for a responsible, yet humane, social policy. On the privatization trend he said: *"In recent years there has been a curb of thought, or what is so described, which holds that all possible economic activity should now be returned to the market. The market system having been accepted, it must now be universal. Privatization has now become a public thing. This, needless to say, we reject. The question of private versus the government role in modern life is not to be decided in abstract theoretical problems. The decision depends on the merits of the particular case. Conservatives, people on the right, need to be warned, as we also warn ourselves, that ideology can be a heavy blanket over thought. Thought must guide action. The continuing flaws, inequities, and cruelties of the market system make it an unreliable provider of some services."*

On the stock market boom he said: *"We are presently witnessing a stock market boom for which we may be reasonably sure there will be an eventual day of reckoning"*

On the Federal Reserve's efforts to rein in the economy: *"We must not be in fear of a strong productive economic performance, but we must have well in mind the danger of excess. In good times, the public budget, taxes and expenditures must be a restraining force. So too, action against mergers and acquisitions and other manifestations of adverse, sometimes insane, corporate behaviour. Monetary restraint, hiring constraints may be in order, a matter in which conservatives are more than adequately agreeable. I will not comment further on my old friend Alan Greenspan."* *"We cannot be casual about inflation. As necessary, it must be restrained ... What we do not accept is that an all-pervasive fear of inflation should arrest all economic progress."*

On the balanced budget: *"We accept the need for fiscal responsibility. This does not, however, mean an annually balanced budget. If I may be allowed a word on our*

*country in particular, the balanced budget has, at the moment, become a major weapon in a larger attack on the poor. Borrowing for enhanced future return is just as legitimate for government as it is for corporations and individuals. The valid test is that increased debt should be in keeping with increased ability to pay. And that, indeed, is our present situation." On unemployment: "The social loss in human distress of unemployment must be directly addressed. This means opportunity for alternative public employment in recession or depression. The social waste of idleness cannot be accepted."*

*On income distribution: "The market system distributes income in a highly unequal fashion, a matter on which the U.S., it is now recognized, has a world leadership. Our distribution of income is more unequal than that of any other major industrial country. Strong and effective unions, a humane minimum wage, social security, [and] good medical care are all part of the answer to the unequal distribution of income. So also a progressive income tax. On this, the socially concerned agree."*

*On taxes: "Few exercises in social argument are so obviously in defence of financial self-interest as those put forward by the rich against their taxes. It always boils down to the slightly improbable case that the rich are not working as hard as they should because they have too little income, and the poor are not working as hard as they should because they have too much. Nothing contributes to energy and initiative in modern economy as the struggle by the affluent to maintain their after-tax income."*

*On education: "High professional competence, generous financing, and yes, wise, effective discipline must make and characterize the education that is available to all. The justification is not that a well-educated labour force enhances economic productivity, which is the respectable present case. It is, rather, that education enhances, enriches, and enlarges the enjoyment of life. That is the true justification."*

*On welfare: "Let us recognize that in any welfare system there will be some abuse. Some people will not work. Let us recognize that in any university with tenure there are some people who discover that leisure is a wonderful thing. We don't condemn universities because this is true. Let us not condemn the poor because some also abuse the system." He advocated compassionate social policies for the growth of urban society. He surveyed the failure of a conservative Congress to achieve its agenda declaring: "Those who would reverse social action or even allow it to stagnate*

*are not in conflict with the socially concerned. They are in conflict with the history; We are in line with history. It is our support. For that we should be both grateful and energetic."* (Report by Fred Solomon, Dept. of University Relations)

To be accurate, throughout history all states intervened in the economy in two ways: 1) They minted the money. 2) They kept armies and conducted wars, which required major spending by the state. So the question is not the states' intervention in the economy but the nature of the state and the nature of its intervention.

Between the two extremes of minimum/maximum state participation we find views like Galbraith's, who said in an interview to Brian Lamb: *"I react to what is necessary. I would like to eschew any formula. There are some things where the government is absolutely inevitable, which we cannot get along without comprehensive state action. But there are many things - producing consumer goods, producing a wide range of entertainment, producing a wide level of cultural activity - where the market system, with independent activity is also important, so I react pragmatically. Where the market works, I'm for that. Where the government is necessary, I'm for that. I'm deeply suspicious of somebody who says, "I'm in favor of privatization," or, "I'm deeply in favor of public ownership." I'm in favor of whatever works in the particular case.* (Interview with Brian Lamb, *Booknotes*, C-SPAN (November 13, 1994)

What is missing in all debates on the State participation in the economy is a discussion on the nature of the state itself. What kind of State is it? What is its structure? Whose interests does it serve? Clearly, participation in the economy by the British state in 1945 differed from participation in the economy by Lenin's one-party state in 1920. These two are not the only possibilities. The British sociologist Richard Titmuss replied to the charges of inefficiency levelled against government-run enterprises by a detailed research comparing the economics of the blood market in Britain and the USA. In the UK the blood market is run by the government and supplied by voluntary donors who donate their blood. In the USA the entire blood-market is commercialized. Donors, administrators and personnel do it for money. The blood market supplies all hospitals with blood and is a major component in any health system. In 1970 Titmuss published the results of his scrupulous research in a book entitled *"The gift relationship"*. His conclusion is as follows:

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*“On four testable - non-ethical - criteria, the commercialized blood market is bad. 1) In terms of economic efficiency it is highly wasteful of blood: shortages - chronic and acute - characterize the supply and demand position and make illusory the concept of equilibrium. 2) It is administratively inefficient and results in more bureaucratization, and much greater administrative, accounting and computing overheads. 3) In terms of price per unit of blood to the patient (or consumer) it is a system which is five to fifteen times more costly than the voluntary system in Britain, and finally, 4) in terms of quality, commercial blood markets are much more likely to distribute contaminated blood. The risks for the patient of disease and death are substantially greater.”* (“The gift relationship” by Richard Titmuss, new edition by The New Press, New-York,. 1997, p.314)

One could argue against Titmuss that producing blood does not require people’s effort, skill, or time, and therefore many can afford to donate it whereas very few would agree to work for free in a factory. But his point that economics - unlike physics or chemistry - are inextricably linked to moral choices (the “priorities” of Chapter 2) is still valid. Today [2007] privatization of the economy progresses to include even prisons so one can ask - why not privatize the Army? The police? The Courts? Parliament? Government? This raises questions like the cost-effectiveness of an army of mercenaries, compared with that of conscripts or volunteers. Private armies of mercenaries exist in Africa and have been used there. Some governments have hired such armies and are satisfied with their cost-effectiveness balance. Suppose private armies turn out to be cheaper and more effective than armies of conscripts, or volunteers, should armies be privatized?

So far the “Privatization Vs. nationalization” controversy considered two options for running the economy: Private owners seeking profits and State officials seeking careers. But there is a third option no one mentions, namely - all citizens decide policy and all employees decide its execution at their place of work.

It is time to consider this option in any public debate on the economy.

## 12. The Non-Party State

In most countries today a tiny group of people known as "Government" makes all political decisions (i.e. decisions binding an entire society). This group consists of members of political parties. A political Party is a voluntary organization committed to promote particular policies. In elections the citizens can decide only which party will run society. The party that received most votes in elections sets up the government. As more than one party participates in elections every party could, eventually, form a government. This system is a "multi-party state". Today a multi-Party state maintaining freedom of Press and speech is called "Democracy". Actually, this has nothing to do with democracy which is direct policy making by all citizens, not by their representatives. Rule by elected Representatives (RR) is more democratic than rule by an unelected King or Dictator - but politics by representatives contradicts Democracy. The very meaning of the word "Democracy" is that all citizens - the "Demos" - decide all policies. This is what "Demos-Kratia" meant in Athens. The "Demos" are "All citizens" and "Kratos" is "Authority to decide". In Demos-kratia all citizens have authority to propose and vote on every policy. This may surprise those who think democracy means free elections but in democracy there are no elections. When all citizens have authority to propose and vote on every policy they do not need representatives so elections are eliminated. In democracy those appointed to carry out policies are nominated by lottery not by election. This contradicts what most people today - including all academics, journalists, writers, politicians - believe 'Democracy is, namely - political decision-making by elected representatives. They dismiss the original meaning of "democracy" as "outdated" or "impractical"

In today's political system (falsely named "Democracy") 99.9% of the citizens cannot decide any policy. Such a system is not a democracy but rule by representatives (RR). In RR the citizens can only decide who will decide for them.

RR is in deep trouble today because most people everywhere mistrust representatives. They express their mistrust by not voting in elections. In the recent elections to US Senate and House of Representatives (Nov. 2006) only 40% of the electorate bothered to vote. This trend persists for the last 40 years. Refusal to participate in elections is

a vote of "No confidence" in the "elect your ruler" system. So why does RR persist? Because - so far - most people see no alternative to RR that offers more freedom.

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“Freedom” means living by one's own decisions. People are “Free” when they live according to their own decisions. For a long time people thought that if they decide who decides for them what society should do - they are free. Nowadays they no longer think so. They realized that if they cannot trust their representatives then their freedom is like that which Henri Ford granted his customers when he said: *"Customers are free to choose any colour of car they want, provided it is Black"*. Actually, electing others to decide - even if they are 100% trustworthy - is no freedom. Only those who live by their own decisions are free.

Total freedom is impossible when people live in a group. In any group, even in a loving couple, one must, occasionally, accept decisions of the other. When one lives by decisions made by others one isn't free. Whenever people live in a group, be it a couple, a sports team, a commune, a political party, or society, they give up, voluntarily, part of their freedom for the sake of living together. A group can function with various levels of freedom. In a society ruled by elected representatives citizens have more freedom than in a Monarchy, as they can at least decide who will decide for them. In a one-party state members of the ruling party can elect the leader of the party, so they have more freedom than in a Dictatorship where they cannot elect the dictator. In a multi-party state citizens can choose the ruling party, so they have more freedom than in a One-party State. However, those disillusioned by the freedom of the multi-party State - as today most people are - see no alternative political system where people have more freedom than in the multi-party system. Without such an alternative they are stuck with the multi-party State. In 1991 we saw that most citizens of the USSR and "Eastern Block" countries rejected the One-party State despite all the advantages its state-run, planned, economy conferred on them. Those who reject the One-party State can opt for a Multi-party State, but what can those who reject the Multi-party State opt for?

The alternative to the multi-party state is the non-party state.

In a non-party state political parties exist but they do not decide policies for others. They only advocate policies. They act to convince citizens to vote for particular policies, but only the citizens themselves - without representatives - have authority to vote. In a Non-party state all citizens - not politicians - decide all policies. In such a state there are no elections - and no Parliament. All citizens are the parliament. There is a continuous public debate on policies on radio and TV and politics are discussed and decided without politicians (see next chapter). This is a *Direct Democracy - DD*.

The prime problem of politics is the maker of political decision not the content of the decision. The prime problem of politics is: WHO DECIDES what society should do? The basic political problem is not: “*Shall we go to war?*” but “*Who decides whether we shall go to war?*” not “*How much tax shall we pay?*” but “*Who decides how much tax we shall pay?*” not “*What shall our taxes be used for?*” but “*Who decides what our taxes shall be used for?*” There are various answers to this question. Monarchists say: a King must decide. Republicans say: elected representatives must decide. Technocrats say: experts must decide. Genuine democrats say: all citizens must decide. “Who decides” is also the central issue the family, at every place of work, in every site of education, in every town, and in every state. Future revolutions will be about “who decides” not about “what to decide”. Their guiding principle will be: No decision obeyed without the right to participate in making it. This principle abolishes separation of deciders from obeyers. When this separation is abolished people are free. What they do with their freedom is another matter.

Most people in most countries today mistrust all politicians and political parties. Often even those who support a party mistrust the party and politicians they support. They vote for them because they consider it “the lesser evil”. This was not always the case. Before WW1 most people trusted the politicians and political parties they voted for. Most Germans trusted Hitler until his death. Most Russians trusted Stalin, most Britons trusted Churchill, most Japanese trusted Hirohito, most Americans trusted F.D.R. and many Frenchmen trusted De-Gaulle. “Trust” is a conviction that the person one trusts will keep his word. It does not mean “agreement” with that person, as the British electorate in 1945 proved. The British Elections of 1945 were one of the most significant events of the 20th century. Held on 5 July 1945, a mere 2 months

after the end of WW2 in Europe. Final counts were declared on July 26, 1945 after counting votes of soldiers serving overseas.

Held shortly after Victory Europe Day (May 8) it was the first UK general election since 1935 as general elections had been suspended during WW2. It resulted in a stunning defeat of the Conservative Party led by Winston Churchill and a landslide victory of the Labour Party led by the unknown Clement Attlee who won a majority of 145 seats. The British electorate trusted Churchill, but disagreed with his policies.

The result of the election was totally unexpected, given the heroic status of Winston Churchill, Britain's Prime Minister during WW2. It reflected the voters' belief that a post-war Britain built by Labour Party will be better than one built by the Conservatives. Labour promised a nationalised economy and Health Service while Churchill and the Conservatives wanted to reconstruct the old free market economy and services. Churchill's statement that Attlee's "Welfare State" program would require a Gestapo-like body to implement it created much resentment. While voters respected Churchill's wartime record they opposed the Conservative Party's domestic and foreign policies - with all the unemployment, poverty and misery they created before they war. Most UK citizens did not want this type of economy to reappear. Labour had also been given, during the war, the opportunity to display their competence in government on domestic issues by their leaders Ernest Bevin, Herbert Morrison and Attlee at the Ministry of Labour. Their administration was efficient.

Clement Attlee's 1945 government was the most radical British government of the 20th century. It nationalized the Bank of England, the coal mines, electricity, gas, railways and iron & steel. It created the National Health Service under Health minister Aneurin Bevan which to this day the Labour party still considers its proudest achievement. Originally the NHS provided "cradle to grave" health services free of charge to all citizens. The "Welfare State" was Labour's response to the attraction that the benefits of state-run, planned, economy of USSR held for many in the UK. The Labour Party did not want to replace the privately-owned economy of the UK with a State-owned, planned, economy. The Labour Party was - and remains - committed to reforms, not to revolution, but it was under pressure from a considerable part of the electorate, especially industrial workers and soldiers, whose respect and sympathy for the USSR grew during WW2 due to the heroic - and immense - battles of the "Red

Army" against the Nazi Army. No battle of the US or UK armies was anywhere near in size and ferocity to the battles of Stalingrad, Kursk, or Leningrad, which cost the "Red Army" millions of casualties. The city of Leningrad was under siege for 30 months and hunger forced some people to eat the dead. No British or American city was under siege during WW2. All history books and films made in the US and UK minimize the role of the USSR in WW2 and maximize the roles of the USA and UK. Yet any comparison of numbers of casualties in each of the three armies - and the destruction each of these countries suffered - demonstrates clearly that the brunt of the burden of defeating Nazi Germany was carried by the USSR. The US, UK, and France allowed Hitler to contravene the Versailles Treaty and build a huge army knowing it will be used against Lenin's State-owned economy. But after WW2 British soldiers had great respect for the "Red Army" and for the social benefits of the USSR's economy, providing full employment, state-paid housing, healthcare, education and pensions. This respect reached a level that caused many to believe that after the war the British soldiers will start a revolution in Britain. Such attitudes swept the Labour Party into office and brought the Welfare State into existence.

In 1945 most people, in most countries, still trusted most politicians. In those days each political party published its political programme describing what it will do when it achieves power. Voters studied party programs carefully and voted for the one that appealed to them most. Many voters also considered the reliability of the party that proposed programs that appealed to them. Most parties had a record of broken promises in past elections and this deterred some voters, but most people voted for the political programme that appealed to them.

All this changed in 1952, during the USA Presidential election campaign, when TV became a mass-media. This was the first election campaign using TV to promote a political party and a presidential candidate. The Republican Presidential candidate General Eisenhower (referred to as "Ike") was marketed like a brand of toothpaste. His image, not his political program, was the prime product. A notable ad for "Ike" was an issue-free animated cartoon with a song by Irving Berlin called "*I Like Ike*". The ads for Eisenhower were short, snappy and upbeat, and often relied on catchy animation just like ads for consumer goods. A very effective Eisenhower TV spot relentlessly repeated the refrain: "*I like Ike. You like Ike. Everybody likes Ike - for*

*President.*" Eisenhower himself was infuriated by the ad-film director's instructions telling him to stare into some vacant corner on the ceiling without saying anything. This image was later imposed on shots of interviews with random people in the street to create the impression that "Ike" listens attentively to their views. The Republicans' political programme was not mentioned, but Ike won the elections by a big majority.

From this moment on the marketing approach to politics dominated all political campaigns on TV. Parties began "to sell" their programmes rather than "to explain" them. The spirit of TV commercials began to permeate politics. TV is primarily a visual medium. Viewers remember what they see, not what they hear. Party programs and speeches are verbal. They make poor images so they rarely appear on TV. What appears on TV is a politician whose looks and gestures are designed to attract voters. People watching politicians on TV wonder whether they are trustworthy, not what their political programmes are. In political elections today images are "in", political programs and ideas are "out". As TV watchers outnumber book readers a general transformation of peoples' consciousness began: images overshadowed ideas.

TV close-ups often reveal qualities invisible in still photos. They magnify intonations, body-language, face expressions, and unintentional gestures. When physicist Robert J. Oppenheimer, who supervised the scientific side of constructing the first Atom-Bomb, gave a rare TV interview, he stared continuously at the floor giving a clear impression of being haunted by guilt. This stayed in viewers memory long after the content of his words faded away.

Most politicians on TV are too eager to "sell" themselves as "honest". Excessive eagerness creates a manipulative image. Therefore most politicians seem to viewers - who see dozens of manipulative commercials daily - as salesmen trying to manipulate them. This enhances mistrust of politicians and politics nowadays.

But this is not the only reason for peoples' mistrust of politicians today. Political Parties make pre-election promises - designed to attract voters - and repeatedly break them after elections. Fifty years of broken promises convinced most voters that all political parties, and politicians, are untrustworthy. Many believe this is an inherent quality of all politics. Lord Acton's dictum: *"All power corrupts and absolute power*

*corrupts absolutely*" is seen as an "Objective truth". However, few contemplate the meaning of the central term in this assertion, namely "Power".

What does "Power" mean in politics? The answer is simple: in politics "Power" means authority to decide for others. To make - on behalf of other people - decisions that are binding for an entire society. If I have authority to decide only on behalf of myself I have little political power. If I have authority to decide for 100 people I have some political "power". If I have authority to decide for 100 million people I have a lot of political "power". "Politics" means "matters of an entire society". "Policy" is "a decision binding an entire society". "Political Power" is authority to decide policy for others. Where does this authority come from? Four centuries ago the answer was - from God. When the Head of the Church placed the crown on the head of the King this symbolized: *"God authorizes this person to decide policy for all his subjects"*. This no longer works today. So who authorizes a political leader today to decide policy on behalf of millions of people? The electorate. The voters play the role of the Head of the Church three centuries ago. They authorize whoever they vote for to decide policy on behalf of others. Voting transfers authority to decide what society should do from voter to the person one votes for. When I vote in elections I authorize someone else to decide on my behalf what society should do. Voting is a transfer of authority. By transferring our authority to another person we diminish our own authority. Once we voted all our political authority has been transferred to the person, or party, we voted for. If we are unhappy about the way they use our authority we must wait till next elections. Then we can transfer our authority to someone else. Why transfer our authority to decide what our society should do, to another person?

By voting for a politician we lose authority to vote on policy. Voting drains our political authority. It transfers our political authority to the politician we voted for. If we do not vote we retain our authority to decide policies but what can we do with it? In Rule by Representatives - nothing. Others will vote for politicians and the system will continue as before while we shall be stuck with our authority but unable to use it.

How can we utilize our personal authority to decide policies? Only by creating a new system where every citizen can vote directly on policies, not on politicians.

Such a system is a Direct Democracy (DD) as the citizens themselves - without representatives - decide directly what their society should do. This can also be called a non-party state as this State is not run by political parties but directly by all its citizens. Political Parties can - and will - exist in such a state but they will not decide policies. They will only advocate policy, not decide it. They will work to convince citizens to vote for - or against - a particular policy, but they will not vote on behalf of the citizens. The political decision-makers must be - all the time - all the citizens.

Deciding policy is a crucial part of running society. Once a decision is made it must be carried out. Who will carry it out? In a one-party or multi-party state this is done by a tiny group known as "Government" or "Cabinet". In a non-party state there are no elections and no Parliament as all citizens can vote on all policies, and there is no government. State departments of Health, Education, Transport, Treasury, Defence, etc. exist but they are not run by a Minister (or Secretary) appointed by a party. In a non-party state Heads of departments are appointed - at fixed intervals - by lottery. Lots are drawn from data-banks of people who have required experience, skill, and knowledge. Nomination by lottery abolishes conspiracies, favouritism, corruption and inefficiency caused by elections. Panels drawn by lottery advising the public on policies, costs and consequences, will contain a variety of views, often conflicting with each other. Not the panel's views will prevail but citizens' choices. Political problems are often created by politicians seeking to boost their careers, roles, and importance. The ethnic war in former Yugoslavia created by Milošević in the 1990s is a typical example. A non-party state cleanses politics from the motivation of personal political careerism. When all citizens decide all policies, personal political careerism ceases to play a role. Citizens consider issues, not careers. As preferences of citizens differ choices are balanced by counter preferences. This reduces personal bias in politics. The greater the number of political decision-makers the less will personal bias determine policies. A State where every citizen can vote on every policy and those responsible for carrying out policies are appointed by lottery is a non-party state. It abolishes representatives. This minimizes costs, conspiracies, and corruption. No one is paid for deciding policy so all costs of politicians, parliaments, presidents, and their perks are saved. Direct democracy is cheaper, more efficient, free from personal bias and less prone to corruption and conspiracy than Rule by Representatives.

### .13. **Politics without politicians?**

"Politics" is "deciding what society will do". "Politicians" are people who decide for others what society will do. In the past very few people, often a single person ("King", "President", "Dictator") decided for all citizens what their society will do. Those for whom others decide are not free since to be free means to live by one's own decisions. Only those who live by their own decisions are free. Those who live by decisions of others are not free. A person who decides for others is said to have "Power". This does not mean physical strength. "Power" in politics is "authority to decide for others". Many people crave power for its own sake but few achieve it, usually they succeed by using plotting and scheming. Many people want to decide for others what they should do, in the family, in school, at work, or in the state. To achieve this they resort to conspiracies, lies, and bribes. Lord Acton observed: *"All Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely"*. This was - and remains - true, wherever people crave power, in the state, at home, at work, in school. The efforts to achieve - and keep - political power, breed corruption. No wonder most people everywhere are disgusted with power and with politics.

Can there be a system to decide what society shall do that does not depend on power? Most people think this is impossible. They do not see the connection between the revolution in electronic communication - and politics. They never understood what Marx understood 150 years ago, namely, that technology revolutions cause revolutions in mentality - and in politics. Today, by using mobile phones, magnetic cards, radio, TV, and the Internet, it is possible to set up a system where every citizen can propose, debate, and vote, on every policy proposal and no one decides for others. In such a system every citizen decides for herself only, so no citizen has power. In such a system there are no elections or representatives, no "House of Representatives" and no permanent "government" All citizens govern themselves. A system like this is a "Direct Democracy", In Greek "Demos - Kratia" (from which the word, and the system, known as "Democracy" originated) means "citizens power". Such a system existed in the city-state of Athens some 2500 years ago and lasted for some 200 years. In the past it was impossible for millions of citizens to have a Direct Democracy (DD) because technical means enabling millions of citizens to propose, debate, and vote, on policy proposals, and to count all the votes, did not exist. Therefore it seemed sensible

to most people that a few representatives will decide for all citizens. These few had political power while most citizens had no political power. Ancient Athens is the only exception to this where at least all free men (but not women and slaves) decided themselves what their city should do. The number of free Athenian men was around 50,000, and the city was divided into 50 districts with 1000 citizens in each. They invented elaborate clay and metal devices for voting and counting votes. In such a system no citizen decides for other citizens. Each citizen has one vote and decides for himself only. This abolished "Power" in politics and eliminated corruption and conspiracies. Only those who opposed democracy and wanted to overthrow it resorted to corrupt means.

Mass participation in politics and public debates on policy in ancient Athens gave birth to philosophy, to the theatre, to tragedy and comedy, to logical reasoning, to critical descriptions of politics and of history, to trial by jury, and even to public debates on military strategy. These innovations were unique to the Athenian democracy and although invented 2500 years ago we still use them today. In nearby Sparta - a mere 100 miles from Athens, where two kings ruled, there were no public debates on policy, and Sparta left no heritage useful to us today. Participation of all citizens in Politics abolishes power. It has many other advantages. It eliminates corruption and conspiracies and boosts creativity. It has also many dangers and difficulties, but the freedom its participants enjoy outweighs all of them.

Today most people find the idea of a state where every citizen has the right to propose, debate, and vote on every policy, bizarre, impractical, and at best - utopian. The following intends to stimulate a re-thinking of this automatic response.

First of all it is necessary to realize that the electronic communications revolution makes participation of millions of citizens in deciding policies technically feasible. The mobile telephone with a camera and a link to the Internet enables millions of citizens to vote by sending sms messages, to have their IDs checked, and to add up all votes, in a matter of minutes. This is already done in TV programmes like "A star is born". People can vote on policy proposals by sending SMS messages and a photo of their iris image simply by staring into their phone's camera. Iris identification is better than fingerprints. A database of citizens' iris images will be set up and a special program will compare any incoming image with those in the database. This will

ensure that only citizens will vote and no one will vote twice. Today all the problems of sending, identifying, and adding up, millions of votes within minutes, can be solved by the electronic communications technology. Many solutions already exist. Technical obstacles to DD that seemed insurmountable a few decades ago have been overcome.

To give an idea how such a state might work consider the following possibility: Each government department is allocated a radio or TV channel. There is a channel for matters of Education, of Health, of Transport, of Commerce, of Defence, etc. All channels operate 24 hours per day throughout the year. In each of channel a panel of people with knowledge and experience debate the pros and cons of every proposal. Members of the panels are drawn by lottery from data-banks of those with the required experience. Panel members serve on panels like Jury members in courts of law. They are replaced every 24 hours. This ensures that no bias will favour any proposal and no experts will indirectly influence all citizens. Suppose a citizen phones a proposal. It is listed, and when its turn arrives it is discussed by the panel. Listeners can phone in to add their comments. The debate on each proposal lasts a fixed period determined by the Constitution. When this time is up citizens are notified and the voting starts. People vote by mobile phone, magnetic card, or the Internet. A period set in the Constitution determines the time allocated for voting. When this time is up the votes are counted and if they exceed a minimum - determined by the Constitution - the proposal enters a second round of debates and voting. Every citizen can find out on radio or TV which proposal entered a second round, and participate in the second round debate. When the time is up a second vote is taken. If the proposal gained the required majority (a simple majority, a preferential majority, a local majority, or an overall majority) the proposal become a policy binding all citizens. However, within a year citizens can start a new debate to revoke this policy.

Once a policy has been decided a panel for carrying it out is drawn by lottery from data-banks of people with the required qualifications. This panel has to report regularly over radio or TV to all citizen about the progress of its work.

Such a system for deciding and carrying out policy is technically feasible. It may encounter difficulties, but none that are essentially insoluble. In such a state there are no elections, no representatives, no government. This is politics without power.

Absence of representatives makes this system much cheaper than rule by representatives. Moreover, abolishing elections cleanses politics of all conspiracies, corruption, and bribes, caused by people seeking political power.

Political Equality, granting every citizen one vote on every political proposal, creates Direct Democracy, Politics without Politicians, and Politics without Power. It is cheaper, cleaner, and far more democratic than rule by representatives. Such a system will make the state really democratic - and also the economy. If this is applied to every place of work, so all employees decide all decisions about their work, then both management and unions become redundant. This will put an end to strife and strikes.

This leaves us with sociological and psychological objections to Direct Democracy.

The first - and most common - objection to DD argues that matters of policy are too complicated and require knowledge, information, and experience most citizens lack. How can ordinary citizens, who lack most of the relevant information, decide a complex political issue? To answer this question let us consider the nature of decisions and of conclusions. Most people confuse decisions with conclusions.

A decision is not a conclusion. "Deciding" and "Concluding" are two utterly different mental activities. There are four major differences between the two:

1) To "decide" is to choose one option out of a number of options. If only one option is available there is nothing to "decide". "Deciding" is "choosing". We choose what we prefer. Preference is determined by a priority, so decisions are determined by priorities.

Conclusions are not determined by priorities. We cannot choose them. To draw a conclusion we must start from given data and use logic to deduce consequences. The data and the logic are given. We cannot choose them. By carrying out a sequence of logical deductions we reach a single final result we call - "conclusion". This does not depend on our priorities and we cannot choose it. The data and the logical deductions impose a conclusion on us. We must accept it even if we prefer a different one.

A conclusion is determined by data, past experience, and logical reasoning but a decision is determined by priorities, not by data, experience, and not by logic.

2). A conclusion can be 'right' or 'wrong' ( $2+2=5$ ) it cannot be 'Good' or 'Bad'. There are no bad conclusions, only wrong ones. A decision can be 'Good' or 'Bad', but not 'right' or 'wrong'. There are no wrong decisions, only bad ones.

3). Those who make a decision are responsible for its results as they could make a different decision - by using a different priority - and get different results.

Those who draw a conclusion are not responsible for its results.

They could not draw a different - correct - conclusion..

They are responsible only for the conclusion being correct, not for its results.

4). Data determines conclusions, it does not determine decisions.

The same data forces different people to draw the same conclusion, but they can make different decisions on the basis of the same data if their priorities are different.

To further clarify the difference between decisions and conclusions, let us compare Hamlet wondering "*To be or not to be?*" with a doctor pondering "*To amputate or not to amputate?*"

Hamlet has two options and must decide which to choose. He chooses by his priority.

Knowledge and logic cannot help him as they do not determine what is 'Good' for him.

A doctor must solve his dilemma by data, medical knowledge and logical deductions leading to the right conclusion. If the conclusion is 'Bad' (like "the patient has cancer") the doctor is not to blame. He is responsible only for his conclusion being "Right" not "Good".

Imagine a patient suffering from a tumour in the leg. Analyzing the test-results the doctor concludes the patient has cancer and says: "*Amputation will enable you to live; without it, you'll die soon.*" Analyzing the medical data by using medical knowledge and logical reasoning a doctor draws a single medical conclusion ('diagnosis'). If the conclusion is wrong it is due to faulty data or wrong deduction but not due to the doctor's priority. Medical data and logical reasoning determine a doctor's conclusion but they do not determine the patient's response to this conclusion. The doctor *concludes* but the patient *decides* how to respond to the doctor's conclusion. Different patients will make different *decisions* on the same conclusion deduced by the doctor..

Some patients will decide to die rather than to live as disabled, others will decide to live as disabled rather than die. Both respond to the same conclusion ("diagnosis") of the doctor..

Which decision is "Good"?

Can the same data and doctor's conclusion lead to different - even contradictory - decisions, both “Good”?

Can two decisions that contradict each other both be ‘good’?

Surprising as it may seem the answer is - Yes.

The reason is simple: different patients have different priorities; some prefer life with disability to death, while others prefer death to life with disability. Both decisions are ‘Good’ for those who made them, as they are determined by different priorities, not by facts, knowledge or logic. Different people have different priorities, and there is no absolute priority enabling us to grade all priorities.

How does all this relate to politics?

Is politics about decisions or about conclusions?

Do politicians ‘decide’ policy or ‘conclude’ policy?

In politics people vote. Voting is choosing. To choose is to prefer. People *decide* what to prefer. Anyone deciding policy - King, Dictator, President, Prime Minister, Leader, or ordinary citizen - *chooses* one option from a number of options. We cannot choose a conclusion. Answering “*What to do*”? is always a decision, never a conclusion.

Decisions are determined by priorities, not by data, knowledge or reasoning. The same facts, knowledge, and logic, can lead to different decisions due to different priorities.

Politics is decisions, not conclusions. We *decide* political issues. We don’t conclude them.

Those who make a decision are responsible for its results as they could make a different decision (motivated by a different priority) and get different results.

Politicians whose decisions produce undesirable results usually try to evade their responsibility for such results by saying “*I had no choice*” pretending their decisions were conclusions. But they voted. Voting is choosing. One cannot choose a conclusion.

How does all this answer the question about ordinary people's lack of knowledge rendering them incapable of making balanced, informed, political decisions? It clarifies that decision-making means choosing an option - according to one's priorities - and not drawing a conclusion - according to one's knowledge and logic.

Rarely has a political decision-maker all the knowledge on the issue he decides. He doesn't need it. Experts who have the knowledge advise the decision-makers and present the various options. The decision-maker (King, President, Prime Minister, or Dictator) chooses an

option according to his priorities not according to some knowledge. Every ordinary citizen can do this. It requires no special knowledge.

In Errol Morris's excellent TV documentary on Robert McNamara (US Secretary of Defence 1961-68) *"The fog of war"* (2004) (see the transcript on the Internet) McNamara reminisces:

*"The telephone rang; a person comes on and says "I'm Robert Kennedy. My brother, Jack Kennedy, would like you to meet our brother-in-law, Sargent Shriver."*

*4 o'clock Sarge comes in. Never met him "I've been authorized by my brother-in-law, Jack Kennedy, to offer you the position of Secretary of the Treasury."*

*I said, "You're out of your mind. I know a little bit about finance. But I'm not qualified to be Secretary of the Treasury". He said: "Anticipating that, the President-Elect authorized me to offer you the job of Secretary of Defence." I said: "Look, I was in World War II for three years. But Secretary of Defence? I'm not qualified to be Secretary of Defence". "Well," he said, "anticipating that, would you at least do him the courtesy of agreeing to meet with him?"*

*So I go home and tell Marge [McNamara's wife A.O.] that if I could appoint every senior official in the department and if I could be guaranteed I wouldn't have to be part of that damn Washington social world... She said, "Well, okay, why don't you write a contract with the President, and if he'll accept those two conditions, do it." My total net income [as Director of Ford Company A.O.] at the time was of the order of \$800,000, but I had huge unfulfilled stock options worth millions.*

*I was one of the highest paid executives in the world. And the future was of course brilliant. We had called our children in. Their life would be totally changed.*

*The salary of a Cabinet Secretary then was \$25,000 a year. So we told the children they'd be giving up a few things. They could care less. Marge could care less.*

*It was snowing. The Secret Service took me into the house by the back way. I can still see it. There's a love seat, two armchairs with a lamp table in between. Jack Kennedy is sitting in one armchair and Bobby Kennedy's sitting in the other.*

*I said: "Mr. President, it's absurd, I'm not qualified."*

*"Look, Bob," he said, "I don't think there's any school for Presidents either."*

*He said, "Let's announce it right now". He said, "I'll write out the announcement."*

*So he wrote out the announcement, we walk out the front door.*

*All of these television cameras and press ,till hell wouldn't have it.*

*That's how Marge learned I have accepted. It was on television. Live.*

*Kennedy: All right, why don't we do some pictures afterwards? I've asked Robert McNamara to assume the responsibilities of Secretary of Defence. And I'm glad and happy to say that he has accepted this responsibility. Mr. McNamara leaves the presidency of the Ford Company at great personal sacrifice.*

**McNamara:** *That's the way it began. You know, it was a traumatic period. My wife probably got ulcers from it. May have even ultimately died from the stress. My son got ulcers. It was very traumatic, but they were some of the best years of our life and all members of my family benefited from it. It was terrific. (see the Internet)*

McNamara never served in Washington before, never held any political post, and never studied Finance or Defence. Elsewhere he admitted that when he came to Washington he didn't know the difference between an Atom-bomb and an ordinary bomb. Yet Kennedy appointed him Secretary of Defence, and never regretted it. Kennedy himself was in the same situation but - unlike McNamara - he knew that decision-making is not a skill but a role every normal person can fulfil. No President is an expert on the options he chooses. The experts on the options explain to him their costs and consequences. All he has to do is to choose one. Choosing is not a skill that can be taught. It depends on priorities and not on knowledge. Medicine, Law, and Engineering are skills. Doctors, lawyers, and engineers pass tests and get certificates - issued by a university - allowing them to practice their skill, but no President passes a test in choosing to get a certificate allowing him to be President. This is not a defect of the system but the nature of decision-making. It depends on priorities, not on knowledge. If different people have different priorities then the same knowledge will motivate them to make different decisions. We choose Political representatives by their priorities, not by their knowledge. If George W. Bush junior - whose knowledge is rather limited - can be President of the USA then most normal people can be President of the USA since GWB is neither a genius nor

an imbecile. GWB's Presidency ought to dispel the myth that political decision-making requires an awful lot of knowledge which most citizens lack. But the myth will not be dispelled as this will denude politics. If everyone can decide policy why not replace our representative by our sms? After all, this is much cheaper, eliminates political corruption and conspiracies, and abolishes many political problems.

Another common objection to Direct Democracy argues that if all citizens have the right to propose laws and policies there will be an enormous number of proposals and the system will be unable to cope with most of them.

This possibility is refuted daily in all Parliaments in the world. In all of them all members can propose laws and policies, yet the number of laws and policies actually proposed is much less than the number of MPs. There is not a single parliament where all members proposed laws or policies on the same day. The number of proposals depends on the number of current political issues, not on the number of MPs. Moreover, as the contents of many proposals often overlap many drop their proposal if a similar one was accepted.

Direct Democracy, unlike any other political system, cannot be imposed on citizens. One cannot force people to propose laws and policies and vote on them. DD depends on citizens' active participation in policy making. It cannot work if most citizens are indifferent to their society. DD can be set up only if most citizens want it, and it can function only if they are active participants in it. If they are, and the system functions, it means they are concerned to keep it going. So they will take care to protect it from abuse and eliminate what hinders its operation.

This brings us to the next common objection to DD, namely, the argument that most people today are indifferent to politics and will not participate in DD politics. This is indeed the situation - today. The percentage of voters in USA elections is a good example. In all US elections during the last 40 years only 40% of those entitled to vote bothered to do so. The situation in most European countries is similar. Peoples' indifference to politics - so the argument goes - is the major obstacle to DD.

This argument ignores the fact that current Rule by Representatives (RR) breeds, and cultivates citizens' political indifference. RR wants citizens to be politically active only on Election Day. In all the days between elections RR wants citizens to "Know their place" and leave politics to politicians. Most Reps are concerned more about their careers than about the needs of those who voted for them. No wonder most citizens become indifferent to politics - and even disgusted by it - in RR.

Indifference to politics in RR is bred by RR not by Politics. Indifference to politics is not a feature of humanity. Politics fixes the choices of society as a whole. The will to do so lies dormant in every individual but most political systems repress it. It awakens in moments of emergency or revolution. The most recent cases were the French General Strike in May 1968 and the bombing of the World Trade Centre towers in New-York in 2001. During these moments the behaviour of most people in these two societies changed dramatically. People volunteered to help others, began to really listen to others, volunteered for community service, made sacrifices for others, even risked their lives for others. This contradicted their former behaviour and the attitudes which the existing political system instilled in them - namely - *"Mind your own business"*.

Where did the readiness to mind other peoples' business come from? It was latent in the social nature of individuality (see Ch.3) buried under layers of selfishness, indifference, and fear, created by an economic system based on selfishness and a political system based on representation advising: *"Mind your own business, and society will take care of itself"*. This attitude cracked under the pressures of Human solidarity erupting during an emergency or a revolution.

Indifference to society and political apathy are not basic components of "Human Nature" They are produced by political systems that benefit, and even depend on, such attitudes. Why should political representatives encourage citizens' participation in politics when this participation threatens the role of political representatives?

Political apathy and indifference produced by RR are no indication of peoples' political attitudes and behaviour in DD. When the political system encourages peoples participation in politics most of the current apathy and indifference will evaporate.

Another objection to Direct Democracy argues that it enables Demagogues to shape policy by their ability to influence many citizens. A Demagogue is a person with exceptional ability to influence people. Hitler and Mussolini were demagogues.

Demagogues can appear in every political system and pose a problem. Hitler was a demagogue and got elected to be Leader of Germany. Elections empowered him to represent all Germans, so he abolished all other parties and stayed ruler of Germany long after many Germans realized his policies lead to disaster. This can never happen in DD where the demagogue has only one vote. He can influence people to vote for his policies but he never represents anyone. Even if citizens vote for his policies he has only one vote, like every other citizen, and the citizens can vote against his policies immediately when they realize they lead to disaster.

Direct Democracy - like all other system for deciding policy - faces two kinds of problems: 1. Technical problems, and 2. Inherent problems.

Technical problems can be eliminated, but inherent problems are like volcanoes - they can be treated but not eliminated. They can reappear, perhaps in a new form, and must be tackled in new ways.

Technical problems of DD stem from the right of millions of citizens to propose, debate and decide, every law and policy. Electronic communications provide the means to do this but procedures must be devised to protect the public from abuse of this right. Control committees can do it, but they must be drawn by lottery and serve one term only. This will prevent the formation of elites controlling everything. Nomination by lottery applies also to Committees responsible for carrying out policies. Choosing policy depends on priorities, not on expertise. But carrying out a policy often requires expertise most citizens lack. Committees appointed to carry out policies need to include experts but must be changed regularly to prevent the formation of 'expert elites' influencing all decisions.

Inherent problems of DD stem from two issues:

1. There is no guarantee that the results of a decision will be 'good'.
2. Conflicts between overall majorities and local majorities are inevitable.

A decision can produce undesirable - even disastrous - results, totally unexpected by the decision-makers. This happened to popes, dictators, presidents, representatives, fathers, mothers, us - and majorities - everywhere. The chance that a Pope, a Dictator, a President, a General Secretary or Representatives will revoke their decision if it produced a disaster is small. All refuse to admit they were wrong, as this undermines their authority and their role as decision-makers. People insist that undesirable results of their decisions are not their fault. In DD a minority of 1% of the citizens can initiate a new vote on a decision that produced undesirable results. This does not ensure that every bad decision will be revoked, but the chance of doing so in DD is greater than in any system ruled by those who insist on their infallibility. Citizens in a DD need not suffer indefinitely the undesirable results of a bad decision (like continuing a lost war). They need not wait for new elections, or start a campaign to change a leader. They can renew the public debate on a bad decision and revoke it immediately.

Often policies proposed by a minority and rejected by the majority turn out to be right, while the majority turns out to be wrong. Majorities often err and produce disasters. For this reason minorities must be protected from being muzzled by the majority. Conflicts between local majorities and overall majorities are inevitable. The best way to resolve them is by agreeing in advance which types of issues will be decided by an overall majority of all citizens - and which by a local majority of those involved directly. Although an overall majority can impose its decisions by using force this is undesirable as it will motivate local majorities to use force too. This can lead to an armed conflict which is eventually terminated by a compromise. To prevent armed conflicts it is better to reach a compromise that neither side will like yet both will accept it as the "lesser evil". A compromise is accepted by both sides, but victory of one side motivates the other side to prolong its resistance.

It is essential to prevent DD from becoming a "Dictatorship of the majority". This can be done by a Constitution granting the minority certain rights.

1. The right of any minority (political/ethnic/sexual/religious, or other) to express and promote its views - including anti-DD views, however repugnant they are to the majority - must be guaranteed, and protected, against any violation by any majority.

2. Any minority must have the right to veto specified decisions provided it proposes alternative policies to the one it vetoed. The right of Veto does not apply to every decision. All citizens must decide which decisions can be vetoed.
3. Some decisions will bind only to those that voted for them, not to those who voted against them. All citizens will decide to which decisions this applies.
4. The Constitution must clarify which decisions require a majority in a vote, and which require a majority in the entire electorate (including non-voters). Some decisions may require a preferential majority of 60% or more of all citizens.
5. When 1% of all citizens propose to debate and vote on a particular decision, that decision shall be debated and submitted to a vote of all citizens.

A DD Constitution must protect every minority from being crushed by the majority. Minorities must obey majority decisions but must be protected from abuse of this rule. Those in the majority must consider how they would respond if they were in the minority, and do their best to minimize the discomfort of the minority. The spirit of DD is respect for the autonomy of others, including those in a minority. Majorities are fallible and must take care not to create situations where erroneous decisions cause irreparable damage.

A critical attitude to one's own decisions is preferable to over-confidence.

DD reduces the damage caused by demagogues. In any political system, demagogues can influence people to make decisions that produce disasters, but only in DD this can be remedied immediately. In DD a demagogue can only advocate a policy, not decide it, because like all citizens, a demagogue has only one vote. Demagogues can influence citizens' voting but if this produces undesirable results citizens can revoke their decision immediately, thus terminating the influence of the demagogue.

In dictatorship the dictator is usually a demagogue and must be stripped of his power before his decisions can be changed. This is not easy, and takes time. In Rule by Representatives citizens must wait till next elections before they can change

representatives, hoping these will make new decisions. This prolongs the suffering from disastrous decisions.

Only in DD can disastrous decisions be revoked immediately.

Direct Democracy is not a magic cure for all the problems of society. There is no such cure. Whoever preaches such a cure sells illusions. DD abolishes politicians' power and solves many political problems faster than all other political systems because evasion of responsibility for bad decisions by decision-makers is impossible in DD. In all other political systems decision-makers can evade their responsibility for decisions that produced undesirable results by shifting responsibility onto others. Evasion of responsibility works like a veil hiding both causes and makers of a bad decision from most citizens.

In DD citizens who made a decision that had undesirable results cannot blame others. This forces them to confront their motives for their decision, tackle them, and thus break the vicious circle where the same motivations produce the same undesirable results repeatedly.

Replacing RR by DD is the logical - and historical - continuation of replacing Monarchy by Parliament. Both increase citizens' freedom by enabling them to live by their own decisions.

DD deepens citizens' understanding of the problems of their society. It is not Nature, God or History that cause problems to societies but people living as a group. Until people discover the source of political problems within themselves they will face the same problems repeatedly, being unable to overcome them.

When all citizens decide all policies, no undesirable result of their decisions can be blamed on others. Those who made a decision are responsible for its results and if it produced a disaster they must find out where they went wrong, and why. This is not how representatives, dictators, popes, kings, presidents, or general-secretaries behave, as it would destroy their credibility and terminate their role as decision-makers. Only in DD, where deciding policy is not a temporary role but a permanent right of every citizen, can people admit their political errors without fearing that they will lose their right to make political decisions. Citizens who 'made a mistake' do

not lose their right to vote, and can admit - and reconsider - what made them vote for a decision that produced bad results. In doing so they may discover - and overcome - their former motivations and develop new abilities and sensitivities.

DD motivates people - more than any other system - to learn from their own mistakes. Whether people learn from their mistakes - or not - is another matter. Kings, Presidents, Party Leaders, Dictators, or Representatives cover up the causes of their disastrous decisions as this could bring about their replacement by others, but in DD decision-makers cannot be replaced yet their motives for disastrous decisions can be replaced to avoid more disasters.

Today, under RR political systems, most citizens have no authority to decide any policy and will - at best - change those whose decisions produced disasters, but not the motives that led to those decisions. Germans who supported Hitler considered his decisions bad only because he lost the war, not because he started it. If they could decide policy after electing him as leader, they could replace him when they realized the Nazis lost the war and could have discovered their own false priorities, rather than be judged later by those who defeated them.

When dictators achieve power they abolish all means to replace them so only they decide all policies. After 1933 Hitler alone decided all German policies. He carried on the war long after his Army - and most Germans - knew it was lost. If Germany had been a Direct Democracy it could have avoided war, or stopped fighting and might never have killed millions of Jews and other minorities. In dictatorship nasty decisions - and acts - must (and can) be hidden from most citizens, who would object to them. This is impossible in DD. Whatever must be hidden from most citizens cannot become a policy in Direct Democracy because a majority will rarely vote for a decision to hide something from itself.

Some critics argue that DD can produce a *'crowd effect'*, or *'Bandwagon effect'*, causing people to vote like those around them even when they would not do so in private. Today electronic communication enables people to make political decisions privately, separate from any crowd. Today (for the first time in history) anyone can address millions (on TV) from their own home without joining any crowd. Mobile

phones and interactive television enable people to see and hear privately anyone who wants to address them, and to vote on policies in the same way as people already choose films in cable TV networks, by pressing a key on a remote control. This eliminates the 'crowd effect' or 'mob rule' in politics. It is no longer necessary to be in a crowd to propose policy - debate it - or vote on it.

Many people value their authority more than their property, and their Status more than their income. They will vehemently oppose DD as it challenges every dominant authority - in the Family, in Education, at Work and in the State. Therefore any attempt to implement DD anywhere will face fierce opposition from all present-day authorities, and decision-makers. Republicans and Democrats, Conservatives and Liberals, Socialists and Communists, Monarchists and Anarchists will all oppose DD.

RR supporters will denounce DD as 'populist' while anarchists will reject it as 'centralist'. Actually DD has no "centre" but it accepts majority decisions. Most anarchists reject majority decisions.

Many believe that ordinary people cannot themselves make responsible decisions as they lack the required knowledge. If policy decisions require special knowledge, why isn't such knowledge taught anywhere? Why has no politician a certificate confirming his/her qualification to practice politics?

This is so because deciding policy is not - was not - and never can never be, a special skill. To decide is to choose, and no special knowledge is required for choosing. To choose is to prefer. People prefer what they consider 'best' according to their priorities, not because they have some special knowledge for deciding. No amount of skill, information or reasoning determines a decision. Priorities do, and they are arbitrary and cannot be justified. They are what justifies everything else.

In DD, panels of experts - drawn by lottery - will discuss every policy on TV, explain its advantages, its drawbacks, its cost, and the consequences of accepting or rejecting it. Members of such panels will answer questions phoned-in by citizens, and providing all with the necessary information to make a decision. The experts will advise. The citizens will decide.

Many fear that if all citizens will have the right to propose and decide all policies there will be too many decisions to vote on. This is disproved daily in every parliament as the number of proposals is much less than the number of its members. The subject of a proposal, not the number of those entitled to propose it, determines the number of proposals.

Parliaments require three rounds of voting on every policy proposal. Proposals failing to get a required minimum of votes at every stage are dropped. This method can be used in DD and will reduce the number of decisions to vote on.

Contrary to popular belief corruption is not a necessary part of politics. It occurs only when a few politicians decide policy for all others. Seekers of favors from the few policy-makers try to bribe them, while the policy makers themselves bribe others to retain their role of decision-makers. When all citizens decide all policies there are too many to bribe. In committees to carry out policies nominating committee members by lottery makes bribes useless.

Lottery fraud can be prevented, so politics by DD can eliminate corruption.

Some believe that DD is far more complicated than a Rule by Representatives. This is not necessarily the case. Representatives complicate political problems so they will be called to solve them. Politics by DD is simpler than Politics by RR, but even if this were not so most people prefer more freedom in a complex system, to less freedom in a simple system. Dictatorship is much simpler than RR. One ruler, without opposition or coalition, decides all policies. Yet most people prefer RR - despite its complexity - to dictatorship, as in RR they have at least freedom to decide who will decide for them.

A society can be run by Direct Democracy only if most of its citizens want to decide policies themselves. Until the majority wants DD it cannot be implemented as no minority can force a majority to make policy decisions. No minority, however positive its intentions, can impose DD on society. Only when most citizens want to decide policies themselves can they dismiss their representatives and take over the role of policy makers. Political representatives have no authority to represent those who refuse to be represented by them. In the past kings could impose their authority by force. In a modern industrial society authority deciding for others cannot be imposed by force, only by deception or delusion. In a modern industrial society if

people refuse to let others decide for them then those who do so lose their authority to do so. They may try to impose their authority by deception and bribes but this cannot last for long. Direct Democracy - unlike all other political systems - cannot be imposed by force or by undemocratic means. Any political system that can be imposed against the will of the majority cannot be democratic. Either the Demos decides all policies or someone else decides for the Demos. In the parliamentary system representatives decide policies on behalf of all citizens (the "Demos") but such a system is not "demos-kratia".

The rule of the few over the many means '*Oligos-Kratia*', not Democracy.

No Parliamentary system was - or can be - a Democracy.

When the majority - in a school, municipality, borough, village, church, place of work, or in the entire country, decides to make all policies by itself, it will face fierce resistance from all those who currently decide policies. It is a dangerous illusion to believe that those who have authority to decide for others will give it up just because the majority demands it.

They will oppose the decisions of the majority by all means possible.

DD deprives such people of their authority and income so they will use every trick to defeat it. Every DD activist must realize that while DD can be implemented locally, in a school, borough, village, or town, any attempt to implement it in the entire country will require a long and fierce struggle. DD activists must prepare themselves in advance - psychologically and technically - for this struggle. If they are unprepared for it they will be defeated. Opponents of DD will use all known tricks, and invent new ones, to defeat DD. Many tricks are deceptions and psychological manipulations designed to confuse and scare the majority. Many will be scared or confused but if the majority persists in demanding DD no minority can defeat it.

The struggle for DD is the school preparing people for DD. It teaches them how - and why - to run society as DD. This answers the criticism of DD opponents who argue that most people do not want to make policy decisions. This is true in RR which thrives on citizens indifference and induces it in the individual. Such critics assume that peoples' responses and behavior will always be the same as they are in RR where rulers have a vested interest in staying in Power and cultivate the political

apathy of most citizens. Using RR societies as examples to prove citizens' political apathy is misleading as all RR societies oppose rule by all citizens and cultivate citizens' apathy.

Such arguments use what needs to be proved as a proof and are logically false.

Critics of DD argue that most people do not want to be in a position where they must decide all policies of society. This is true about many people today but not necessarily in DD. Clearly, most citizens do want to decide every policy. In DD all citizens have the right to decide policy but not a duty to do it. Most citizens will participate in debates and decisions that concern them but when they will have to obey decisions they do not like on issues that did not concern them their response may change.

Some oppose DD even though they accept that it is technically feasible. These are principled elitists. They abhor rule by all citizens. Elitists denounce DD as '*populist*'. They believe majorities will make decisions causing disasters. One such example is the majority that voted the Nazis into power in 1933. That event happened in RR and is not an argument against DD but against every system of decision-making. Hitler came into power in a parliament, through elections. This can happen in DD too and also to Kings, Dictators, Experts, Statesmen. DD is not worse than RR in this respect. But in DD, unlike all other system, the citizens can revoke the disastrous decisions immediately. Moreover, the more decision-makers the less do psychological whims, phobias and craving for power, shape political decisions. Decisions of a single person depend on one person's psychology. As people have different psychologies their influences cancel each other. The more decision-makers the more canceling out of personal psychology on political decisions. This reduces the influence of psychology on politics.

No political system can protect society from decisions that cause disastrous results. However in DD decisions that produced disasters can be revoked any moment by all citizens. In RR, citizens can replace representatives whose decisions produced disasters only in the next elections. Moreover, replacing representatives leaves intact citizens' considerations and priorities that motivated the election of the representatives. This leads to repetition of the pattern. The old priorities cause the election of new representatives who make the old decisions.

The point is to change priorities, not representatives. As only new priorities produce new decisions. In DD citizens have to reconsider their priorities, not their representatives.

Many assume that the selfishness, greed and political apathy pervasive in society today implies that DD will be a 'jungle' ruled by the unbridled selfish instincts of most citizens. They believe selfishness is part of human nature.

Selfishness, greed and indifference to society are a by-product of privately-owned economy and rule by representatives. Both prevent people from deciding what is best for society as a whole. Privately-owned economy enhances selfishness and greed and rule by representatives enhances political apathy of most citizens. Rule by representatives depends on the political apathy of most citizens throughout the long period between elections. Too much political activity by citizens threatens the rule of representatives. Therefore political representatives - from Kings to Dictators and elected Presidents always advise citizens to "Leave politics to politicians" . Every political system shapes peoples' motives by creating conditions enabling people to 'succeed' only if they accept the norms of the system. Drawing conclusions from peoples' motives and political attitudes in a system of privately-owned economy and rule by representatives is misleading as it ignores the effect of the political system on the behavior of individuals within that system. When this influence is taken into account, this argument against DD collapses because unlike RR - DD depends on citizens' concern for society and enhances it. DD's influence on its citizens contradicts that of RR on its citizens.

Direct democracy is not merely a system for making political decisions - it creates new attitudes in individuals, motivating them to improve society by direct participation in deciding what is best for their society.

Direct democracy transforms the norms, attitudes, aspirations, personality, and the individuality of its adherents.

## 14. **D.I.Y. D.D.**

How can one contribute towards the creation of a society run by direct democracy?

The first thing to realize is that direct democracy - unlike any other political system - cannot be imposed on people because it depends on peoples' active participation in deciding what their family, their place of work, their school, or their country, should do. People cannot be forced to participate in politics. Unless they are willing to become politically active direct democracy cannot be implemented nor can it be maintained. So the problem is to convince one or two people to take part in deciding what is best for their society. Start by finding one other person who agrees with the idea of DD. Meet regularly and discuss who else might be interested in DD, and what local problems can best be solved by DD. When you find a third person agreeing to DD declare your group a local Committee for Direct democracy (CDD) and start to spread DD ideas in your neighbourhood, in school, at your place of work, and wherever you meet other people. Facing today's political apathy of most people this seems an insurmountable task. However, as the events of May 1968 in France (see p. 100) reveal, beneath the layer of political apathy and cynicism there is, in most people, a store of goodwill and concern for others. Once awakened this concern becomes a powerful, persistent, motive for political activity. Activity to introduce direct democracy must start from very small groups of two or three people, debating and discussing how to solve an actual, immediate, local, problem, by applying principles of direct democracy to that problem. The problem can be in a family, in a school, in a neighbourhood or in a place of work. It must be a problem well known to others. Direct democracy activists should propose ways to solve problems by participation of all those suffering from it. DD activists must be prepared that their first attempts to solve problems will end in failure. If - after numerous failures - they succeed to involve others in their campaign, and to solve the problem, they should report this to other CDD and study the reasons of their failures and successes.

Every CDD should meet regularly (say once a week) to discuss local problems that can be solved by DD methods. DD activities must deal with actual, local, problems. Campaigns to solve the actual, local, problems by DD methods are the way for CDDs to grow. Each successful campaign will create new DD activists. Every CDD should

finance its activities only by donations of its own members and never accept money from outside. This will ensure its independence and serve as an indicator of its resources. A clear distinction must be made between sympathizers of DD and activists of DD. A CDD is a group of activists, not of sympathizer. Sympathizers should be encouraged to become activists. When a CDD contains more than a dozen members it should form a second CDD. All CDDs should help each other and cooperate. DDs should strive to form a mass-movement for DD in the entire country with the CDDs as its organizational backbone.

It is absolutely essential to organize a mass movement for direct democracy (MDD). Only an organized, coordinated, mass-movement, can transform an entire country into a direct democracy.

Study local problems and offer DD solutions that people understand. Be prepared – mentally, organizationally, and physically - to meet vehement opposition. Do not resort to violence. Better be a victim than a victimizer. Treat opponents of DD as you would like to be treated yourself. Remember that despite their present hostility they are potential supporters of DD. Act to convert hostility into support. Do not resort to secrecy, conspiracy, or bribes of any sort. Do not accept financial support from outside sources. Every CDD must be self-sufficient using only resources of its members. Each CDD must finance itself and act as an independent unit.

CDD members should promote DD in any way possible, by word of mouth, print, radio and TV, on the Internet, in discussion with friends at work or in school.

Every CDD must be self-reliant, help other CDDs and act to create more CDDs.

When a number of CDDs exist, they should organize a local, regional, national and international conferences to coordinate activities, to learn from each others' experience and to assist CDDs that need help.

In due course all CDDs should help create a World DD Movement to coordinate activities of all DD movements on a world-wide scale. This does not mean the world becomes one huge DD. Regional DDs will merge only if most their citizens - not just DD activists - want it.

A DD movement must not be organized like traditional political parties. It must not have an Executive Committee deciding policy on behalf of others. It must have a Coordinating Committee (CC) to facilitate coordination between CDDs and to aid the exchange of ideas, but every CDD is free to reject proposals of a CC. Proposals from a CC are not decisions imposed on others, they are suggestions to others. Every CDD is free to reject proposals of the Coordinating Committee.

A DD organization has no person or committee deciding for others. It has no leaders.

A movement for DD must not participate in any house of Representatives. Any such participation will turn it into an actor in the circus of politics by representation. It should strive to replace representatives by direct decisions of citizens

The DD movement is an embryo of the political system it strives to create. Creations are imprints of their creators. Relations between members of a DD movement must be like those they want to see between people in a DD society. CDD Members must cultivate their own autonomy and respect the autonomy of others.

DD supporters must not behave like dictators at home, at work, or in society.

If a CDD can implement DD at work, in a school, in a village or borough, it should do so, and be prepared for fierce opposition. Do not wait till DD is implemented everywhere. In small domains DD can work without electronic means. Where less than 100 people are involved DD decisions can be done by raising hands.

Experience gained from struggles to implement DD locally will help other CDDs. However, as long as the entire society is not run as a DD every local DD will be suffer strong pressures from those who dominate society at large. Local DDs may be perverted or crushed by RR and its supporters. It is therefore essential - eventually - to make the entire society function as a DD.

Use humor. Politics need not be grim or boring. Jokes are a powerful political weapon. DD can be fun. Exposing RR can be fun. By making people laugh you win their goodwill.

Never criticize without proposing an alternative to what you criticize. Propose new solutions to every social, political or psychological problem. Be creative, invent new solutions, but keep your feet on the ground.

Do not be deterred by people who say DD is impossible. Millions believed that human flight, lunar landings, use of nuclear energy, curing infertility, changing hereditary traits', were impossible. They were all wrong.

Lord Rutherford "Father of nuclear physics" declared in 1938 that any practical use of nuclear energy would be impossible. In 1945 Hiroshima proved him wrong.

In politics people declare as 'impossible' what they consider 'undesirable'.

Check up the motives of those who say DD is 'impossible'.

**BACK COVER**

This book puts together the pieces of the jigsaw of world politics in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

The completed picture reveals an underlying logic pointing towards new revolutions.